

CITY OF CARDIFF COUNCIL CYNGOR DINAS CAERDYDD

AUDIT COMMITTEE: 24 January 2016

PUBLISHED SCRUTINY LETTERS

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR RESOURCES

AGENDA ITEM: 10.1

PORTFOLIO:

Reason for this Report

1. This report has been prepared to provide Audit Committee members with relevant information relating to correspondence issued by the five Scrutiny Committees. This will provide members with the opportunity to determine whether any matters arising from the correspondence are to be considered at a future Audit Committee meeting.
2. This report will also detail any correspondence between the Chair of Audit Committee and the Chairs of Scrutiny Committees. Since the last meeting, there has been no correspondence between the Chairs of the respective Committees.

Background

3. The purpose of this report is to ensure that there is an exchange of information between Scrutiny and Audit Committee and to provide the opportunity to consider whether any matters arising from respective scrutiny letters require further investigation by Audit Committee.
4. The Audit Committee's Terms of Reference includes the need to work in synergy with the five Scrutiny Committees and to avoid duplication in work programmes.

Issues

5. A review of the correspondence items for Scrutiny Committees was carried out and covered the period between 3 November and 23 December 2016.
 - Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee
 - Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee
 - Environmental Scrutiny Committee
 - Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee
 - Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee

6. In determining which (if any) pieces of correspondence should be considered at a future meeting, consideration needs to be taken of the Audit Committee Terms of Reference, which for reference is set out in Appendix A.
7. Appendix B includes correspondence issued from Scrutiny Committees which may be of interest to the Audit Committee. The responses can be provided to the Audit Committee upon request.

Policy, Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee

8. The Policy, Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee considered the 'Customer Services Strategy' which did not identify issues in the Committee's terms of reference. The Committee also considered the following correspondence which may be of interest to Audit Committee and is included in Appendix B:
 - 'Investment Estate Strategy,' which relates to asset stewardship and governance.
 - 'Review of Scrutiny,' relating to potential changes to the number and remit of Scrutiny Committees, with governance and working relationship implications.
 - 'Q2 Performance,' which outlines financial planning and performance in addition to non-financial matters.
 - The 'WAO Statement of Action', which outlines the current position relative the Wales Audit Office (WAO) Follow on Assessment Report.

Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee

9. The Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee considered the 'Community Safety Scrutiny' and 'Private Rented Sector Housing' correspondence which did not identify issues in the Committee's terms of reference. The Committee also considered the following correspondence which may be of interest to Audit Committee and is included in Appendix B:
 - 'Domiciliary Care scrutiny', which addresses the capacity and sustainability of the market and the requirement to submit a pressures bid for 2017/18 to meet the rising demographic need for domiciliary care.
 - 'Building Maintenance Framework pre-decision scrutiny', which addresses many contract management concerns of the Audit Committee relating to the current framework.
 - 'Direct Payments pre-decision scrutiny' with the aim of achieving value for money and quality of service provision.

Environmental Scrutiny Committee

10. The Environmental Scrutiny Committee considered 'Managing Litter in Cardiff a Neighbourhood Services Member Update' and 'Performance Reporting – Quarter 2'. A 'Planning Service Member Update' highlighted good performance in a number of areas but some concerns about the potential risk of achieving increasing planning fee income targets year on year. The correspondence did not identify issues in the Committee's terms of reference.

Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee

11. The Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee considered the following correspondence which may be of interest to Audit Committee and is included in Appendix B:
 - 'Dumballs Road Regeneration', in partnership with Vastint to purchase approximately 12 acres of land with a £15 million capital allocation of budgeted costs, and to dispose of the former Depot Building at Bessemer Close. The risks and opportunities resulting from coordinating redevelopment are drawn upon in the letter.
 - 'Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report and the Summer Reading Challenge 2016'. The correspondence draws upon a glitch which meant that books were being delivered to the wrong libraries and not promptly identified by internal control systems.

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

12. The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee considered the 'Child Health and Disability Improvement Plan Update', which focussed on service delivery and did not identify issues in the Committee's terms of reference. The following correspondence may be of interest to Audit Committee and is included in Appendix B:
 - The 'Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service', the 'Consortium's actions to address Estyn inspection report' and the 'quarter two Children's Services performance report' correspondence contained concerns about vacant posts and the high use of agency staff.
 - Correspondence on a 'Families First Scheme' discussed the extension of some contract terms, decommissioning of some services alternative / pilot arrangements in the transition and the commissioning of the next Families First Scheme.
 - A 'progress report on the effectiveness of school governors, Quarter 2 Performance and Cardiff 2020' reflected upon difficulties in retaining high quality governors. Also highlighted were the high expectations of Challenge Advisors in excess of governor training and abilities. A Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) report has raised discussion on the quality of teaching, leadership and the shape of education in Cardiff.

13. The twelve pieces of correspondence found in Appendix B highlight areas that partly cross into the Terms of Reference of the Audit Committee. In determining whether or not there are any items to add in future Audit Committees then consideration needs to be given to the terms of reference and the need to avoid duplication where possible.

Reason for Recommendations

14. To consider the correspondence and determine which require further consideration at a future Audit Committee meeting.

Legal Implications

15. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Financial Implications

16. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Recommendations

17. To note and identify any items contained within the correspondence of Scrutiny Chairs that need to be put on the Agenda at a future Audit Committee.

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CORPORATE DIRECTOR RESOURCES
Date: 24 January 2016

The following appendices are attached:

Appendix A - Audit Committee's Terms of Reference
Appendix B - Published Scrutiny Letters