

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar, on Tuesday 3 March 2020 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors ALEX KING, BILL DUFF, BRENDA DURNO, BRIAN BOYD, KENNY BRAES, LYNNE DEVINE, BEN LAWRIE, MARK MCDONALD, IAN MCLAREN, BOB MYLES, MARK SALMOND and BETH WHITESIDE.

Councillor KING, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Julie Bell with Councillor Durno substituting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 January 2020 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

4. SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 OCTOBER 2019 TO 31 DECEMBER 2019

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 19 November 2019, there was submitted Report No 65/20 by Gordon Pryde, Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, containing performance information relating to quarter three (1 October to 31 December) 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 Angus Fire Academy.

Scott Gibson, Group Commander provided a brief summary of the 2019/20 quarter three activities and an overview of some of the performance highlights of the twelve headline indicators and targets, highlighting accidental dwelling fires, non-domestic building fires, road traffic collisions, unwanted fire alarm signals and deliberate primary and secondary fires.

In referring to the review of the Angus Local Fire and Rescue Plan he encouraged members who had not already done so, to share their views by completing the short survey which was open until 18 March 2020.

Following members questions and in response having heard from Gordon Pryde, Local Senior Officer and the Group Commander, 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 October to 31 December 2019.

5. POLICE SCOTLAND

(a) **ANGUS LOCAL POLICING AREA PERFORMANCE RESULTS FOR THE PERIOD 1 OCTOBER 2019 TO 31 DECEMBER 2019**

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 19 November 2019, there was submitted Report No 66/20 by Chief Superintendent Andrew Todd, which updated the Committee on the performance results for the period 1 October 2019 to 31 December 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 which were:-

- Putting Victims at the Heart of What We Do
- Tackling Crime and Antisocial Behaviour
- Protecting Vulnerable People
- Maintaining Public Safety

Chief Inspector Wayne Morrison provided an informative overview of the key areas of the Report.

Chief Inspector Morrison thereafter responded to a number of members' questions.

Councillor Devine raised the issue of online crime including the Think Before You Type campaign highlighting the potential for more collaborative work between Angus Council and Police Scotland on prevention measures. In response, the Depute Chief Executive agreed that he would arrange for this to be progressed with Police Scotland.

The Committee thereafter agreed to note the contents of the Report.

(b) **ANGUS LOCAL POLICING PLAN TAYSIDE 2020-2023**

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 7 March 2017, there was submitted Report No 67/20 by Chief Superintendent Andrew Todd providing members with a draft of the proposed Local Policing Plan for 2020-2023.

The Report indicated that the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012, Section 47 stated that as soon as was reasonably practicable after the first strategic police plan was approved under Section 34, the local commander must prepare and submit a local police plan to the relevant local authority for approval.

The purpose of the Local Policing Plan was to highlight the most important areas to be addressed in Angus for the next 3 years. Appendix A attached to the Report, outlined the priorities that had been identified using a number of sources, these priorities were outlined in Section 3.1 of the Report.

Superintendent Elaine Logue provided an overview of the draft Local Policing Plan for 2020-2023 highlighting that the Plan was supportive of the priorities in the Angus Community Plan 2017-2030 and that following feedback the final report would be brought back to this Committee in quarter 4.

Following questions from Councillors Boyd and Whiteside in terms of police presence in both Carnoustie and Monifieth, and in response having heard from Superintendent Logue, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

6. EXTERNAL AUDIT – ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 5 March 2019, there was submitted Report No 68/20 by the Director of Finance presenting the External Auditor's Annual Audit Plan for 2019/20.

The Report indicated that the Annual Plan contained an overview of the planned scope and timing of the audit and was carried out in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing (ISAs), the Code of Audit Practice and guidance on planning the audit.

The Plan set out the work necessary to allow Audit Scotland to provide an independent auditor's Report on the financial statements and meet the wider scope requirement of public sector audit including the audit of Best Value. The wider scope of public audit contributed to assessments and conclusions on financial management, financial sustainability, governance and transparency and value for money.

The 2019/20 significant audit risks which required specific audit testing were outlined in Exhibit 1 of the Appendix to the Report.

Gillian Woolman, Audit Director, Audit Scotland provided a detailed overview and highlighted the various aspects of the Report.

Having heard from the Audit Director in response to questions from both the Convener and Councillor Braes, the Committee agreed to note the content of the External Audit Annual Audit Plan for 2019/20.

7. SCOTLAND'S CITY REGION AND GROWTH DEALS – AUDIT SCOTLAND – JANUARY 2020

There was submitted Report No 69/20 by the Director of Strategic Policy, Transformation and Public Sector Reform presenting Audit Scotland's Report on Scotland's City Region and Growth Deals published in January 2020 and its findings and recommendations for Scottish Government and Councils working on City Region and Growth Deals.

The Report indicated that in August 2014, the UK Government and the Scottish Government jointly announced the first City Region Deal in Scotland for the Glasgow City Region. Under the deal, the eight councils in the Glasgow City Region agreed to work together to manage an infrastructure investment programme. Since then, all areas of Scotland had signed, or were working towards signing, either a City Region Deal or, for regions that did not have a city, a Growth Deal.

All deals were different and were intended to be based on local circumstances and priorities. In Scotland, all signed deals were agreements between the UK Government, the Scottish Government, Councils and sometimes other partners, such as local business representatives, and universities. They were long-term programmes, with funding committed for 10-20 years.

The Audit Scotland's Report would also be considered by the Tay Cities Joint Committee as part of the Joint Committee Governance Agreement approved by Angus Council, (Report 89/16 refers).

A number of key messages from the Audit Scotland Report were outlined in Section 4 of the Report. Audit Scotland Recommendations for the Scottish Government and Councils were outlined in Section 5 of the Report.

As the Tay Cities Deal was expected to be signed shortly, Councillors should be aware of the key role the Council will play, as one of the main partners in the delivery of the deal. The Scrutiny tool checklist for Councillors, attached as Appendix B to the Report, outlined the Council's current position.

The Director of Strategic Policy, Transformation and Public Sector Reform provided a detailed overview and update in terms of the Report. She confirmed that the Tay Cities Deals partner authorities: Dundee City, Fife and Perth and Kinross Councils would also consider the Audit Scotland Report. She advised that the Tay Cities Deal, Heads of Terms had been signed however the Tay Cities Deal had not yet been signed but emphasised that the deal was expected to be signed off shortly.

Councillor Devine raised concerns in relation to the delay in information being provided to members and also in terms of the key points covered under "It is not clear why some projects were selected and other are not", section of the Report.

Councillor Braes referred to the Scrutiny Checklist for Councillors, attached as Appendix 3 to the Report, in particular highlighting the question "How well informed am I?". In his opinion, he considered that he was not well informed given the considerable gap in information being provided, emphasising that this was a personal comment and not a criticism.

Councillor Myles also emphasised that in addition to funding committed by both Scottish and UK Governments, funding had also been committed by Councils and other partners.

In response, the Director of Strategic Policy, Transformation and Public Sector Reform provided an update and advised that it had been anticipated that the deal would have been signed off by now with more information made available and reported to members earlier.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the Audit Scotland's Report on Scotland's City Region and Growth Deals published in January 2020; and its findings and recommendations for Scottish Government and Councils working on City Region and Growth Deals;
- (ii) there was awareness of the scrutiny tool that was available for Councillors to understand the Council's current position within the Tay Cities Deal; and
- (iii) to note that the Tay Cities Joint Committee would consider the implications of the Report.

8. INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITY UPDATE

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 January 2020, there was submitted Report No 70/20 by the Service Leader (Internal Audit), providing the Internal Audit Activity update on the main findings of the Internal Audit Report issued since the date of the last meeting.

The Report indicated that work continued within the Internal Audit Team to complete one item from the 2018/19 Internal Audit Plan agreed by this Committee in April 2018. The 2019/20 Internal Audit Plan was being progressed and adhoc requests for advice were being dealt with as they arose. The time spent on these and slower response times from some services than previously experience, had delayed completion of several audits. The plan had been reviewed when preparing the 2020/21 plan (Report 71/20 refers) and some audits had been moved to the 2020/21 plan.

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

- Housing National Regulatory Framework
- Carbon Reduction
- Integra Budget Module (Budget Monitoring and Budget Management)

The Report presented the progress with the Internal Audit activity within the Council up to 20 February 2020, provided an update on progress with the 2018/19 and 2019/20 Internal Audit Plan, progress with implementing internal recommendations and items proposed to be carried forward to the 2020/21 plan.

The Service Leader (Internal Audit) provided an overview of the Report.

In terms of risk management, the Chief Executive provided background detail and an informative update in relation to the coronavirus. She also advised the procedures and measures that had been put in place and emphasised the important role for all individuals in following the advice provided to help contain the current outbreak.

Having heard from the Director of Finance who provided an update in terms of the Finance Actions Overdue as at 20 February 2020, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the update on progress with the 2018/19 Internal Audit Plan;
- (ii) to note the update on progress with the 2019/20 Internal Audit Plan;
- (iii) to note management's progress in implementing Internal Audit recommendations; and
- (iv) to approve the items identified to be carried forward to the 2020/21 Internal Audit Plan.

9. ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2020-21

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 23 April 2019, there was submitted Report No 71/20 by the Service Leader (Internal Audit) providing the Audit Manager's Annual Internal Audit Plan for 2019/20 for approval.

The Report indicated that in terms of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS), the Service Leader (Internal Audit) was required to set a risk based audit plan sufficient to provide the required assurances to members and officers in relation to corporate governance, risk management and internal controls.

Attached as Appendix 1 to the Report were the outcomes of the annual planning exercise and the Service Leader's proposed 2020/21 Internal Audit Plan, for approval.

The 2020/21 Internal Audit Plan set out the proposed activity to be performed by the Council's Internal Audit team in order to allow the Service Leader (Internal Audit) to provide an Annual Internal Audit opinion in June 2021.

The Service Leader (Internal Audit) provided an overview of the Report.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note that a risk based approach methodology had been utilised to develop the proposed Internal Audit Plan for 2020/21; and
- (ii) to approve the proposed 2020/21 Internal Audit Plan.

10. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2020/21

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 21 March 2019, there was submitted Report No 72/20 by the Director of Finance seeking members to review and scrutinise the proposed Treasury Management Strategy for Angus Council in 2020/21.

The Report indicated that the purpose of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement was to develop borrowing, investment and debt rescheduling strategies for the forthcoming financial year based on prospects for interest rates. The strategies adopted took account of the current treasury position and treasury limits in force that would limit treasury risk and treasury activities of the Council.

The 2020/21 Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy set out the expected treasury management activities for Angus Council for the forthcoming financial year.

The Director of Finance provided an overview of the Report and also highlighted that Treasury Management training would be provided to members in due course.

The Director of Finance responded to members questions in relation to ethical investing, non treasury investments, in particular, Registered Social Landlord Loans, Lender Option Borrower Option (LOBO), thereafter the Committee agreed to note the proposed Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2020/21, attached as Appendix A to the Report.

11. REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS (SCOTLAND) ACT 2000 ANNUAL REPORT

With reference to Article 10 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 24 April 2018, there was submitted Report No 73/20 by the Director of Legal and Democratic Services advising members of the use of surveillance powers by the Council in terms of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 in the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019.

The Report indicated that Angus Council was a public authority for the purpose of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 ("RIP(S)A") and had the power to authorise directed covert surveillance and the use of covert human intelligence sources. Covert activities covered by RIP(S) A would be lawful if the activities were authorised and if they were conducted in accordance with the authorisation.

In the year to 31 March 2019, four covert surveillance activities were authorised as detailed in Section 3 of the Report. There were no authorisations in respect of the use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources.

Having heard from the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the requirements on the Council in respect of surveillance and other investigatory activities in terms of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000;
- (ii) to note that four authorisations were granted for surveillance and other investigatory activities regulated by the above Act in the year to 31 March 2019; and
- (iii) to note that Annual Reports on the use of surveillance and other investigatory activities regulated by the above Act would be submitted to this Committee.