

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar, on Tuesday 29 September 2015 at 11.00am.

Present: Councillors BRIAN BOYD, LYNNE DEVINE, BILL DUFF, CRAIG FOTHERINGHAM, JIM HOUSTON, IAN MCLAREN, ROB MURRAY, BOB MYLES, MARTYN GEDDES and MARK SALMOND.

Councillor BOYD, Vice-Convener, in the Chair.

1. **APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Bob Spink, Bill Bowles, Jeanette Gaul and Ronnie Proctor MBE with Councillor Martyn Geddes substituting for Councillor Proctor.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Committee agreed to note that no declarations of interest were made.

3. **MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 25 August 2015 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

4. **DIRECTORATE ANNUAL REPORTS 2014/15**

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 30 September 2014, there was submitted Report No 384/15 by the Chief Executive advising of the production of the 2014/15 Directorate Annual Reports.

The Report indicated that as an integral part of the Council's performance management arrangements, each Directorate prepared an Annual Report for the previous year reporting to their service committee in the first cycle after recess. The Report was designed to give members, employees and the public an update on performance within Directorates during the previous financial year.

The Committee then heard from the Strategic Directors for People, Resources and Communities in relation to their Annual Report.

Having heard from a number of members, the Committee, for its interest, agreed to note the contents of the Report.

5. **MANAGING CONFIDENTIAL AGENDA PAPERS – ACTION PLAN**

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 18 June 2015, there was submitted Joint Report No 385/15 by the Chief Executive and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, providing members with the Report prepared by Audit Scotland on the Council's arrangements for the management of confidential or "green papers".

The Report indicated that concerns had arisen from the unauthorised release of agenda papers protected under the terms of Part 1 Schedule 7A to the 1973 Local Government Act.

In addition to an internal review of procedures and circumstances, Audit Scotland had undertaken a review of the Council's procedures. The Audit Scotland Report was appended as Appendix I to the Report.

The Audit Scotland Report made a small number of recommendations. The action plan as appended to the Audit Scotland Report set out each of these recommendations and showed the proposed or implemented actions.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services confirmed that some of the action points had now been completed. She intimated that a training session had recently been delivered to elected members however, as some members had been unable to attend the session, a second training session would be delivered in January 2016.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Audit Scotland Report and Action Plan; and
- (ii) to approve the proposed actions set out in the Action Plan.

6. ANGUS COUNCIL CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2014 - 2015

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of the Social Work and Health Committee of 8 January 2009, there was submitted Report No 386/15 by the Head of Children and Young People Services, Chief Social Work Officer, presenting to members the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) Annual Report for 2014/2015.

The Report indicated that the overall objective of the Chief Social Work Officer's post was to ensure the provision of effective, professional advice to local authorities, including elected members and officers, in the authority's provision of statutory social work duties and to provide professional governance and leadership in the delivery of social work and social care services.

The role would be increasingly important in the context of the impending integration of health and social care. As the Angus Health and Social Care Partnership would be a distinct legal body there would be no capacity for Angus Council to independently sanction or veto decisions made by the Partnership, yet the Council would be reliant on the new Partnership for the fulfilment of its statutory duties for which the Council would remain ultimately accountable. The Chief Social Work Officers Care and professional governance role would become more and more important as the partnership arrangements in Angus developed.

This was the first Annual Report to be submitted to members following revised national guidelines issued in 2014. The Report provided details for members as to how the Chief Social Work Officer for Angus Council discharged the specific statutory elements of the role and also outlined the important contribution social work services made to the wellbeing and safety of the people of Angus. It also detailed key developments across the range of services and highlighted challenges for the year ahead, which were outlined in Section 4 of the Report.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Angus Council Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report for 2014/2015, as appended at Appendix 1 to the Report, and
- (ii) to commend the Angus Council Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report for 2014/15 to Angus Council for their respective consideration.

7. INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITY UPDATE

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 25 August 2015, there was submitted Report No 387/15 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.

The Report provided an update in relation to the 2015/16 Internal Audit Plan, the follow-up Audit in respect of Transforming Angus and the Internal Audit Charter.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the update on progress with the 2015/16 Internal Audit Plan; and
- (ii) to approve the Internal Audit Charter.

8. SICKNESS ABSENCE APRIL TO JUNE 2015

With reference to Article 11 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 23 June 2015, there was submitted Report No 388/15 by the Head of HR, IT and Organisational Development, advising of the level of sickness absence within the Council for the period 1 April to 30 June 2015.

The Report indicated that for all Council employees there had been a 17.9% reduction in the percentage of working days lost, when compared with the previous quarter in January to March 2015. There was a 4.1% increase in the percentage of working days lost, when compared with the corresponding quarter in 2014/2015. The increase was a result of both teachers and local Government employees' absence increasing by 10.9% and 2.7% respectively, compared with the corresponding quarter in 2014/15.

The Committee agreed to note the terms of the Report.

9. ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN AND SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2013/2016 – 2014/2015 FULL YEAR HIGHLIGHT REPORT

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 27 January 2015, there was submitted Report No 389/15 by the Head of Planning and Place, presenting the 2014/15 Full Year Highlight Report on the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013/16.

The Report indicated that the final Full Year Progress Reports for each of the five thematic priorities had been produced and had been used to compile the highlight report.

A selection of indicators were included in the Report, where performances had either exceeded, or failed to meet target. Overall the performance of the Angus Community Planning Partnership had been relatively positive with 61% of the indicators meeting or exceeding target.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the 2014/15 Full Year Highlight Report for the Angus Community Planning and Single Outcome Agreement 2013/16, as appended to the Report;
- (ii) to note that the Report had been submitted to the Angus Community Planning Partnership Board on 23 September 2015; and
- (iii) that the Report be submitted to the Scottish Government by the end of September 2015.

10. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT – 2014/15

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 11 September 2014, there was submitted Report No 390/15 by the Head of Corporate Improvement and Finance, presenting Angus Council's Annual Report on Treasury Management activities in 2014/15.

The Report indicated that as a result of sound treasury management activity, the Council had met all its financial obligations and cash flow requirements throughout the financial year without encountering any liquidity problems. A higher than budgeted return on investments had been delivered in compliance with the Treasury Management policies and strategies.

The Committee agreed to note the 2014/15 Treasury Management Annual Report, as appended to the Report

11. ANGUS COUNCIL ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2014/15 AND ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT TO MEMBERS

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 25 August 2015, there was submitted Joint Report No 391/15 by the Chief Executive, Strategic Director – Resources and the Head of Corporate Improvement and Finance, providing Audit Scotland's Annual Audit Report to Members on the 2014/15 Audit of Angus Council, Strang's Mortification

and Angus Council Charitable Trust; and also the 2014/15 Audited Annual Accounts of Angus Council.

The Report indicated that Audit Scotland's Annual Audit Report to Members was a positive one and had recognised the progress made by the Council on a number of fronts and the Council's compliance with relevant accounting and governance standards. Although there were no major areas of concern, the Report highlighted some significant risks that would need to be managed by the Council including those associated with the funding environment which was subject to sustained pressure to deliver more with less.

Two actions were highlighted which were currently being worked on, and were addressed and outlined in the action plan, which was appended to the Report.

The Council's unaudited Annual Accounts for financial year 2014/15 had been submitted to the Controller of Audit for audit by the Council's appointed external auditors. The statements had been prepared in accordance with the Local Authority's Accounting Code of Practice. The audit would be completed with the issue of an unqualified audit opinion on the 29 September 2015, subject to this Committee approving the accounts for signature.

Having heard the Service Manager, Finance highlight a number of points, and having also heard from Stephen Boyle, Audit Scotland in relation to the Angus Council 2014/15 Audit, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of Audit Scotland's Annual Audit Report to Members, attached as Appendices 1A and 1B to the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the 2014/15 Audit Annual Accounts of Angus Council for signature in accordance with the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014, attached as Appendix 2 to the Report.

12. SCRUTINY REVIEWS

The Services Manager – Governance and Consultancy provided members with a brief update and overview in relation to the scrutiny panel reviews. The Customer Care review panel was progressing well and the scope had been agreed. The next panel meeting would take place on 6 October 2015.

In relation to the Economic Development (links to Planning) mini review, Councillor Brian Boyd would chair the mini review and that the next review panel meeting had been arranged for 26 November 2015.