

AUDIT COMMITTEE

AGENDA

10th Meeting, 2001 (Session 1)

Tuesday 26th June 2001

The Committee will meet at 2.00 pm in Committee Room 1, Committee Chambers to consider the following agenda items:

1. **Committee Business:** The Committee will consider whether to take agenda item 4 in private.
2. **Youth Justice in Scotland:** The Committee will receive a briefing from the Auditor General for Scotland on his report entitled 'Youth Justice in Scotland (AGS/2001/5)'.
3. **Work Programme:** The Committee will consider the Auditor General for Scotland's draft programme of reports for 2001/02.
4. **National Health Service Bodies in Tayside:** The Committee will consider a draft report on its inquiry into National Health Service Bodies in Tayside.

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The papers for this meeting are as follows

Agenda item 2

Report from the Auditor General for Scotland entitled
'Youth Justice in Scotland'.

AGS/2001/5

Audit Scotland Briefing Paper.

AU/01/10/1

Agenda item 3

Paper on the Auditor General for Scotland's draft
programme of reports for 2001/02.

AU/01/10/2

Agenda Item 4

Draft Committee Report entitled 'National Health Service
Bodies in Tayside'.

PRIVATE PAPER

AUDIT COMMITTEE 26th June 2001**Youth justice in Scotland – A baseline report**
Briefing paper from the Auditor General

The report presents the results of an initial review of what is known about children and young people who offend, their offences and how their behaviour is dealt with in Scotland. It covers the ages 8-21.

The report sets out proposals for a baseline performance audit of youth justice in Scotland, designed to review the extent to which youth justice services meet accepted good practice and to make recommendations as to how these services may be improved.

Because of the importance and complexity of this subject, it was decided to publish the proposals for further audit work and seek comments. Scottish Ministers have expressed support for this work.

The consultation period runs until the end of August 2001. Work is continuing and comments from the consultation will be incorporated as appropriate. The report of the audit findings is expected to be published towards the end of 2002.

This work is the first example of a cross cutting study, jointly commissioned by the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission. The Audit Committee agreed to its inclusion in the programme of work for the Auditor General at its meeting on the 13th June 2000.

The report has been sent to the conveners of the Justice Committees, the Education and Lifelong learning Committee and the Local Government Committee for their interest.

A full briefing on the content of the report will be offered to the Audit Committee at its meeting on the 26th June.

Audit Committee, 26 June 2001

Proposals by the Auditor General for the Audit Committee programme September/December 2001

In this report I describe the work in progress which the Committee may wish to consider in the period from September to December of this year.

1. *Further Education*

This summer we will be publishing two reports relating to further education in Scotland and I would suggest that the Committee might like to take these together after the recess.

Moray College

This report, which will contain the results of my examination of the financial management and governance of Moray College, will be published on 28th June. It will raise important issues relating to accountability for the further education college sector as a whole.

Further Education Overview

This will be my first overview report on the results of audits of further education colleges across Scotland. The report will include comments on the financial health of colleges.

2. *NHS*

There are four reports lined up on the NHS in Scotland. Two of these will in effect be “baseline reports” which advise the Committee of the early stages of performance audits. These will prepare the way for detailed reports at a later stage when it would be appropriate for the Committee to consider whether it wishes to take evidence and make its own report.

Outpatient services

Scheduled to be published in the autumn, this will be a bulletin which will highlight the limited management information available on outpatient services. A self assessment handbook will also be published at the same time, and an audit will take place over the coming year. This is a form of baseline report and the Committee is invited to wait for the follow up report before considering the issue in detail.

NHS supplies

This baseline report, due in September, will look at issues surrounding the procurement and management of supplies in the NHS. This topic will be the subject of a full performance audit report within two years, when the Committee may decide whether to take evidence.

GP prescribing

Our intention with this work was to produce a detailed follow up study to a report (published by the Accounts Commission in September 1999) which would look at performance. The data we need to carry out this study is due to be provided by the Common services Agency, but unfortunately it will not be available for some time. We have decided therefore to produce an interim report covering how issues such as IT, repeat prescribing, models of support, training, medicines management and how unified funding streams are being progressed. The part of the work on performance indicators will not now be produced until May 2002 at the earliest.

NHS Overview

This will be the second overview of the NHS, based upon local audit reports for the financial year 2000/2001. It will report on the major issues arising from the local audits of individual NHS bodies and highlight some of the key trends and issues affecting the NHS in Scotland. I would expect that this NHS overview will be produced by the end of this year, and that once again it will contain issues that the Committee might wish to examine more closely.

3. Audit Review

As you know, these are examinations that I am asked to do at short notice, such as the examination of the Holyrood project. We have one such review in the pipeline at present.

The new trunk roads contracts

This study was at an advanced stage when court action by one of the bidders caused us to take legal advice on the publishing of this report. As members of the Committee will know, the Transport and Environment Committee has agreed to postpone its separate investigation into this subject. In light of the legal issues I have postponed for the moment publication of my report.

4. Strategy and Longer Term Priorities

Work is in hand to prepare a draft strategy for Audit Scotland, which will be presented to the Committee for its consideration and comment in the autumn. We are also working on a longer term programme of performance audits and the Committee will be invited to consider these after the recess.

Robert W Black
Auditor General for Scotland