

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE** held remotely on Thursday 23 September 2021 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors ALEX KING, BILL DUFF, JULIE BELL, KENNY BRAES, COLIN BROWN BEM, LYNNE DEVINE, MARK MCDONALD, IAN McLAREN, BOB MYLES, DAVID LUMGAIR and BETH WHITESIDE.

Councillor KING, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Brian Boyd and Mark Salmond with Councillor David Lumgair substituting for Councillor Salmond.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Bell declared a non-financial interest in Item 8, Report 297/21 as a Council appointed Board member to VAA and AHSCP IJB. She indicated that she had a specific exclusion and dispensation respectively and would participate in any discussion and voting on the item.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 24 August 2021 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

The Convener, on behalf of the Committee, welcomed Chief Superintendent Phil Davison and Chief Inspector Leanne Blacklaw to their first meeting of the Scrutiny and Audit Committee.

Councillor Brown joined the meeting during consideration of the following item.

4. POLICE SCOTLAND – ANGUS LOCAL POLICING AREA QUARTERLY REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2021 TO 30 JUNE 2021

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 1 June 2021, there was submitted Report No 293/21 by Chief Superintendent Phil Davison, which updated the Committee on the performance results for the period 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021.

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 under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.

Chief Superintendent Phil Davison introduced Chief Inspector Leanne Blacklaw, Local Area Commander for Angus, and in moving forward, intimated that they were looking forward to working together with elected members and partners to improve outcomes for the Angus community and the wider Tayside area.

He confirmed that as a result of the pandemic and national lockdown, there were considerable variances in the data provided for some indicators in comparison to the previous year's reporting period. A brief overview of the quarter one report was also provided.

Councillors Bell, Braes, Devine, Duff, McLaren and Myles raised questions and comments in relation to housebreaking, fraud, anti-social behaviour, comparative data, workforce, COP 26, common assault on emergency workers, Operation Close Pass, speeding, drink/drug driving

and possession of drugs, and in response Chief Superintendent Davison and Chief Inspector Blacklaw provided detailed and informative updates.

Also in response to Councillor Bell's questions and comments, Chief Inspector Blacklaw confirmed that with reference to assaults on emergency workers that this related to Police Officers only; also that in terms of the drug driving statistics, advised that she would seek further information and revert back with a response in due course; and that an introductory letter would also be issued to Community Councils.

The Committee agreed to note the Angus Local Policing Area Quarterly Report for the period 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021.

At this point, the Police Scotland representatives left the meeting.

5. INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITY UPDATE

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 24 August 2021, there was submitted Report No 294/21 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 presented an update on the Internal Audit activity within the Council and provided an update on progress with the planned audit work and the internal audit and counter fraud recommendations. Updates were provided in terms of the Data Analysis/Continuous Auditing related to Payroll and Accounts Payable Audits.

The Service Leader – Internal Audit provided a summary and highlighted the key areas of the Report.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the update on progress with the planned Internal Audit work; and
- (ii) to note management's progress in implementing internal audit and counter fraud recommendations.

6. REVIEW OF AUDIT CHARTER

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 20 August 2019, there was submitted Report No 295/21 by the Service Leader - Internal Audit summarising a review of the Audit Charter and minor amendments proposed.

The Report indicated that the Charter was reviewed against good practice published by the Institute of Internal Auditors and confirmed that the guidance had not been changed since 2019.

The proposed changes were detailed in Section 5 of the Report and outlined as track changes in the Appendix to the Report.

The Committee agreed to approve the amendments to the Audit Charter.

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

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 27 April 2021, there was submitted Report No 296/21 by the Service Leader - Internal Audit advising members of reports submitted to other Angus Council committees, the Council, Tayside Contracts and to the Integration Joint Board that were relevant to the work of the Scrutiny and Audit Committee.

Attached as Appendix 1 to the Report was a list of reports covering the period 1 April 2021 to 12 August 2021.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the Reports listed in Appendix 1 to the Report; and
- (ii) that no further detailed discussion on any of the Reports was required at this time.

8. ANGUS COUNCIL PLAN ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020-2021

With reference to Article 10 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 9 September 2021, there was submitted Report No 297/21 by the Chief Executive presenting the Angus Council Plan Annual Performance Report for 2020-2021.

The Report indicated that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Council, staff, communities and citizens had been significant and wide reaching. The Report linked back to the previous plan and made reference to the future planning around resilience and the update to the plan in March 2021 and also demonstrated the excellent performance by services throughout the pandemic year.

Strategies and plans had been developed to support and complement the plan to include medium-term budget strategy; Workforce Plan; Angus Child Poverty Local Action Report 2020 and Angus Food Growing Strategy.

The Chief Executive in presenting the Report advised that the Angus Council Plan Annual Performance Report (Report No 279/21 refers) had been considered at Angus Council on 9 September 2021 and that the plan had been updated having taken account of members comments.

Councillor Duff welcomed the updated Plan as appended to the Report.

In commending the Report, Councillor McLaren also took the opportunity to highlight a number of key achievements including the Angus on the Go Project, the installation of energy efficient measures undertaken that had resulted in 907 homes being upgraded, significant increase in recycling rates, and the reduction in carbon emissions.

Having heard from Councillor Bell in relation to anti-social behaviour and participatory budgeting, the Committee agreed to note the Angus Council Plan Annual Performance Report 2020-2021, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report.

9. DETAILED RISK REPORTING TO SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 24 August 2021, there was submitted Report No 298/21 by the Service Leader - Internal Audit presenting detailed risk information in line with proposals agreed by the Committee in August 2021, Report 256/21 refers.

The Service Leader – Digital Enablement and IT provided an informative overview of the IT Resilience and Cyber Attack (Business Continuity) Risk, and emphasised that if this risk was realised, it would result in significant and wide ranging interruption to services and potentially the inability to provide IT services due to the loss of data centre and/or other critical infrastructure components.

Updates were provided in terms of recent cyber attacks at Hackney Council and more locally at the SEPA offices in Arbroath, in December 2020.

She provided further context in relation to the main factors that contributed to the potential downtime, and the mitigation controls including the automatic switch over of email and other components to the secondary site in Arbroath; implementation of Office365; highlighting that cloud services were more resilient, particularly during ransomware attacks; data backup and recovery; business continuity plans; regular maintenance of environment, equipment and

security standards; PSN accreditation achieved in August 2021 and the Council wide application strategy.

The main barriers and challenges faced in mitigating these risks included the negotiation of appropriate planned downtime to permit the testing of technical business continuity plans; the resourcing of preventative work alongside the work around the change initiatives; and the budget issues associated with the ongoing cost of security components.

Following questions from Councillors Bell and Braes in relation to the homeworking arrangements impact on the level of risk, and also the recent cyber attack at Brechin High School, the Service Leader – Digital Enablement and IT provided an update.

The Committee agreed to note the information presented in relation to the IT resilience and Cyber Attack (Business Continuing) Risk.