



Glasgow City Council

Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee

**Report by: Divisional Director NRS Property & Major Projects and
Head of Service for Sustainability**

Contact: David McEwan/Gavin Slater

**FINANCE AND AUDIT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT
ASSESSMENT OF COMMITTEE EFFECTIVENESS**

Purpose of Report

To advise members of the main findings from the recent independent assessment of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, undertaken as required by the Council's Standing Orders.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- 1) Note the content of the report
- 2) Agree to the implementation of the action plan, to be led by the Executive Director of Financial Services in conjunction with the Chair and Vice Chair; and
- 3) Refer the report for inclusion in the consolidated report to Operational Performance and Delivery Scrutiny Committee

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ☐

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐

consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Standing Order 31 requires that an annual assessment of the work of each Scrutiny Committee shall be carried out to assess the effectiveness of the working of the committee and to assess any training needs of members and officers. The assessment will be carried out by the relevant Convener in years 1 and 2 and an independent assessment will be carried out in year 3 and every third year thereafter.
- 1.2 This report provides a summary of the year 3 independent assessment of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee (FASC) which was undertaken by the Divisional Director of NRS for Property, City Deal & Major Projects and the Head of Sustainability for NRS.
- 1.3 The FASC has representation from all parties on the Council and the Chair and Vice Chair are both members of the Scottish Labour Party.
- 1.4 The Committee meets every four weeks (outwith recess). The current Convener was appointed by the Council in November 2025 and has been in post for all meetings since that time.
- 1.5 The Terms of Reference for the Committee were approved in May 2022 and are available [here](#). In summary, the remit of the Committee is:

The Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee is responsible for: monitoring the financial performance of the Council, its Trading Operations and ALEOs; money allocated to it by the Glasgow City Integration Joint Board; the performance of audit and inspection within the Council; and for promoting the observance by Councillors of high standards of conduct.

- 1.6 As part of this review, interviews were conducted with the Lead Reporting Officers for the Committee, Morag Johnston, Director of Financial & Business Services, and Jillian Campbell, Head of Audit & Inspections. The chair and vice-chair of the committee – Cllr O'Lone and Cllr Turner respectively – were also consulted during the review. The senior lead officer for this committee is Robert Emmott. A number of Committee meetings were also viewed either in person or through viewing the recording. Members are welcome at any time to raise suggestions with the officers that support the committee or directly with the Convener.

2. Summary of Findings

- 2.1 Generally, the Committee is operating effectively with no major areas of concern identified. Workplans and agendas are agreed in advance and agendas are well managed by Financial Services officers.
- 2.2 The Convener is clear on their role and demonstrates a strong understanding of the papers that are presented at Committee and manages the questions from other Members effectively ensuring that everyone gets a chance to ask questions.
- 2.3 The Committee reflects the political make-up of the Council and is chaired by a Member who is not part of the administration. The Committee continues to meet in a hybrid

format, allowing Committee Members, officers, and observers, to attend virtually online or in person. Generally, this approach is working well, enabling a broadly high level of attendance by Committee Members. It was previously noted by the Committee that “in-person” attendance is preferable where possible and it is also noted that the level of “in-person” attendance could be improved. As an example, at one recent meeting of the committee, only one member was in the room out-with the Chair and Vice-Chair.

- 2.4 Meetings are recorded and webcast, enabling access to the Committee’s business by members of the public and other stakeholders in accordance with Open Government commitments.
- 2.5 The workplan is agreed by the committee annually but additional papers can be added at the request of the committee. The most frequent reports relate to financial monitoring and audit reports. The Committee therefore agreed to generally focus each meeting alternatively between these two areas, whilst allowing for flexibility to prioritise more urgent business.
- 2.6 There is a well-established pre-agenda process for the Committee. Papers are prepared in advance by officers and are submitted within appropriate timescales with late papers being an infrequent exception.
- 2.7 Officer support and attendance at Committee is strong. It is also worth noting that “in-person” attendance is encouraged wherever possible.
- 2.8 No significant issues were identified with the quality of papers being brought to the Committee, and where questions are unable to be answered by officers at Committee, there is a Question and Answer (Q&A) paper included on the agenda for the next meeting.
- 2.9 It was noted, however, that consideration may be given to the Q&A paper being moved to be the last item on the agenda rather than the first item. It has been noted that the Q&A paper being considered first can divert members attention away from the core agenda papers to consider matters that have already been discussed at a previous committee.
- 2.10 Committee papers were found to be of a high standard as was the standard of presentation of the papers by officers.
- 2.11 It was noted by reporting officers, however, that the level of detailed scrutiny by members in the form of questions could be improved. Training on scrutiny was organised to take place in March 2026, however, only four members of the committee attended the training. The Chair has requested that another training session is organised as soon after summer recess as possible and a request made that the Business Bureau make this training mandatory for members of the committee.
- 2.12 A review of the work coming through the Committee over the past 12 months compared to the Terms of Reference confirmed that the Committee has broadly met its requirements.

3. Action Plan

- 3.1 An action plan is included below, detailing areas where improvements could be made to the current arrangements for the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee.

Action Plan

No.	Observation	Recommendation
1	Whilst attendance at committee using hybrid arrangements is good, “in person” attendance at committee meetings was low.	In person attendance at the meetings should be encouraged wherever possible. Engagement with officers and presenters can be more effective when conducted “in person” and any challenges associated with IT connectivity (such as poor audio quality, intermittent connection issues, etc) can be avoided.
2	The level of relevant questioning of officers by members could be improved.	Additional training by relevant officers and agencies on how to undertake appropriate scrutiny should be undertaken, this – in turn – should lead to improved levels of governance and scrutiny of officer’s papers and presentations.
3	Similar to the above, at times it has been observed that some questions are not related or pertinent to the content of the papers or presentations.	Training on how to scrutinise papers appropriately will address this, however, the chair should also be alert to questions that are unrelated to the papers and whilst exercising latitude, should ensure that questioning remains largely relevant to the content of the papers.
4	Consideration of the Q&A paper that forms part of the papers (where questions that could not be answered at the previous committee are responded to), has been observed as diverting attention away from the core agenda items.	Rather than having the Q&A paper as the first item on the agenda, the recommendation would be to have it as the last item on the agenda. In so doing, the business of the day can be given the appropriate focus, in favour of discussion on matters that have already been considered at previous committee meetings.

7. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: None arising from this report

Legal: None arising from this report

Personnel: None arising from this report

Procurement: None arising from this report

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify. Not applicable

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report? Not applicable

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage. Not applicable

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify: Not applicable

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal? Not applicable

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target? Not applicable

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts: None arising from this report

8. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

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