

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL**AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****11 August 2022****Report by Clerk****CLARIFICATION RECEIVED ON QUERIES RAISED AT PREVIOUS MEETING****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To summarise the clarification received and circulated on queries raised at the meeting of the committee held on 23 June.

RECOMMENDATION

2. It is recommended that the committee notes the position.

REPORT

3. In June, the committee endorsed the final observations and recommendations made by the committee in April 2022 arising from its self-evaluation, agreeing to implement recommendations made as appropriate.

4. One of the self-evaluation observations made was that when queries on reports are raised at meetings, it is not always possible for answers to be provided at the meeting itself. Although the provision of clarification or assurances subsequently was considered acceptable, it was agreed, in the interests of transparency, that the Clerk should submit a summary of clarification received and circulated to the next meeting.

5. A related observation endorsed by the committee in June was that it is useful, where possible, for Members to alert the Clerk or Chair in advance to issues they wish to raise at meetings. This is with a view to helping to ensure that answers can be requested, prepared and made available to the committee where possible at its meetings, also in the interests of transparency. Members of the committee are therefore encouraged to alert the Clerk or Chair to issues in advance to the extent possible.

6. The clarification provided on queries raised at the meeting on 23 June, which has already been circulated through correspondence, is itemised in Appendix 1 to this report.

RECOMMENDATION

7. It is recommended that the committee notes the position.

Local Government Access to Information Act 1985

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Background Papers:-

1. Audit and Scrutiny Committee Agenda – 23 June 2022 (Items 5 and 6)

CLARIFICATION SOUGHT AND CIRCULATED FOLLOWING MEETING ON 23 JUNE 2022

DATE OF MEETING AND ITEM	ITEM AND ISSUE(S) RAISED	CLARIFICATION
23 June (Item 5)	<p><u>UNAUDITED ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2021/22</u></p> <p>It was agreed that the Clerk seek clarification on when the Climate Community Partnership would be convened.</p>	<p>It has been confirmed that this will be commencing as soon as possible, now that the Elections are over; and that the Get to Zero Manager and Climate Change Officer have been asked to proceed with work on this.</p>
23 June (Item 6)	<p><u>CONSULTANCY EXPENDITURE AND RELATED LOG</u></p> <p>It was agreed that the Clerk seek confirmation on whether or not:-</p> <p>(a) the active travel measures referred to in the Consultancy Log would ultimately be funded by Sustrans; and</p> <p>(b) the costs of the independent assessment of proposed building costs in relation to Caldwell House related to a live planning application and, if so, if the applicant, rather than the Council, should ultimately meet the costs.</p>	<p>(a) All the active travel measures referred to in the Log were funded by Sustrans, apart from the project at Row 47 (A77 Cycle Lane: Phase 2: M77 Bridge to Hunter's Roundabout: Design & Tender Preparation), which was funded by SPT; and</p> <p>(b) A Major planning application has been received by the Council for determination. Major applications can be complex to deal with and, as the Council is a small one, it does not employ specialist staff to assist it in relation to a wide range of issues such as trees, ecology, noise from wind turbines, archaeology and financial assessments to name a few. As such, the Council procures specialists to assist as and when necessary. The applicant pays a fairly significant planning fee to have a Major planning application determined and, if specialist advice is needed, that is paid for out of the planning fee.</p>

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