

Audit Committee Meetings and Reporting Calendar Report by Kenneth Lawrie, Chief Executive

1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to propose a reduction in the number of Audit Committee meetings held in each financial year from 7 to 5.

2 Background

2.1 A benchmarking exercise was undertaken across other Scottish Councils to determine the frequency of Audit Committee meetings held. The majority of those that responded meet on a quarterly cycle with either one or two meetings reserved for discussion of draft and final accounts.

There would be a number of advantages of adopting this model:

- It would release officer time in the Audit team enabling resource to be more focussed on the delivery of the Audit Plan;
- it would allow Risk Reports to be presented to each of the Audit Committees matching the quarterly reporting cycle of risk reports;
- it would allow an increase in the number of agenda items brought to each meeting and allow a better spread of reports reducing the risk of presenting light agendas; and
- it would allow the Internal Audit reporting cycle to be aligned more closely with Corporate Management meetings and the Audit Committee meetings.

3 Proposed Reporting Calendar

3.1 Appendix one to this report details the proposed meeting structure and provides a guide to the reports which would be delivered to each Audit Committee meeting under this revised structure.

4 Report Implications

4.1 Resource

The proposal would release officer time in the Audit team by having to support fewer Audit Committee meetings enabling resource to be more focussed on the delivery of the Audit Plan.

4.2 Risk

There would be no increase to risk by adopting this approach. All existing reports would still be submitted to the Audit Committee.

4.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- Community safety
- Adult health, care and housing
- Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- Sustainable growth
- Business transformation and Best Value
- None of the above

4.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

This report does not address the priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan.

4.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

There would be no impact on performance and outcomes. The same number of reports will be provided to the Audit Committee.

4.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Reports submitted to the Audit Committee are designed to highlight potential risks and proposals to add controls to reduce these risks. Reducing the number of Audit Committees would not impact on this approach as the same number and types of reports will still be presented to the Audit Committee.

4.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The proposal has been discussed with the Chair of the Audit Committee and the Chief Executive.

4.8 Ensuring Equalities

There are no equalities issues with regard to this report.

4.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

There are no sustainability issues with regard to this report.

4.10 IT Issues

There are no IT issues with regard to this report.

5 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Audit Committee:

- review the proposed reduction to the number of Audit Committee meetings;

- review the revised reporting calendar; and
- implement the new reporting structure from September 2015 subject to Audit Committee and Council approval.

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