

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

MINUTES of MEETING of the AUDIT COMMITTEE held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD on MONDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2000

Present: Councillor John Stirling (In the Chair)

Councillor Donald McIntosh
Councillor Ronald Kinloch

Councillor Isobel Strong
Councillor Dick Walsh

Attending: Nigel Stewart, Director of Corporate & Legal Services
Stewart McGregor, Director of Finance

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

The Director of Corporate & Legal Services advised Members that the Council had not made a decision as to whether or not the Chair of the Audit Committee should be a Councillor or one of the independent persons. He accordingly invited them to appoint a Chair either on a permanent or interim basis.

Councillor Stirling was unanimously appointed to Chair of the Audit Committee on a permanent basis.

The Committee resolved in terms of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the public for the following item of business on the grounds that it was likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 respectively Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

2. AUDIT COMMITTEE: APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS

The Director of Corporate & Legal Services submitted the Terms of Reference of the Audit Committee which had previously been adopted by the Council. Following a previous decision of the Council, an advertisement had been placed in local newspapers inviting expressions of interest for appointment to the two positions on the Committee to be filled by independent persons who are not Councillors. The expressions of interest which had been received were submitted. Before proceeding to consider these the Committee agreed they would assess them against the following skills and attributes:-

- (1) Ability to contribute to the Terms of Reference of the Audit Committee.
- (2) A demonstrable commitment to the Ethos of Public Service.

- (3) Active citizenship demonstrating an ongoing commitment to the Argyll and Bute area.
- (4) The ability to assimilate a multitude of information, combined with clear thinking and common sense, to provide analytical skills to enable objective and fair decision taking.
- (5) An empathetic approach to understanding the issues which may be brought before the Committee.
- (6) Communication skills to enable articulation of a constructive contribution to the work of the Committee.
- (7) Skills of negotiation, diplomacy and clear thinking to enable the resolution of conflicting points of view and contentious issues.
- (8) A confidence in their own character and abilities and at the same time be capable of commanding the respect of others.
- (9) The ability to maintain a balanced and independent view and to support the Audit Committee's independent role.

The Director of Finance submitted a report on preparations and approach that Members may wish to adopt following the appointment of the two independent persons, including training for Members.

(During the process of considering applications Councillor Stirling declared that he knew Mr G Mulvaney personally took no part in the decision, and left the room during discussion of his application).

Decision

1. Having considered the expressions of interest which had been received, the Committee agreed to invite the following to meet the Members of the Audit Committee in order to provide an opportunity for further discussion of their interest in being appointed as a Member of the Committee:-

Mr V Bradbury
Mr Harry Cathcart
Dr. Alastair MacBeth
Mr Graham Michie
Mr Eric Milligan

2. That the Director of Corporate & Legal Services and Director of Finance prepare some issues for discussion at the forthcoming interviews.
3. That the Director of Corporate & Legal Services write to those other persons who had applied for consideration thanking them for their interest.
4. To request the Director of Finance to invite Dr. Arthur Midwinter of Strathclyde University and Councillor Ian Drysdale, East Renfrewshire Council to meet with the Audit Committee, following appointment of the independent persons, to address them on the role of an Audit Committee from their experiences.

3. **DATE FOR INTERVIEWS: NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Audit Committee would take place on Wednesday 29 November 2000 at 10.a.m. in the Members Room, Kilmory.

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