

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar, on Tuesday 22 August 2017 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors ALEX KING, BILL DUFF, JULIE BELL, BRIAN BOYD, SHEILA HANDS, LYNNE DEVINE, RICHARD MOORE, ANGUS MACMILLAN DOUGLAS OBE, MARK MCDONALD, IAN MCLAREN, MARK SALMOND and BETH WHITESIDE.

Councillor KING, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Kenny Braes, Colin Brown and Ben Lawrie with Councillors Sheila Hands and Richard Moore substituting for Councillors Braes and Lawrie.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 22 June 2017 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

4. SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL TO 30 JUNE 2017

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 22 June 2017, there was submitted Report No 274/17 by Colin Grieve, Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, containing performance information relating to the first quarter (April to June) of 2017/18 on the performance of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in support of member scrutiny of local service delivery.

Attached as Appendices 1 and 2 to the Report was the detailed breakdown and analysis of all data collected during the reporting period along with the performance summary for the period 1 April 2017 to 30 June 2017.

Roy Dunsire, Group Manager provided an overview and highlighted a number of key performance results.

Councillor Hands raised her concern that she had received several complaints in relation to the provision and installation of smoke alarms for those with a hearing impairment.

In response, Roy Dunsire, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, provided an update and highlighted the difficulties faced in obtaining funding to enable and sustain the provision of smoke alarms for those with a hearing impairment. He also confirmed that he would arrange for a fire representative to attend and provide an update to the next meeting of Strathmartine Community Council.

Alan McKeown, Strategic Director – Place, advised that he would undertake to review the issues raised in regards to the service provision of smoke alarms for those with a hearing impairment to Angus Council tenants.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) 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 2014-17;
- (ii) to request that a Scottish Fire and Rescue Service representative attend the next Strathmartine Community Council meeting to provide an update in relation to the provision of smoke alarms for those with a hearing impairment; and
- (iii) that the Strategic Director – Place would undertake to review the issues raised in regards to the service provision of smoke alarms for those with a hearing impairment to Angus Council tenants.

5. ANGUS LOCAL POLICING AREA PERFORMANCE RESULTS FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL TO 30 JUNE 2017

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 22 June 2017, there was submitted Report No 275/17 by Chief Superintendent Paul Anderson, which updated the Committee on the performance results for the period 1 April 2017 to 30 June 2017.

Attached as Appendix A to the Report were the performance indicators that had been subdivided into the following priorities within the Report which were the Local Policing Priorities as identified in the three year Local Policing Plan:-

- Putting victims at the heart of what we do
- Tackling crime and anti social behaviour
- Protecting Vulnerable People
- Maintaining Public Safety

Chief Inspector David McIntosh accompanied by Superintendent Suzie Mertz highlighted a number of key areas and provided a detailed overview of the Report.

Councillor Bell highlighted that she had attended a briefing in relation to the Safe Together Model which she found interesting and informative and recommended that consideration be given to provide a similar presentation to all elected members.

Following discussion and having heard from a number of members, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) that Chief Inspector David McIntosh, Police Scotland should liaise in the first instance with the Chief Executive, Angus Council, to make the necessary arrangements, in relation to providing a presentation to elected members in respect of the Safe Together Model.

Following a question from the Convener, Chief Inspector McIntosh confirmed that there were no additional confidential matters to be reported as previously listed on the agenda. The Convener thereafter confirmed that Agenda Items 14 and 15 would no longer require to be considered by the Committee.

At this point, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Police Scotland representatives left the meeting.

6. STRATEGIC PROGRESS AND PERFORMANCE: REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2016 TO 31 MARCH 2017

There was submitted Report No 276/17 by the Chief Officer, Angus Health and Social Care Partnership providing information to members with regards to the progress of Angus Health and Social Care Partnership in delivering its Strategic Plan. The 2016/17 Strategic Progress and Performance Report had been approved by Angus Integration Joint Board on 28 June 2017.

The Report indicated that the Angus Integration Joint Board was fully established and had assumed delegated responsibility for services from 1 April 2016. The services which were delegated to the Integration Joint Board were set out in an Integration Scheme approved by the Scottish Government.

In Angus, services delegated by Angus Council which were identified in the Integration Scheme were all social work and social care services for adults except welfare benefits and criminal justice services.

In keeping with legislative requirements, services were delivered through four geographical localities, each of which had a multi-agency Local Improvement Group which supported the delivery of the Strategic Plan, influenced its content according to local demographics and assessed need, and oversaw change to operational delivery.

Section 42 of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 stated that Integration Authorities must prepare an annual performance report for each reporting year. Each Integration Authority was required to report on its performance against a set of prescribed national outcomes and indicators. A number of additional local indicators had been developed to show progress and performance in relation to the four Integration Joint Board strategic priorities.

Attached as Appendix 1 to the Report was the Angus Health and Social Care Partnership 2016/17 Strategic Progress and Performance Report.

Vicky Irons, Chief Officer, George Bowie, Head of Community Health and Care Services – South and Vivienne Davidson, Principal Planning Officer, Angus Health and Social Care Partnership provided an informative update in relation to a number of key areas of the Report.

Following discussion and having heard the responses to a number of questions raised by members, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

7. 2016/17 UNAUDITED ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 23 August 2016, there was submitted Report No 277/17 by the Head of Corporate Finance, outlining the Council's 2016/17 unaudited Annual Accounts and East of Scotland European Consortium (ESEC) 2016/17 unaudited Annual Accounts, which, as required by law had been submitted to the Controller of Audit for audit purposes.

The Report indicated that the annual accounts had been prepared by the Head of Corporate Finance and his team on a draft basis and submitted to the Controller of Audit for audit purposes in accordance with the statutory deadline of 30 June 2017.

Appendix 1 to the Report included a summary of the Council's financial performance for the year which was an extract from the management commentary within the accounts. The Report also noted that £33k of the £334k uncommitted General Fund balance at 31 March 2017 had subsequently been committed as a result of the financial implications of the deferral of the changes to recycling centres.

At the ESEC Board meeting of 20 March 2015, the Board were advised of the requirement for producing their Annual Accounts under the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014, which came into force on 10 October 2014. It was agreed at that meeting that due to the geographical spread of members and that the Board was made up of nominees from several different local authorities, to delegate the Board's responsibilities for scrutiny of the unaudited accounts to the host authority's Scrutiny and Audit Committee which performed the same function for the Angus Council accounts.

The ISA 260 Report for Angus Council would not be available until the audit work was complete. The findings from the audit work and ISA 260 Report for Angus Council would be incorporated into the Annual Report to Members this year as a result of change in legislation and this would be submitted to the Scrutiny and Audit Committee meeting on 26 September 2017. The Report would also be presented to Angus Council on 19 October 2017.

The ESEC audited accounts and associated Annual Report incorporating the ISA 260 Report would be presented to the ESEC Board at the end of October 2017 to fulfil its role in authorising the audited accounts for signature, thus concluding the ESEC Annual Accounts process for the year.

The Service Manager, Financial Services provided an overview and highlighted a number of points.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the Angus Council's 2016/17 unaudited Annual Accounts; and
- (iii) to note the East of Scotland European Consortium (ESEC) 2016/17 unaudited Annual Accounts.

8. INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITY UPDATE

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 22 June 2017, there was submitted Report No 278/17 by the Acting Service Manager – Governance and Consultancy, providing the Audit Manager's update of the main findings of the Internal Audit Report issued since the date of the last meeting.

The Report indicated that following the review of reporting in other internal audit services, some changes had been made to the layout of the Council's Internal Audit report to provide greater clarity in the presentation of findings to both management and the Committee. The review of reporting methods was undertaken as part of the Internal Audit team's Improvement Action Plan to ensure ongoing compliance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).

Two internal Audit Reports had been issued since the last Committee, these being:-

- 2016/17 – Integration Joint Board Financial Management
- 2017/18 – School funds Governance (Primary Schools)

The Report provided an update in relation to the progress of Internal Audit Activity in the Council up until the end of July 2017, the changes to the Report template, the final Report from the 2016/17 Internal Audit Plan, progress with the 2017/18 Internal Audit Plan and the progress with implementing internal audit recommendations.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the changes made to the Council's Internal Audit Report;
- (ii) to note the update on the completion of the 2016/17 Internal Audit Plan;
- (iii) to note the progress of the 2017/18 Internal Audit Plan; and
- (iv) to note management's progress in implementing internal audit recommendations.

9. SCRUTINY PANEL REVIEW - UPDATE

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 23 August 2017, there was submitted Report No 279/17 by the Acting Service Manager – Governance and Consultancy, presenting updates on the action plans from the previous years' Scrutiny Panel reviews, for review and challenge.

The Report provided an update on progress in addressing the recommendations of the following Scrutiny Reviews:-

- Customer Care (Report 255/16, June 2016)
- Economic Development & Links to Planning (Report 105/16, March 2016)
- Transforming Angus/Management Restructure (Report 257/15, June 2015)
- Improving Partnership Working (Report 257/15, June 2015)
- Roads Maintenance (Report 283/14, June 2014)
- Progress Towards Zero Waste (Report 283/14, June 2014)

Section 4 of the Report summarised the position as at 31 July 2017. Appendix 1 to the Report outlined the Scrutiny Panel Reviews Action Plan update.

The Committee agreed to note the updates on the outstanding Scrutiny Review recommendations.

10. NATIONAL FRAUD INITIATIVE – PROGRESS REPORT

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 23 August 2016, there was submitted Report No 280/17 by the Acting Service Manager – Governance and Consultancy updating members on the work of the 2016 National Fraud Initiative.

The Report indicated that the National Fraud Initiative was a major counter-fraud initiative which was undertaken every two years. Participation was compulsory for Scottish Local Authorities as part of their statutory audit. National Fraud Initiative worked by using data matching to compare a range of information held on participating bodies' systems to identify potential inconsistencies or circumstances that could indicate fraud or error.

The Angus Council datasets for the 2016 National Fraud Initiative exercise were submitted in October 2016 and the results of the data matching exercise were released in the first quarter of 2017. The Council received 97 reports with a total of 4,060 individual matches. 1,849 of those (45%) related to creditors. The overall approach to investigating the matches were agreed with the Head of Corporate Finance, focusing initially on those matches which NFI suggested should be prioritised for review and investigation.

Section 4 of the Report summarised the investigation progress as at 20 July 2017.

Participation in NFI was an integral part of the Council's corporate approach to the prevention and detection of fraud and error. Work continued to check the matches received and identify those that required further investigation. The final Angus Council outcomes for NFI 2016 would be submitted to this Committee in August 2018, together with Audit Scotland's national report.

The Committee agreed to note the progress in investigating the matches from the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) 2016 and external audit assessment of the Council's approach.

11. AUDIT SCOTLAND REPORT – EXTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS UPDATE

There was submitted Report No 281/17 by the Head of Corporate Finance presenting for the Committee's interest a short update on the progress with the 2016/17 External Audit which was relevant to the business of the Council and the role of this Committee.

The Report indicated that the terms of reference of the Committee involved consideration of relevant Reports published by Audit Scotland.

An update on the progress with the 2016/17 External Audit was appended to the Report.

Having heard from Rachel Browne, Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland, highlight the key areas, the Committee agreed to note the Audit Scotland Report – External Audit progress update as appended to the Report.

12. ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT – 1 APRIL 2016 – 31 MARCH 2017

With reference to Article 14 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 June 2016, there was submitted Report No 282/17 by the Chief Executive highlighting the complaint statistics and satisfaction for 2016/17 and updating members on the action being taken to ensure the effectiveness of the complaint handling procedure and to learn from complaints.

The Report indicated that since 1 April 2013, the Council had been operating the new complaints handling procedure for local authorities as required by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. During 2016/17, a total of 236 complaints were recorded as closed off during the year. Details of the analysis of key indicators for 2016/17 were outlined in Section 4 of the Report and a full copy of the indicators were attached as Appendix 1 to the Report.

Indicator 7 of the Performance Management framework required Councils to Report on customer satisfaction with the complaints process. To achieve this, satisfaction surveys were issued to all complainers within six weeks after the complaint had been closed off. During 2016/17, 11 completed questionnaires were returned and the results were outlined in Section 5 of the Report.

Each Directorate had been asked to identify and act on the key learning points from the complaints received about their service. Complaints, along with the key learning points and procedures/processes that had changed as a result of the complaints, were outlined in the attached Appendices to the Report.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the key performance indicators on complaints closed between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017; and
- (ii) to note the results of the satisfaction survey sent to everyone who had made a complaint which was closed during 2016/17.

13. COMPLAINT STATISTICS APRIL – JUNE 2017

With reference to Article 12 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 22 November 2016, there was submitted Report No 283/17 by the Chief Executive, highlighting the complaint statistics for 2017/18 and to update members on the action being taken to ensure the effectiveness of the complaints handling procedure and to learn from complaints.

The Report indicated that since 1 April 2013, the Council had been operating the new Complaints Handling Procedure for Local Authorities as required by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. During the first three months of 2017/18, a total of 79 complaints were recorded as closed off. The analysis of key indicators for 2017/18 were outlined in Section 4 of the Report. Complaints received during 1 April to 30 June 2017 were detailed in the Appendices to the Report.

The Report also highlighted a number of compliments that had been received during the period 1 April to 30 June 2017. Compliments were received in writing, via facebook/twitter and by telephone. Examples of compliments were outlined in Section 7 of the Report.

Councillor Moore raised a query in relation to the number of complaints received during the first quarter of 2017 and having heard from the Chief Executive, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the key performance indicators on complaints closed between 1 April 2017 and 30 June 2017;
- (ii) to review future reports to include data comparisons from previous quarters; and
- (iii) to note the learning from complaints identified by the Directorates.