

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **RISK AND AUDIT SCRUTINY GROUP**

#### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 21 JUNE 2006 AT 1000 HRS IN MEETING ROOM 1, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK**

**PRESENT:** Councillors William Crawford, Stephanie Young, Douglas Reid, Gordon Cree, Harry Wilson, Stuart Finlayson, Eric Jackson and Elaine Dinwoodie; and Fiona Lees, Chief Executive; and Alex McPhee, Executive Head of Finance.

**ATTENDING:** James Lavery, Executive Director of Development and Property Services; Graham Short, Executive Director of Educational and Social Services; William Stafford, Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services; Colin Houston, Chief Auditor; Alan Wasson, Audit Manager; Michela Watt, Audit Manager and Stuart Nelson, Administrative Officer.

**ALSO ATTENDING:** Cameron Revie, Engagement Partner; and Joanne McWilliams, Engagement Manager, both PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP.

**CHAIR:** Councillor William Crawford, Chair.

#### **PREVIOUS MINUTES**

1. There were submitted, and approved as a correct record, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Risk and Audit Scrutiny Group held on 27 April 2006 (circulated).

#### **ANNUAL REPORT 2005/2006**

2. There was submitted a report (circulated) by the Chief Auditor which directed attention to matters of significance that had arisen out of the 2005/2006 audit process, and offered an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's systems of internal control.

Arising from the report, Members of the Group sought and received clarification, confirmation and further information, as required, in respect of the undernoted matters, namely:-

- Social Work use of the Council's taxi hire service contract, in respect of which the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services had initiated a comprehensive review process, to include examination of the control mechanisms relating to 'no shows' by clients;
- the nature of the involvement of the Internal Audit Section in, and their contribution to, the Councils' Best Value Processes;
- recent implementation of streamlined management structures within the authority and arrangements for review of the Council's political structures during 2006 and 2007;
- implementation and monitoring of banking arrangements in schools for school meals income;
- the system of controls surrounding housing allocations arrangements; and

- implementation of systems relating to the collection of income from on-street and off-street parking and the reporting of non-operational parking ticket machines.

It was, otherwise, agreed to note the contents of the Annual Report 2005/2006, as appended to the Chief Auditor's Report.

Councillors Wilson and Reid joined, and Councillor Dinwoodie left, the meeting during consideration, but prior to determination of the preceding item.

### **PRIORITIES AND RISKS FRAMEWORK: A NATIONAL PLANNING TOOL FOR 2005/2006 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUDITS**

3. There was submitted a report dated June 2006 (circulated) by PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP which considered the Council's position in addressing the six key areas of the Risks and Priorities Framework and its progress in implementing the required reforms.

In this connection, the Group received a detailed presentation by Joanne McWilliams, Engagement Manager, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, to highlight the actions taken by the Council in respect of the risks identified and other areas for further development and actions.

Having heard the Chief Executive and Cameron Revie, Engagement Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, in explanation of a range of issues relating to workforce planning, the Efficient Government agenda and the Community Planning process, it was agreed to note the terms of the report.

The meeting terminated at 1111 hrs.