

# ANGUS COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM NO 3(ii)(t)

MINUTE of MEETING of the **SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE** hosted at Angus House, Orchardbank, Forfar and held remotely on Tuesday 16 June 2020 at 2.00pm.

**Present:** Councillors ALEX KING, BILL DUFF, JULIE BELL, BRIAN BOYD, KENNY BRAES, COLIN BROWN, LYNNE DEVINE, BEN LAWRIE, MARK MCDONALD, IAN MCLAREN, BOB MYLES and BETH WHITESIDE.

Councillor KING, Convener, in the Chair.

## 1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Mark Salmond.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Bell declared a non-financial interest in Items 10, 13 and 14 (Report Nos 161/20, 164/20 and 165/20) in that she was a Board member of Angus Health and Social Care Integration Joint Board, as an elected member. She indicated that she would participate in any discussion and voting on these items.

Councillors Devine and Duff declared non-financial interests in Item 6 (Report No 157/20) in that they were Council appointed Board members of ANGUSalive. They indicated that they would participate in any discussion and voting on this item.

## 3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 March 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 JANUARY 2020 TO 31 MARCH 2020

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 March 2020, there was submitted Report No 154/20 by Gordon Pryde, Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, containing performance information relating to quarter four (1 January to 31 March) of 2020 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 Prince's Trust.

Gordon Pryde, Local Senior Officer highlighted that it had been his aim to undertake a review of the Local Fire Plan for Angus earlier but advised that due to the impact of Covid-19, the review required to be put on hold for a short period of time. He indicated that he was now in a position to initiate the review of the Local Fire Plan for Angus for 2020/21.

He thereafter provided an overview of the twelve performance indicators for 2019/20 quarter four activity and the year-end progress. Since lockdown, there has been a significant increase nationally in the number of house fires involving people including fatal fires. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service had launched a national campaign, "Make the Call" and highlighted that the campaign's focus was to appeal to communities to help reach out to those most vulnerable and

to identify people over 50 who smoked, lived alone and had mobility and medical issues who were more at risk of accidental fires in their own homes.

Scott Gibson, Group Commander summarised the 2019/20 quarter four activities and provided 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.

He also referred to the continued visits to high risk premises and the involvement of the service in training exercises with Tayside Sports Ground Safety Team and Exercise North Explorer.

Councillor Devine highlighted her appreciation to the re-introduction of Safe Angus. She also referred to the extensive community safety engagement programmes, in particular, Youth Engagement and the provision of CPR training and enquired whether there had been any consideration to CPR training being provided to both primary and secondary schools across Angus. The Group Commander provided an update and advised that going forward the service would continue to work with partners organisations as more persons trained in CPR resulted in better outcomes for communities.

Following a question from Councillor Boyd in terms of the reporting timescales and having heard from Gordon Pryde, Local Senior Officer, 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 January 2020 to 31 March 2020.

## **5. POLICE SCOTLAND**

### **(a) ANGUS LOCAL POLICING AREA PERFORMANCE RESULTS FOR THE PERIOD 1 JANUARY 2020 TO 31 MARCH 2020**

With reference to Article 5(a) of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 March 2020, there was submitted Report No 155/20 by Chief Superintendent Andrew Todd, which updated the Committee on the performance results for the period 1 January 2020 to 31 March 2020.

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 Superintendent Todd provided clarity in terms of the reporting period and that the report was as a consequence reporting against the previous Local Policing Plan 2017-2020. Chief Inspector Wayne Morrison provided an informative overview of the key areas of the Report.

Chief Superintendent Todd and Chief Inspector Morrison responded to members questions and points in relation to a number of areas including domestic abuse, assaults including the Mentors in Violence programme, antisocial behaviour, detection rates, drug misuse – possession and supply and Covid-19 testing.

In reference to hate crimes, Councillor Bell reflected that it was the four year anniversary of the murder of MP Jo Cox. She highlighted that hate crime did exist in our communities and raised that there had been no statistics reported in the current or

previous performance report and requested that rolling statistics be provided in future reporting.

She raised a question in terms of the how the national programme would encourage those affected by hate crime to come forward, the progress of the HIMAP (Hate Incident Multi Agency Panel) group including the involvement of people from our communities. Also, in terms of CONTEST (Counter Terrorism Strategy) she enquired as to what data was emerging from preventative work, interventions and the demographics that could be identified as at risk.

In response, Chief Superintendent Todd provided background information and an update. He confirmed that he would arrange to bring forward further information on hate crimes including statistical information, to the next committee, for consideration and feedback.

In terms of CONTEST, he confirmed that he would look further into this and revert back in due course.

Chief Inspector Morrison provided an update in terms of HIMAP, highlighting that there had been limited progress over the last few years with instigating a local group in Angus. He confirmed that there had been discussion around the benefits of a Tayside wide group being set up and advised that this area of work was outwith his remit therefore he would require to revert back to Committee, in due course.

Chief Superintendent Todd confirmed that there had been 24 substantive racially-aggravated harassment and conduct crimes recorded in Angus last year. Councillor Bell raised concerns and intimated that she wanted people to feel that they could report crimes as they occurred, in an attempt to reduce and tackle hate crimes. She emphasised the time for action was now.

Chief Superintendent Todd advised that a review would be undertaken in respect of the Hate Incident Multi Agency Panel Group in Angus.

Councillor Devine referred to the Keep Safe locations in Angus and given the current situation enquired whether it would be possible for a list of Keep Safe locations, split into ward area, to be provided to elected members. Chief Superintendent Todd advised that he would seek advice, and circulate this information to Committee, should this be permitted.

The Convener highlighted that should the Keep Safe location lists be circulated, he requested that the two wards areas of Arbroath be kept together and not split into individual wards.

Councillor Lawrie indicated that the Crown Office had recently published a report which highlighted that hate crimes in Scotland had increased and enquired as to whether the national trend was replicated in Angus. Chief Superintendent Todd provided an update and also responded to his questions regarding advice to victims of hate crime and also in relation to advice for anyone who witnessed hate crime. Chief Inspector Morrison provided an overview of the number of cases reported in Angus and confirmed that the end of year report highlighted a reduction in reported case from the previous year.

Councillor Whiteside referred to the recent fatality in Angus, and also to the works undertaken by BEAR Scotland, at the junctions in and around the vicinity of Tealing and Peterden areas. She advised that Tealing Community Council had expressed disappointment that following the works undertaken, they considered there was now decreased visibility at some of these junctions. She asked Police Scotland's view as to whether there should be further road safety improvements at these junctions.

In response, Chief Superintendent Todd provided background detail and outlined the role of Police Scotland in terms of procedures and follow up actions undertaken following fatal accidents.

Councillor Whiteside also raised a question in terms of the increase in drink and drug offences in Angus and whether this was a result of the introduction of drug wipe testing. Chief Superintendent Todd in response confirmed that the drug wipe testing did contribute to the increased percentage and that further detailed information would be provided in the quarter 1 performance report.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

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

With reference to Article 5(b) of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 March 2020, there was submitted Report No 156/20 by Chief Superintendent Andrew Todd providing members with a final Local Policing Plan for 2020-2023.

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.

The Convener highlighted that the draft Angus Local Policing Plan Tayside 2020-2023 had been presented to the last meeting and having heard from Chief Superintendent Todd, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

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

**6. ANGUSALIVE ANNUAL REPORT 2018/2019**

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 23 April 2019, there was submitted Report No 157/20 by the Director of Strategic Policy, Transformation and Public Sector Reform, presenting ANGUSalive's Annual Report for 2018/19.

The Report highlighted some of ANGUSalive's key achievements and developments during 2018/19 and included a financial overview. More detailed financial information was available in ANGUSalive's report and consolidated financial statements for the period ended 31 March 2019.

ANGUSalive's annual accounts were required by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)/ Companies House to be audited by December each year.

Kirsty Hunter, Chief Executive of ANGUSalive provided an overview of the Report and highlighted that through the hard work and the dedication of the team, to the people of Angus, a net income of £415k during the financial year 2018/19 had been achieved. Following the Board's agreement these funds had been added as a contribution to the Board's reserves and importantly ensured the ongoing maintenance of facilities, equipment and provision of services offered including free activities. Savings agreed with Angus Council for financial years 17/18, 18/19 and 19/20 had also been achieved.

It was noted that Angusalive's strategic aims for the charity had been reviewed and that the contributions made to the community planning priorities and local outcomes were now included within these aims. She confirmed that full accreditation status had been awarded to all five museums, and emphasised the benefit realisation of being accredited museums. In terms of the quality indicator 3, "How Good is our Public Library Service", following a peer review, a level 5 for services and the impact these services were having on the life of learners had been awarded.

She advised that they continued to work with external auditors, Scott-Moncrieff, and indicated that they were working towards the Angusalive's annual accounts for 2019/20 being signed off in September 2020 which was earlier than the previous year.

Councillor McDonald raised questions in terms of reviewing the report in a more timely manner, as well as comparative statistics with previous year figures and progress of the organisation review.

Councillor Whiteside raised questions in terms of the Board of Directors membership and also whether it would be beneficial for the Committee to have sight of a draft report earlier in the reporting schedule.

In response, the Chief Executive, Angusalive provided an update.

In terms of the Chairman's introductory statement, in particular, reference to the six community sport hubs based in Angus, Councillor Boyd expressed disappointment that Carnoustie whose facilities generated significant contributions to the Angus economy, was not included and questioned when Carnoustie would be included within the Community Sport Hub (CSH) initiative. The Chief Executive, Angusalive advised that she would discuss this further with colleagues and revert back to Councillor Boyd in due course.

In response to questions from Councillors Boyd and Myles, the Chief Executive, Angusalive provided an update as to the route map for recovery and how Angusalive were working to remain in contact with all service users across the range of activities provided prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the ANGUSalive Annual Report for 2018/19;
- (ii) to note that the ANGUSalive Annual Report for 2019/20 would be submitted to this Committee once it had been finalised and lodged with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)/Companies House; and
- (iii) to request the Chief Executive, Angusalive, to review and consider the inclusion of comparative statistics with previous year figures, in future reporting.

*At this point, the Chief Executive of Angusalive, left the meeting.*

## **7. REPORTS RELEVANT TO THE WORK OF THE SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE**

With reference to Article 12 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 19 November 2019, there was submitted Report No 158/20 by the Service Leader, Internal Audit, advising members of reports submitted to other Angus Council committees, the Council, Tayside Contracts and to the IJB that were relevant to the work of the Scrutiny and Audit Committee.

Attached as Appendix 1 to the Report was a list of reports submitted to other Angus Council committees and the IJB for the period 18 October 2019 to 3 April 2020.

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

Councillor Duff raised a point and sought the views of the Committee as to whether there should be scrutiny of Tayside Contracts given that, in his opinion, there were gaps in this particular area, highlighting that the Committee had just heard from the Chief Executive of Angusalive (Report 157/20 refers) and also that the IJB had their own audit committee arrangements in place.

Councillor Myles indicated that he was not objecting to further scrutiny but advised that Tayside Contracts Joint Committee already scrutinised the work of Tayside Contracts. He requested that this should be looked into further to ensure there would be no duplication of scrutiny.

Councillor Whiteside in reference to Report 142/20 – Review of Governance Arrangements emphasised the importance of this area and given that this was being reviewed by a small member officer group, she considered that it would also be beneficial for the Committee to have sight of this particular review.

Having heard from the Convener, the Chief Executive agreed to review the request to scrutinise Tayside Contracts and also the Review of Governance Arrangements and that she would revert back to the Committee in due course.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the reports listed in Appendix 1 to the Report; and
- (ii) subject to the Chief Executive's review, that Tayside Contracts and the Review of Governance Arrangements should be the subject to more detailed discussion by this Committee.

## **8. CORPORATE COUNTER FRAUD REVIEW 2019/20**

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 18 June 2019, there was submitted Report No 159/20 by the Service Leader - Internal Audit, summarising the activity undertaken by the Corporate Fraud Team (CFT) in the year to 31 March 2020.

The Report supported the Council's zero tolerance approach to fraud and corruption. The Corporate Fraud Team was a specialist investigative team which operated in 2019/20 within the Internal Audit Service reporting to the Chief Executive. The continued work of the CFT played a key role in the Council's response to its risk of fraud and corruption.

Corporate fraud included instances where individuals sought to profit from their position as employees. In 2019/20 the CFT concluded 9 corporate fraud investigations. In addition to the investigative work carried out during 2019/20, the CFT had provided a diverse range of advice and guidance to a number of areas including Waste Operations; Housing, Support Services; and Planning.

During the financial year to 31 March 2020, the CFT identified recoveries in excess of £151k (2018/19 £108k) from investigative work and a further £18k (2018/19 £31k) of fraud and error in Housing Benefits and Council Tax through the sharing of intelligence with the Single Fraud Investigation Service.

CFT, working with Organisation Development colleagues, had developed an online Counter Fraud e-learning course, which was launched in January 2020. This course was considered a key tool in raising fraud awareness and promoting the services provided by the CFT.

The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic noted new and enhanced fraud threats to the Council, which resulted in the CFT working in various ways to address these threats. The work of the CFT continued to play a significant role in not only protecting public resources and assets but in encouraging fairness, process improvements and promoting a healthy culture within the Council.

The Service Leader – Internal Audit provided an update to the Report.

Following a question from Councillor Bell in terms of cyber security, the Chief Executive advised that a paper on cyber security had recently been discussed by the Corporate Leadership Team and that she would arrange for this to be shared with the Committee in due course.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and

- (ii) to note the results of the self-assessment against the CIPFA Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption, attached as Appendix 1 to the Report.

## **9. AUDIT SCOTLAND REPORT: FRAUD AND IRREGULARITY UPDATE 2018/19**

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 20 August 2019, there was submitted Report No 160/20 by the Service Leader – Internal Audit, advising members of the Audit Scotland Report “Fraud and Irregularity Update 2018/19” and considered the internal control issues raised in relation to Angus Council.

The Report indicated that the Audit Scotland report provided information on a number of fraud cases, including the internal control weaknesses that contributed to the fraud occurring. The fraud cases, internal control weaknesses contributing to the fraud and a high-level overview of the Council’s position were detailed in Section 4 of the Report.

Having heard from the Service Leader – Internal Audit, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the Council's position in relation to internal controls to mitigate against the reported incidents; and.
- (ii) that there were no recommendations about future internal audit or scrutiny work required.

## **10. INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITY UPDATE**

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 March 2020, there was submitted Report No 161/20 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 the Covid-19 pandemic had had a significant impact on the work of the Internal Audit team and as a result a number of projects had not been finalised. A review of the 2020/21 Internal Audit plan, considering revised risk assessments in view of the Covid-19 pandemic would be brought to the next meeting of this Committee in August 2020.

Audit Scotland had published on their website a summary of responses to the Covid-19 outbreak from scrutiny bodies in Scotland. It was noted that “All scrutiny bodies had altered their scrutiny programmes and where possible, were providing support for the bodies they inspected”. The summary as at 11 May 2020 was attached as Appendix 2 to the Report.

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

- Stock and Inventory
- User Access (Housing Northgate)
- Licensing
- Data Analysis/Continuous Auditing: Payroll and Accounts Payable

The Report presented the progress with the Internal Audit activity within the Council up to 8 June 2020, provided an update on progress with the 2018/19 and 2019/20 Internal Audit Plans and progress with implementing internal recommendations.

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

In relation to the Northgate (Housing) User Access Management audit, John Morrow, Service Leader (Housing) provided background detail and an informative update to the Report.

Following members questions relating to risk, system security and system delivery in meeting the needs of the service, and in response, John Morrow, Service Leader (Housing) and Paul Kelly, Director of Audit and Assurance, Scott-Moncrieff provided an update.

Councillor Devine raised concern in terms of the Pupil Equity Fund audit which was planned for March 2020 but given the current situation, was currently on hold. She highlighted that the fund was allocated directly to schools and targeted at closing the poverty related attainment gap and requested that this audit be progressed as a priority.

With reference to Appendix 2 of the Report, Summary of responses to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak from scrutiny bodies in Scotland, in particular, the response from the Care Inspectorate, Councillor Bell raised concerns regarding care homes, and the Care Inspectorate's position regarding joint visits. Given the prominence of the care sector throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, she was concerned that people could be exposed, if lessons were not learned and that issues may not be properly addressed.

The Director of Children, Families and Justice confirmed that at the outset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Care Inspectorate took public health advice and stepped down routine visiting to care homes to avoid the unnecessary spreading of the virus. Given the ongoing situation with Covid-19, the Care Inspectorate had reviewed the position, having always had a nuanced approach but were now taking a risk based approach regarding visits. Currently there were strong oversight arrangements in place both locally and on a pan-Tayside basis, and in consultation with the Care Inspectorate, they continue to visit care homes. She highlighted that there was a statutory duty to take forward any areas of concern relating to care home operations

She confirmed that local visits were continuing to all care home providers and that there was daily contact to enquire as to the welfare of residents, and if there were any further requirements in terms of training, support and PPE.

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 the update on progress with the 2020/21 Internal Audit Plan;
- (iv) to note management's progress in implementing Internal Audit and Counter Fraud recommendations;
- (v) to note the information provided by Audit Scotland to summarise the response of national scrutiny bodies in light of the Covid-19 pandemic; and
- (vi) to note information relating to the Committee's remit, Item 9, regarding training provided to Councillors on the Code of Conduct and Good Governance.

## **11. INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT AND REVIEW OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

With reference to Article 15 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 18 June 2019, there was submitted Report No 162/20 by the Service Leader – Internal Audit, presenting the Audit Annual Report and independent assurance opinions in relation to both overall corporate governance arrangements and internal controls for 2019/20.

The Report indicated that the Internal Audit Annual Report and review of Corporate Governance provided an overall opinion from the Service Leader – Internal Audit on the internal control and internal financial control environment within the Council for the 2019/20 financial year. This would be used to inform the production of the Council's Annual Governance Statement.

The Internal Audit Annual Report attached as Appendix 1 to the Report provided the information and assurances in relation to the matters outlined in Section 3 of the Report.

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

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Internal Audit Annual Report for 2019/20.



**12. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE – LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE 2020**

With reference to Article 16 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 18 June 2019, there was submitted Report No 163/20 by the Chief Executive, advising of the outcome of the review of the Local Code of Corporate Governance and presenting the revised Local Code for approval.

The Report indicated that Angus Council first adopted a Local Code in 2002. It had been regularly reviewed and updated to ensure consistency with best practice and guidance, in particular the CIPFA/SOLACE framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government. The framework set out seven core principles for good governance, which were outlined in Section 4 of the Report.

The Local Code of Corporate Governance affirmed the Council's commitment to achieving a good standard of corporate governance. It set out the key policies, procedures and structures which demonstrated the Council's compliance with the seven core principles. The Local Code had been reviewed and updated and was attached as Appendix 1 to the Report.

Having heard from the Chief Executive, the Committee agreed to approve the revised Local Code of Corporate Governance.

**13. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE – ANNUAL REVIEW AND DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2020**

With reference to Article 17 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 18 June 2019, there was submitted Report No 164/20 by the Chief Executive advising of the outcome of the annual review of compliance with the principles of good governance and presenting the draft Annual Governance Statement for consideration.

The Report indicated that the overall conclusion of the review was that during 2019/20, the Council had demonstrated that the governance arrangements and framework within which the Council operated were sound and operating effectively and that the Council was generally compliant with the core principles of good governance, including the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance.

During March 2020, towards the end of the 2019/20 reporting period relating to the draft Annual Governance Statement, the Council was required to initiate an emergency response to the Covid-19 pandemic. By necessity, this had involved significant changes and disruption to the manner in which Council services were normally delivered. As a direct result of this, changes to existing strategic and governance arrangements, together with some new governance arrangements had been deployed as part of the Council's response. A number of aspects of the impact of the Council's response to Covid-19 were reflected in the draft Annual Governance Statement.

The 2020/21 action plan was included with the Annual Governance Statement and progress would be reported to this Committee in January and June 2021. This plan also included four continued actions from 2019/20.

Having heard from the Chief Executive, the Committee agreed: -

- (i) to note the 2019/20 draft Annual Governance Statement, including actions to be taken forward during 2020/21 as outlined in Appendix 1 to the Report;
- (ii) to note that 2019/20 draft Annual Governance Statement would be included in the Council's unaudited annual accounts, which would be submitted to the Controller of Audit;
- (iii) to note the exceptional circumstances that evolved towards the end of the 2019/20 draft Annual Governance Statement reporting period in relation to the Covid-19

pandemic, and that various implications of the Council emergency responses to the was reflected in the draft Annual Governance Statement; and

- (iv) to note that the Statement would be kept under review and updated as necessary until the audited accounts were approved for signing later this year. The final statement would be signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.

#### **14. SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE SELF-ASSESSMENT AND ANNUAL REPORT**

With reference to Article 18 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 18 June 2019, there was submitted Report No 165/20 by the Chief Executive, providing a draft Annual Report to Council on the work undertaken by the Scrutiny and Audit Committee during 2019/20.

The Report indicated that a self-assessment workshop arranged for March 2020 was postponed due to the current Covid-19 situation, and following consultation with the Convener, it was agreed that a decision on when the next self-assessment was carried out would be taken once normal committee activities resulted. Two self-assessments checklists from the CIPFA guidance would normally have formed the basis for discussion at the workshop.

The Good Practice Self-Assessment with the principles set out in the CIPFA guidance. The 2018/19 review confirmed a high level of compliance.

The Evaluation of Effectiveness checklist was intended to help Committee members to consider where the Committee was most effective and where there may be scope to do more. The scores for 2018/19 demonstrated an improvement over the 2017/18 scores. Further details were included in the Annual Report attached as Appendix 1 to the Report, where these results had been repeated given that no workshop had taken place this year.

Having heard from the Chief Executive, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the draft Annual Report for the year to 31 March 2020;
- (ii) to determine that there were no amendments required; and
- (iii) to note that the Annual Report would be signed by the Convener and would be submitted to full Council after the recess.

#### **15. CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND JUSTICE SERVICE RESPONSE TO COVID-19**

There was submitted Report No 166/20 by the Director of Children, Families and Justice presenting an update on interim changes to service delivery arrangements in the Children, Families and Justice Directorate as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Report highlighted the impact of Covid-19 on work being undertaken by the Children, Families and Justice Directorate to support and protect children and families in Angus. Section 3.3 of the Report outlined the significant changes to legislation, regulation and guidance which impacted the services delivered.

The changes had been taken into account, when adapting the Council's practice and ensuring minimal interruption to the provision of support during this period to ensure the continued safety, dignity and human rights of people who already had support in place and for those who may require this in the future.

The Director of Children, Families and Justice provided an informative overview of the Report.

Following discussion, where some members raised questions, and in response having heard from the Director of Children, Families and Justice, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the ongoing delivery of statutory social work duties in line with revised legislation and guidance; and

- (ii) to note the service approach to Covid-19 in accordance with the Council's corporate parenting duties and human rights considerations.