

**MINUTES of SPECIAL MEETING of AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held BY MICROSOFT
TEAMS
on WEDNESDAY, 24 NOVEMBER 2021**

Present: Martin Caldwell (Chair)

Councillor Jim Findlay	Councillor Sir Jamie McGrigor
Councillor George Freeman	Councillor Alan Reid
Councillor Jim Lynch	Councillor Richard Trail

Attending: Shona Barton, Committee Manager
Kirsty Flanagan, Section 95 Officer
Laurence Slavin, Interim Head of Finance
Moira Weatherstone, Interim Chief Internal Auditor
Anne Blue, Finance Manager
John Cornett, Audit Scotland
Kyle McAulay, Audit Scotland

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence intimated.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. 2020-21 PROPOSED INDEPENDENT AUDITORS REPORT

The Committee gave consideration to a report outlining the unqualified opinion of the External Auditors, Audit Scotland, on the audit of the financial statements.

Decision

The Audit and Scrutiny Committee agreed to note the findings of the report.

(Reference: Report by Audit Scotland, dated 25 November 2021, submitted)

4. 2020-21 REPORT TO THOSE CHARGED WITH GOVERNANCE (ISA 260)

Consideration was given to a report summarising the findings arising from an audit of the annual accounts. The report noted that work on the 2020/21 annual accounts of Argyll and Bute Council was substantially complete and outlined the key elements of work that remained outstanding. Mr Cornett of Audit Scotland provided an update in relation to the outstanding work and confirmed that the Annual Audit Report would be presented to the Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 9 December 2021. He advised that the Annual Audit Report would provide further detail in respect of the annual accounts and the four audit dimensions that frame the wider scope of public audit set out in the Code of Audit Practice 2016, namely, financial management, financial sustainability, governance and transparency and value for money.

Decision

The Audit and Scrutiny Committee agreed to note the findings of the report.

(Reference: Report by Audit Scotland, dated 24 November 2021, submitted)

Councillor Reid left the meeting at 11:58am, during discussion of agenda item 4 (2020-21 Report to those charged with Governance (ISA 260)).

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5. 2020-21 ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL - ISA 580 LETTER OF REPRESENTATION

Consideration was given to the ISA 580 letter of representation on the audit of the annual accounts of Argyll and Bute Council for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Decision

The Audit and Scrutiny Committee:-

1. noted the contents of the ISA 580 letter of representation; and
2. agreed to recommend to Council that the ISA 580 letter of representation be approved for signing.

(Reference: ISA 580 Letter of Representation by Section 95 Officer, dated 25 November 2021, submitted)

6. 2020-21 ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL TRUST FUNDS - ISA 580 LETTER OF REPRESENTATION

The Committee gave consideration to the proposed independent Auditor's report in relation to the following charitable trusts:-

- McCaig Trust
- Marquess of Bute Silver Wedding Dowry
- Baillie Gillies Bequest
- Kidston Park Trust
- Miss Annie Dickson Bequest
- Logie Baird Prize Fund
- County of Argyll Educational Trust Scheme 1960
- Oban Common Good Fund

Decision

The Audit and Scrutiny Committee agreed to note the findings of the proposed independent Auditor's report.

(Reference: Report by Audit Scotland, dated 24 November 2021, submitted)

7. 2020-21 AUDITED ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The Committee gave consideration to a report presenting the Audited Annual Accounts of the Council and Charitable Trusts for the year to 31 March 2021.

Discussion took place in respect of the general fund reserves; earmarked reserves and issues identified for further development.

The Chair took the opportunity to thank both the Finance team for the provision of highly informative management commentary and for their continued hard work in the provision of the annual accounts.

Decision

The Audit and Scrutiny Committee agreed to recommend to Council that the Audited Annual Accounts of the Council and Charitable Trusts for the year to 31 March 2021 are approved.

(Reference: Report by Section 95 Officer, dated 24 November 2021, submitted)

Having noted that the Interim Head of Finance would be leaving the employment of the Council shortly before Christmas, the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, took the opportunity to thank Mr Slavin for his hard work and commitment to service and wished him well for the future.

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