

REPORT TO: TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD – 24 AUGUST 2020

REPORT ON: RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT ON THE 2019/2020 AUDIT.

REPORT BY: TREASURER

REPORT NO: TVJB 16-2020

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is a response to the report prepared by the Board's External Auditor on the audit of Tayside Valuation Joint Board for the year ended 31 March 2020. A copy of the External Auditor's report and the Board's Audited Statement of Accounts are included on the agenda as separate items.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Board:-

- i endorses this report as the formal response to the External Auditor's report;
- ii notes that the External Auditor's findings and conclusions are favourable;

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

4 MAIN TEXT

Introduction

- 4.1 The external audit of the Board for the financial year 2019/2020 was carried out by Mr Bruce Crosbie, Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland. The Joint Board's External Auditors are normally appointed for a five year period and the financial year 2019/2020 marked the fourth year of Audit Scotland's appointment. However, as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic, the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission for Scotland announced their intention to extend the current audit appointments by one year, and it is therefore anticipated that the final year of Audit Scotland's appointment will be the 2021/22 financial year.

External Auditor's Report

- 4.2 The External Auditor's report outlines his main responsibilities as auditor and describes the scope of audit work undertaken during 2019/2020, and the issues arising from that work.
- 4.3 In addition to the Members of the Board, the External Auditor's Report is addressed to the Controller of Audit at the Accounts Commission for Scotland. Given this wider audience, and the extent of the External Auditor's responsibilities and scope of work, his report is by necessity both fulsome and extensive.

A copy of the report is included on the agenda as a separate item. Accordingly, it is not the intention of this report to provide a detailed response or commentary on all of the External Auditor's findings.

Conclusions

- 4.4 During 2019/2020, the External Auditor examined a number of areas covering a wide range of the Joint Board's activities. It is pleasing to note that the auditor's overall findings and conclusions are satisfactory. In particular, the Joint Board should note the following:
- an unqualified audit opinion will be issued on the truth and fairness of the Joint Board's affairs as at 31st March 2020
 - despite the COVID 19 pandemic, the unaudited financial statements were submitted for audit within the statutory requirements and the agreed audit timetable
 - good quality supporting documentation was made available in electronic format to support the unaudited financial statements
 - the Board's corporate governance arrangements provide a sound framework for organisational decision-making
 - the Joint Board is open and transparent in the way it conducts business
 - The Joint Boards financial position is sustainable in the short to medium term. However, without medium/long term financial scenario planning, it is difficult to assess whether future demand and reductions to funding to councils, will place a strain on the Joint Board's capacity to deliver services at current levels.

5 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues identified.

6 **CONSULTATIONS**

The Assessor and Clerk to the Joint Board have been consulted on the content of this report.

7 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

GREGORY COLGAN
TREASURER

20 AUGUST 2020