

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar, on Tuesday 20 August 2019 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors ALEX KING, BILL DUFF, JULIE BELL, KENNY BRAES, COLIN BROWN, LYNNE DEVINE, BEN LAWRIE, 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 Brian Boyd and Bob Myles.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Bell declared a non-financial interest in Items 6, 11 and 12 (Report No's 260/19, 266/19 and 267/19) in that she was a member of Angus Health and Social Care Partnership, Angus Community Justice Partnership and Angus Alcohol and Drug Partnership, respectively. She indicated that she would participate in any discussion and voting on these items.

Councillor Brown declared a non-financial interest in Item 11 (Report No 266/19) in that he was a Council appointed Director of AngusAlive. He indicated that he would participate in any discussion and voting on this item.

Councillor Devine declared a non-financial interest in Items 10 and 11 (Report No's 265/19 and 266/19) in that she was a Council appointed Director of AngusAlive. She indicated that she would participate in any discussion and voting on these items.

Councillor Duff declared a non-financial interest in Items 7 and 10 (Report No's 262/19 and 265/19) in that he was a Council appointed Director of AngusAlive. He indicated that he would participate in any discussion and voting on these items.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 18 June 2019 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

4. SCRUTINY PANEL REVIEW UPDATE

Members noted that the Scrutiny Panel set up to examine the process undertaken to introduce parking charges, had concluded its interviews with senior officers and elected members. A report on the panel's findings was now being drafted, but would not be finalised in time for the August meeting of the Scrutiny and Audit Committee. The report would be submitted in September.

5. SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2019 TO 30 JUNE 2019

With reference to Article 6 (a) of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 18 June 2019, there was submitted Report No 260/19 by Gordon Pryde, Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, containing performance information relating to quarter one (April – June) of 2019 on the performance and activities in support of the priorities in the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Angus 2017 and the wider community planning priorities.

Attached as an Appendix to the Report was the detailed breakdown and analysis of all data collected during the reporting period which also included an overview of a range of community safety engagement events and partnership working. The Report also provided context to the performance of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in the Angus area against indicators and targets. Appendix 2 to the Report provided details of a notable event in relation to the Strathmartine Hospital Fire on 7 June 2019.

Gordon Pryde, Local Senior Officer, provided a brief summary of the 2018/19 quarter one activities.

Roy Dunsire, Group Manager, provided an overview of some of the performance highlights of the 12 headline indicators and targets, in particular highlighting ADF's, including Home Fire Safety Visits and the range of activities undertaken to support the targets, Non-domestic Building Fires, Road Traffic Incidents, Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals and Deliberate Primary and Secondary Fires. He also referred to the recent fire at Strathmartine Hospital site on 7 June 2019 and also the multi-agency site visit that took place on 25 June 2019.

In looking forward to quarter two, he confirmed that Forfar Fire Station would take delivery of two brand new Scania fire appliances, which would enhance and safeguard Forfar and the wider communities of Angus from a range of incidents and potential threats.

Councillor Whiteside referred to the ongoing issues at Strathmartine Hospital Site, in response the Group Manager provided an update. Thereafter, the Convener indicated that Committee members who had not previously been involved in a site visit may find the experience beneficial.

Councillor Devine thereafter referred to Priority 6 – Effective Risk Management and Operational Preparedness, in particular, developing flexibility to deploy crews, to take on a broadening role within the community and highlighted the opportunity and benefits of becoming more involved with the resilience group in rural areas. The Local Senior Officer indicated that they would consider this request further and look at how best to offer the support required. Councillor Devine also suggested that the Manager – Risk, Resilience and Safety make necessary arrangements to also liaise with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Services.

The Committee agreed to note the performance of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service as outlined in the Quarterly Monitoring Report for the period 1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019.

6. ANGUS LOCAL POLICING AREA QUARTERLY POLICE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2019 TO 30 JUNE 2019

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 18 June 2019, there was submitted Report No 261/19 by Chief Superintendent Andrew Todd, which updated the Committee on the performance results for the period 1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019.

Appendix A to the Report outlined the performance in relation to the identified policing objectives and outcomes which were monitored and reviewed at the monthly Tasking and Delivery Meeting. The data provided in the Report was for information purposes to allow members to conduct their scrutiny responsibilities. The Report made reference to specific crimes mentioned below, the local outcomes being:-

- Putting Victims at the heart of what we do
- Tackling Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Protecting Vulnerable People
- Maintaining Public Safety

Chief Superintendent Andrew Todd introduced Chief Inspector Wayne Morrison. He also requested feedback on the new format of the Report.

Chief Inspector Wayne Morrison thereafter provided an overview and highlighted a number of key areas of the Report.

Councillor Julie Bell raised a point in terms of the domestic abuse statistical data and requested an overview of the Multi-agency Tasking and Coordination (MATAC) process. She indicated that it would be useful if Police Scotland could undertake the necessary arrangements to share the information provided, in terms of domestic abuse statistical data with the Chairs of Angus Violence against Women, Angus Community Justice Partnership and Angus Alcohol and Drug Partnership.

Chief Superintendent Todd thereafter provided a brief overview of the MATAC process.

Councillor Devine raised a query in relation to safeguarding, in particular, in terms of dealing with persons in mental health crisis.

In response, Chief Superintendent Todd provided an overview and referred to a number of areas, in particular, the increase in missing persons and also highlighted that mental health was a resource intensive area in which Police in Angus were playing an increasing role, often as first responders. He provided examples of the challenges faced. He indicated that the volume of

incidents had been problematic and were likely to increase and that the current system was unsustainable. He highlighted that there were ongoing discussions with local authority Chief Executives and also the Chief Executive of NHS Tayside to work in partnership to review the whole system approach. He also emphasised that this was not only a local issue and that solutions to cope with the increased demand were being considered at a national level.

Councillor Bell highlighted the importance of progressing this matter and requested the Depute Chief Executive raise the concerns highlighted with the Angus Health and Social Care Partnership.

The Depute Chief Executive advised that in conjunction with Roy Dunsire, Chair of the Angus Community Planning Partnership Executive Group they would raise the issues and concerns highlighted in terms of mental health with the relevant officers in the Angus Health and Social Care Partnership.

Following discussion in terms of speeding, a number of questions were answered by Chief Inspector Morrison.

Councillor Duff and the Convener both provided feedback in terms of the Report and indicated that whilst the new format was full and informative, they considered that the Performance Summary included in the previous format would enhance the Report if this was included at the beginning of the Report.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

7. INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITY UPDATE

With reference to Article 14 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 18 June 2019, there was submitted Report No 262/19 by the Service Leader - Internal Audit, providing the Internal Audit Activity update on the main findings of the Internal Audit Reports issued since the date of the last meeting.

The Report indicated that work continued within the Internal Audit team to complete a small number of items from the 2018/19 Internal Audit Plan agreed by this Committee in April 2018. The 2019/20 Internal Audit Plan was being progressed and ad hoc requests for advice were being dealt with as they arose.

Attached as Appendix 2 to the Report was the Internal Audit Charter which was reviewed annually to ensure that it remained fit for purpose.

Three Internal Audit Reports had been issued since the last meeting, these were in relation to:-

- New Management Structure – Governance of Internal Working Groups
- Carbon Reduction and Climate Change
- Petty Cash Procedures

The Report presented the progress with the Internal Audit activity within the Council up to 9 August 2019, provided an updated on progress with the 2018/19 and 2019/20 Internal Audit Plans and progress with implementing internal audit recommendations.

The Team Leader, Internal Audit provided an overview of the Report.

Following a question from Councillor Bell in terms of Comfort Funds and in response having heard from the Team Leader, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the update of job titles and that no further change was required to the Internal Audit Charter;
- (ii) to note that the exercise of any rights under the Internal Audit Charter shall be in accordance with any relevant legal parameters;
- (iii) to note the availability of Audit Scotland's Fraud and Irregularities Update 2018/19 on the Elected Members' Sharepoint site and that further information on this would be brought to a future meeting;

- (iv) to note the update on progress with the 2018/19 Internal Audit Plan;
- (v) to note the update on progress with the 2019/20 Internal Audit Plan; and
- (vi) to note management's progress in implementing internal audit recommendations.

8. SLACIAG ANNUAL REPORT 2018

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 August 2018, there was submitted Report No 263/19 by the Service Leader – Internal Audit submitting the 2018 Annual Report of the Scottish Local Authority's Chief Internal Auditors' Group (SLACIAG), for noting.

Appendix 1 to the Report summarised SLACIAG's purpose and the activity throughout the year. The key subjects of focus at meetings of SLACIAG and the two sub-groups dealing with investigations and computer audit were outlined in Section 3 of the Report.

The Committee agreed to note the 2018 Scottish Local Authority's Chief Internal Auditors' Group Annual Report.

9. ACCOUNTS COMMISSION REPORT – SAFEGUARDING PUBLIC MONEY

There was submitted Report No 264/19 by the Director of Strategic Policy, Transformation and Public Sector advising members of the Accounts Commission Report "Safeguarding public money: are you getting it right?".

The Report provided information in relation to internal control; risk management; the roles of elected members and council officers; the role of the audit committee; partnership working; and the role of internal audit. There were eight checklists which were intended to help councillors think about various issues and to identify where further action was required. The checklists were detailed in Section 4 of the Report, together with key contacts and relevant committee reports.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the publication of the Accounts Commission Report; and
- (ii) to note that the checklists from the Report were available from the Elected Members Section of the Council's Intranet.

10. 2018/19 UNAUDITED ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

With reference to Article 15 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 August 2018, there was submitted Report No 265/19 by the Director of Finance, outlining the Council's 2018/19 unaudited Annual Accounts, which as required by law had been submitted to the Controller of Audit for audit purposes in accordance with the statutory deadline of 30 June 2019.

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.

As noted the Annual Accounts were prepared on a draft basis and were submitted to an External Auditor appointed by the Controller of Audit for independent review within the statutory timeframe. For the five-year period commencing with the audit of the 2016/17 accounts, Audit Scotland had been appointed as Angus Council's external auditor.

The ISA 260 Report for Angus Council would not be available until the audit work was complete. The findings from the audit work and the ISA 260 Report for Angus Council would be incorporated into the Annual Report to Members and this would be submitted to the Scrutiny and Audit Committee meeting on 24 September 2019. The Report would also be presented to Angus Council on 17 October 2019.

The Director of Finance provided an overview and highlighted several points.

Following discussion and having heard from some members, the Committee agreed to note the Angus Council 2018/19 Unaudited Annual Accounts.

11. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ASSURANCES

With reference to Article 17 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 18 June 2019, there was submitted Report No 266/19 by the Chief Executive advising members of governance assurances in respect of those organisations included in the Council's group accounts. It also provided draft letters of assurance from the Convener on behalf of the Committee to Angus Health and Social Care Partnership and AngusAlive for approval.

The Report indicated that Report 198/19 considered by this Committee on 18 June 2019 had provided the Council's draft Annual Governance Statement, for approval. Section 5 of the Report noted that the final Annual Governance Statement required to reflect the governance arrangements of the "Group" which, for the year to 31 March 2019, included Tayside Valuation Board, Tayside Contracts, AngusAlive and Angus Health and Social Care Partnership. Assurances had not been received at the time of writing Report 198/19.

Sections 4.1 to 4.4 of the Report summarised the assurances in respect of those organisations included in the Council's group accounts.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the assurances relating to the IJB, Tayside Contracts, Tayside Valuation Joint Board and determined that there were no amendments required to the Council's Annual Governance Statement;
- (ii) to note that assurances from Angus Alive would not be available until after their Board meeting on 6 September 2019;
- (iii) to authorise the Convener of the Scrutiny and Audit Committee on behalf of the Committee to write to Angus Health and Social Care Partnership and AngusAlive confirming the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements; and
- (iv) to delegate authority to the Director of Strategic Policy, Transformation and Public Sector Reform, following consultation with the Convener of this Committee, to update Angus Council's Annual Governance Statement if required, once the relevant information (referenced at Section 4.4 of the Report) was received from AngusAlive.

12. ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT 1 APRIL 2018 TO 31 MARCH 2019

With reference to Article 16 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 August 2018, there was submitted Report No 267/19 by the Chief Executive, highlighting the complaint statistics and satisfaction for 2018/19 and to confirm to members that learning was 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 2018/19, a total of 312 complaints were recorded as closed off during the year. Details of the analysis of key indicators for 2018/19 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. During 2018/19, 16 completed questionnaires were returned and the results were outlined in Section 5 of the Report.

The Depute Chief Executive provided an overview of the Report.

Councillor Devine requested clarification in terms of the Housing and Housing, Regulatory and Protective Services entries detailed in the Complaints by Services Area Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the Report. The Depute Chief Executive indicated that he would investigate and revert back in due course.

Following numerous constituents complaints being received, some members raised concerns relating to the Council's ACCESSLine, in particular, highlighting the length of time it took to make contact and on occasions, the service users have stated that following a considerable wait to

make contact with the ACCESSLine, they were subsequently disconnected before speaking to an operator.

The Depute Chief Executive indicated that the Council were aware of the issues highlighted and that service changes were currently being reviewed to address these issues. In reference to call volumes, he also highlighted that a number of calls to the ACCESSLine could have been answered more efficiently by service users accessing the other channels available and also accessible on the front page of the Council's website. In reference to callers being automatically disconnected from the system he stated that he was unaware of this issue but that he would look into it.

Councillor Bell thereafter highlighted that digital services would not be suitable for all service users. She also expressed concern in terms of the issues raised and that this was not a reflection on staff, but that it was a system that required to be improved and resourced more adequately.

The Committee agreed: -

- (i) to note the key performance indicators on complaints closed between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019;
- (ii) to note the results of the satisfaction survey sent to everyone who had made a complaint which was closed during 2018/19; and
- (iii) to note the complaints received by Service area as detailed in the Report.

13. COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS – APRIL TO JUNE 2019

With reference to Article 17 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 August 2018, there was submitted Report No 268/19 by the Chief Executive, highlighting the complaint statistics for the first quarter of 2019/20 and the compliments received during the period.

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 2018/19, a total of 71 complaints were recorded as closed off. In the first three months, a total of 60 service complaints and 11 investigation complaints were received.

In terms of the target response times for both service and investigation complaints, the average response times exceeded the targeted timescales.

The Report also highlighted the number of compliments that had been received during the period. Compliments were received in writing, via facebook/twitter and by telephone. Examples of compliments were outlined in Section 6 of the Report.

The Committee agreed to note the complaints closed off between 1 April 2019 and 30 June 2019.

14. INTERIM MANAGEMENT REPORT 2018/19

There was submitted Report No 269/19 by the Director of Finance providing Audit Scotland's Interim Management Report which contained a summary of the key issues identified during the interim audit work carried out at Angus Council for the Committee's review.

The Report indicated that the audit work had included testing key controls within the financial systems to gain assurances over the processes and systems used in preparing the annual accounts. A copy of the Management Report 2018/19 was attached as Appendix 1 to the Report.

Rachel Browne, Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland provided an overview of the Report.

Councillor Devine having raised a query in terms of the target date of the ResourceLink – IT access rights Audit findings and in response, having heard from the Director of Finance, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.