

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar, on Tuesday 8 March 2016 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors BRIAN BOYD, BILL BOWLES, LYNNE DEVINE, BILL DUFF, CRAIG FOTHERINGHAM, JEANETTE GAUL, JIM HOUSTON, IAN MCLAREN, ROB MURRAY, BOB MYLES, RONNIE PROCTOR MBE and MARK SALMOND.

Councillor BOYD, Vice-Convener, in the Chair.

Prior to the commencement of business, the Vice-Convener, on behalf of the Committee, extended best wishes to Councillor Bob Spink, Convener, who was unable to attend due to illness.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Bob Spink.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Bill Duff declared an interest in Items 7 and 10 as he was a Council appointed Director of Angus Alive. He indicated that he would participate in any discussion and voting.

Councillor Jeanette Gaul declared an interest in Item 7 as she was a Council appointed Director of Angus Alive. She indicated that she would participate in any discussion and voting.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 26 January 2016 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

4. PETITION – SAVE OUR SHELTERED HOUSING

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 11 February 2016, a short-term Member Officer Group had met on 23 February 2016 and 1 March 2016.

The Committee were advised that the findings of the Member Officer Group would be presented to Angus Council in due course. Once the review was completed and a decision taken, Report No 32/16, Petition – Save Our Sheltered Housing, previously deferred at the meeting of this Committee on 26 January 2016, would thereafter require to be considered.

5. FIRE AND RESCUE QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 OCTOBER 2015 TO 31 DECEMBER 2015

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 24 November 2015, there was submitted Report No 102/16 by Colin Grieve, Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, containing performance information relating to the third quarter (October to December) of 2015-2016 on the performance of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in support of member scrutiny of local service delivery.

Attached at Appendices 1 and 2 to the Report was the detailed breakdown and analysis of all the data collected during the reporting period along with the performance summary for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 December 2015.

Colin Grieve, Local Senior Officer, highlighted a number of performance results.

Following discussion, where questions were answered, the Committee agreed to note the performance of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service against the priorities, performance indicators and targets detailed within the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Angus 2014-2017.

6. ANGUS LOCAL POLICING AREA PERFORMANCE RESULTS FOR THE PERIOD 1 OCTOBER 2015 TO 31 DECEMBER 2015

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 24 November 2015, there was submitted Report No 103/16 by Chief Superintendent Eddie Smith, which updated the Committee on the performance results for the period 1 October to 31 December 2015.

Attached as Appendix A to the Report were performance indicators that had been sub-divided into priorities as detailed within the Report which were the local policing priorities as identified in the three year Local Policing Plan:-

- Serious and Organised Crime
- Public Protection and Safety
- Road Safety
- Antisocial Behaviour
- Theft and Scams

Superintendent Graeme Murdoch provided an overview of the Report.

Having heard the responses from Superintendent Graeme Murdoch to various queries from members, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

7. INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITY UPDATE

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 26 January 2016, there was submitted Report No 104/16 by the Service Manager – Governance and Consultancy, providing the Audit Manager's update on the main findings of Internal Audit Reports issued since the date of the last meeting.

Four Internal Audit Reports had been issued since the last meeting, these being:-

- Complaints Management
- Business Continuity Planning
- Use of Tayside Contracts
- IT Application Strategy

The Report presented the progress of internal audit activity within the Council up to the end of February 2016 and also provided an update on progress with the 2015/2016 Internal Audit Plan, and the implementation of internal audit recommendations.

Having heard from some members, and also the Chief Executive in relation to the outstanding internal audit recommendations by Directorate, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the progress with the 2015/2016 Internal Audit Plan;
- (ii) to note management's progress in implementing internal audit recommendations;
- (iii) to request that the Chief Executive instruct the Service Manager – Governance and Consultancy review the outstanding recommendations contained in Table 2 of the Report; and report back to the next Committee on progress in resolving these recommendations; and
- (iv) that an update report in respect of the Equalities Audit be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee.

8. SCRUTINY PANEL REVIEWS - UPDATE

With reference to Articles 9 and 10 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 23 June 2015, there was submitted Report No 105/16 by the Service Manager – Governance and Consultancy, presenting an update on the Scrutiny Panel Reviews and also the report of the first of the current year Scrutiny Mini Reviews for agreement.

The Report indicated that the Mini Review Scrutiny Panel had agreed that the first review would look at economic development and the links with planning. Following a scrutiny rapid improvement event in November 2015, a short life Officer Working Group had met and developed an action plan to take forward the issues identified. The action plan had been agreed by the Mini Review Scrutiny Panel and was included in the review report attached as Appendix 1 to the Report.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the draft Report of the Economic Development/Planning Mini Review Panel;
- (ii) that the Report be placed before the Communities Committee and the Policy and Resources Committee in April;
- (iii) to approve the monitoring arrangements for the Report Action Plan; and
- (iv) to note that updates on the 2014/2015 and 2013/2014 scrutiny review Action Plan would be submitted to this Committee in April.

9. SICKNESS ABSENCE OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2015

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 26 January 2016, there was submitted Report No 106/16 by the Head of HR, IT and Organisational Development, advising of the level of sickness absence within the Council for the period 1 October to 31 December 2015.

The Report indicated that, during the period of reporting, employees had transferred to Angus Alive on 1 December 2015. The Report indicated that for all Council employees there had been an 8.9% increase in the percentage of working days lost, when compared with the previous quarter in July to September 2015. There was a 1.16% reduction in the percentage of working days lost when compared with the corresponding quarter in 2014/2015. Although local government employees' absence had fallen by 1.4%, teachers' absence had risen by 2%, compared to the corresponding quarter in 2014/2015.

Having heard from a number of members who raised concerns in relation to the level of sickness absence, and having heard from the Head of HR, IT and Organisational Development, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the Report; and
- (ii) to further consider a review of the information provided to seek to achieve greater clarity in statistical presentation through relevant comparisons.

10. EXTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 10 March 2015, there was submitted Report No 107/16 by the Head of Corporate Improvement and Finance, presenting the External Auditor's Annual Audit Plan for 2015/2016.

The Report summarised the key challenges and risks facing Angus Council and set out the audit work that was proposed to be undertaken in 2015/2016. This was the final year of the five year audit appointment and the Assistant Auditor General was currently concluding a procurement process for the appointment of public sector auditors for the next five year cycle. Details of the Council's new External Auditor would be advised in the Spring.

Stephen Boyle, Assistant Director, Audit Scotland highlighted the various aspects of the Report.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the External Audit Annual Audit Plan.

11. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Committee resolved, in terms of Standing Order 28(2) that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item, so as to avoid the possible disclosure of information which was exempt in terms of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, paragraph 14.

12. POLICE AND FIRE REFORM: LOCAL SCRUTINY AND ENGAGEMENT: OPERATIONAL REPORT

Members were provided with updates in relation to the divisional/local and national perspectives by Superintendent Graeme Murdoch, Police Scotland and Iain Whyte, Board Member, Scottish Police Authority.

The Committee noted the information provided.