#### EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

## **AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

#### 20 June 2019

#### Report by Clerk

# COMMITTEE'S SPECIALISATION ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS AND INSPECTION REPORTS

#### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To propose changes to the Committee's specialisation arrangements for dealing with internal and external audit reports and inspection reports.

#### RECOMMENDATION

2. It is recommended that the Committee considers balancing out more evenly the specialisation workload that is falling to each of its members as proposed.

#### **BACKGROUND**

- 3. In August 2017, following discussion and taking account of the distribution of aspects of the Committee's workload during the previous 5 years and also views expressed by members of the Committee, updated specialisation arrangements were approved for dealing with both inspection reports and external and internal audit reports, including those of a corporate nature or with a Council-wide focus. More specifically, it was confirmed which members of the Committee, working in pairs, would lead on specific matters and agreed to review the arrangements in due course.
- 4. Some changes to the Committee's membership have occurred since then as a consequence of which those more newly appointed to it simply took on the specialisation remit of those who had resigned. Otherwise, no other changes to the arrangements have been made thus far.

#### PROPOSED REVISIONS TO SPECIALISATION ARRANGEMENTS

- 5. At the end of 2018 the Committee was reminded of the intention to review its specialisation arrangements. It was explained that an analysis of reports dealt with since May 2017 had revealed that the workload was unbalanced, with some Elected Members having dealt with more reports than others. Consequently it was agreed to seek further feedback from members of the Committee on the analysis and related issues with a view to submitting proposals to a future meeting.
- 6. Members of the Committee were invited to submit comments and observations on a possible reconfiguration of responsibilities and related issues, such as on the extent to which any might wish to change their current remit. To assist, the list of current specialisation responsibilities (see Paragraph 7 below) was provided together with a further list itemising over 30 reports published and dealt with thus far; and a summary of the number dealt with by each Elected Member. No members of the Committee provided feedback, when asked, that suggested they were proactively seeking any change of remit.

7. The current specialisation arrangements are that reports considered to have a Council-wide focus are currently dealt with by the Chair and Vice-Chair to lead on in liaison with other members of the Committee as they consider appropriate. As far as leading on various audit and inspection reports is concerned, the Chair and Vice-Chair have not had the heaviest workload thus far, but the arrangement has recognised the more general workload linked to their roles. Currently, taking account of the authority's departmental structure, the other Members of the Committee lead on other issues as follows:-

Chief Executive's Office Provost J Fletcher Councillor A Ireland Corporate and Community Councillor J McLean Service Department Councillor J Swift Councillor C Gilbert Environment Department Councillor A Ireland Health and Social Care Provost J Fletcher Partnership Councillor C Gilbert **Education Department** Councillor C Gilbert Councillor A Ireland

The lead for reports relating to corporate responsibilities, which cut across more than one department and rest with a specific director, are dealt with by the member who deals with the department with which the corporate responsibility concerned lies.

- 8. A table prepared (see Appendix) summarises the number of reports dealt with thus far by each Member by department etc. and overall. As far as it has been possible to do so, such as by taking account of Audit Scotland's future work programme over the next few years, the approximate total number of reports each Member may expect to deal with between the local government elections in 2017 and 2022 has been estimated and reflected in the same table.
- 9. The table suggests that the workload of Councillors Ireland and Gilbert has been the greatest, with Councillors Swift and McLean having had one of the lowest. Taking account of the estimated number of reports that remain to be dealt with, in recognition of the workload that has fallen to Councillors Ireland and Gilbert thus far and following consultation with the Chair, it is proposed that Councillors Swift and McLean continue to lead on Corporate and Community Services issues but also take on responsibility for leading on any Education related matters that remain to be dealt with during the rest of the current Administration. It is also proposed that the Chair and Vice Chair take on the remit Councillors Ireland and Gilbert currently have for Environment Department issues. These arrangements would continue to be kept under review as considered necessary.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

10. It is recommended that the Committee considers balancing out more evenly the specialisation workload that is falling to each of its members as proposed.

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# NUMBER & TYPES OF REPORTS DEALT WITH, & APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF REPORTS TO BE DEALT WITH, BY MEMBERS UNDER THE COMMITTEE'S CURRENT SPECIALISATION ARRANGEMENTS FROM 2017 TO 2022

In each case, the number of reports dealt with thus far by each Member is provided. Below that, in each case, the approximate total number of reports expected to be dealt with between May 2017 and the next local authority elections, if the current arrangements remain in place and unchanged has also been provided.

	Reports with Council-Wide Focus	Chief Executive's Dept.	Corporate & Community Services Dept.	Environment Dept.	HSCP	Education Dept.	TOTAL FOR MEMBER
Cllr S Miller (Chair)	8 (Approx 20)						<b>8</b> (Approx 20)
Cllr B Grant (Vice-Chair)	8 (Approx 20)						8 (Approx 20)
Prov J Fletcher		6 (Approx 15)			<b>6</b> (Approx 15)		<b>12</b> (Approx 30)
Cllr C Gilbert				3 (Approx 10)	<b>6</b> (Approx 15)	<b>5</b> (Approx 15)	14 (Approx 40)
Clir A Ireland		6 (Approx 15)		3 (Approx 10)		<b>5</b> (Approx 15)	14 (Approx 40)
Clir J McLean			<b>5</b> (Approx 15)				<b>5</b> (Approx 15)
CIIr J Swift			5 (Approx 15)				<b>5</b> (Approx 15)

