

REPORT TO: TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD – 30 AUGUST 2021

REPORT ON: RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT ON THE 2020/2021 AUDIT.

REPORT BY: TREASURER

REPORT NO: TVJB 20-2021

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 2021. 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 2020/21 was carried out by Mr Richard Smith, Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland. The Joint Board's External Auditors are normally appointed for a five year period and the financial year 2020/21 marked the fifth year of Audit Scotland's appointment.

However, in October 2020 Audit Scotland approved the extension of current audit appointments for a year to include the 2021/22 audit year. This decision reflects the need for stability and continuity given the longer-term impact of Covid-19 on audited bodies and the difficulty of running the necessary audit procurement exercise during the pandemic.

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 2020/2021, 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 2020/2021, 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 2021
- despite the ongoing 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

ROBERT EMMOTT
TREASURER

23 AUGUST 2021