

# ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of HYBRID MEETING of the **SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Tuesday 4 March 2025 at 2.00pm.

**Present:** Councillors GAVIN NICOL, CHRIS BEATTIE, JULIE BELL, SERENA COWDY, LYNNE DEVINE, IAIN GALL, ROSS GREIG, LOUISE NICOL, RONNIE PROCTOR MBE, MARTIN SHEPHERD, LOIS SPEED AND TOMMY STEWART.

Councillor NICOL, Vice-Convener, in the Chair.

*Prior to the commencement of business, the Vice- Convener indicated that a Request to Speak had been received from Mr Steven Morrison and Mrs Catriona Ness in relation to Agenda Item 4. The Committee agreed to hear the request to speak prior to Agenda Item 4.*

## 1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Craig Fotheringham and Derek Wann with Councillor Tommy Stewart substituting for Councillor Wann.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/STATEMENTS OF TRANSPARENCY

Councillor Stewart made a statement of transparency in relation to item 4, in that he had received the Petition and delivered it to Council Officers and had also put the petitioner in touch with Roads colleagues.

Councillor Bell made a statement of transparency in relation to item 4, in that one of the petitioners was friend and former colleague but there had been no discussions with regards to the Petition.

## 3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 23 January 2025 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Vice-Convener.

### REQUEST TO SPEAK

At this stage in the meeting, Mr Morrison and Mrs Ness, the petitioners relating to Report No 71/25, addressed the meeting and provided background information as to the reasons for the petition being submitted, together with photographic evidence which supported the petition.

Following a number of questions from members, the Vice-Convener thanked Mr Morrison and Mrs Ness for their presentation at which point they withdrew to the public benches.

## 4. PETITION – TRAFFIC CONCERNS – BALTIC STREET, MILL STREET, MOUNT STREET AND ROSEHILL MONTROSE

There was submitted Report No 71/25 by the Acting Director of Legal, Governance and Change, advising members of a petition which had been received in connection with residents' concerns regarding excessive use of Baltic Street, Mill Street, Mount Street and Rosehill Montrose and speeding of vehicles, large articulated vehicles and agricultural machinery. A copy of the petition documentation was attached as Appendix 1 to the Report.

Following a number of questions and comments, the Committee agreed to request a fuller report together with an options appraisal from the Service Leader – Roads & Transport to be presented to a future meeting of this Committee.

## 5. SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE - QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 OCTOBER TO 31 DECEMBER 2024

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 December 2024, there was submitted Report No 72/25 by the Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service relating to quarter three, 1 October 2024 to 31 December 2024, on the performance

and activities in support of the priorities in the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Angus 2020 and the wider community planning priorities.

Attached as Appendix 1 to the Report was a detailed breakdown and analysis of all data collected during the reporting period. Headline indicators within the Report provided Members with an overview of the performance summary for the reporting year. The Report also provided an update with regards to Community Safety engagement events and partnership working and highlighted any notable incidents and events.

The Group Commander provided a brief overview of the Report and was heard in relation to the key performance highlights, updating key performance figures for performance management targets and the Community Safety Engagement Programmes.

A number of actions would be taken forward following discussions with regards to statistics relating to fires and the use of accelerants and how information with regards to deaf fire alarms was shared to bring awareness to the community.

Following questions and comments, 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 2024 to 31 December 2024.

**6. POLICE SCOTLAND - ANGUS LOCAL POLICING AREA QUARTERLY REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 OCTOBER 2024 – 31 DECEMBER 2024**

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 December 2024, there was submitted Report No 73/25 by the Chief Superintendent, Police Scotland which updated the Committee on the performance results for the period 1 October 2024 to 31 December 2024.

The Chief Superintendent introduced Grace Ewing, Temporary Area Commander for Angus, and thanked Ross Fitzgerald for all his work and support over the years. He also thanked Gary Aitken for covering this role in the interim.

Thereafter, the Temporary Area Commander provided members with a brief update with regards to the temporary housing of Police Scotland at Angus House. It was noted that work around the role out of body worn video devices continued with the Tayside area starting this process in Spring 2025 and regular updates would be provided to the Committee.

Thereafter members were given an overview of the Report which outlined the performance of Police Scotland and information in relation to some of the work which had taken place within the Angus Local Policing Area. The data provided within the Report was for information purposes to allow members to conduct their scrutiny responsibilities under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.

Following questions and comments, the Committee agreed to note the Angus Local Policing Area Quarterly Report for the period 1 October 2024 to 31 December 2024.

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

*At this stage, the meeting was adjourned for a 10 minute comfort break. The meeting resumed at 15:51.*

**7. ANGUSALIVE 2024/25 Q1&2 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 December 2024 there was submitted Report No 74/25 by the Acting Director of Legal, Governance and Change presenting ANGUSalive's Performance Report for Quarters 1 and 2 of 2024/25 which reviewed the governance and assurance arrangements in place.

The Report covered the period 1 April to 30 September 2024 and provided high level information with regards to priorities and actions that had been achieved, with key highlights of service activity which included how the five service areas were performing against their key performance indicators (KPI's) and how the organisation was performing in terms of customer satisfaction, safety, health and wellbeing, information governance, marketing and communication. KPI's continued to be developed and refined together with information on human resources, health and wellbeing, volunteering, disability and inclusion, and holiday activities.

A number of actions would be taken forward following discussions with regard to providing a breakdown of cost for activities and a more detailed breakdown with regards to business areas of complaints which would be circulated to members.

Following questions and comments the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the new arrangements for ANGUSalve performance reports to be brought to this Committee on a six-monthly basis, following consideration by the ANGUSalve board; and
- (ii) to note the ANGUSalve 2024/25 Q1&2 Performance Report within Appendix 1 of the Report.

At this point, Kirsty Hunter Chief Executive AngusAlive left the meeting.

## **8. EXTERNAL AUDIT – ANNUAL AUDIT PLANS**

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 23 April 2024, there was submitted Report No 75/25 by the Director of Finance presenting the External Auditor's Annual Audit Plans for 2024/25 for Angus Council and Angus Council Charitable Trust.

Mark Laird, Audit Scotland, provided a summary of the Annual Audit Plans 2024/25 and highlighted the main areas including Materiality, Wider Scope and Best Value. The 2024/25 significant audit risks were outlined in Exhibit 2 of the Appendix to the Report.

The Committee, having reviewed the Report, agreed to note the proposed External Auditor's Annual Audit Plan for Angus Council and for Angus Council Charitable funds 2024/25, as detailed in Appendices A and B to the Report.

At this point in the meeting, Mark Laird, Audit Scotland, left the meeting.

## **9. INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITY UPDATE**

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 23 January 2025, there was submitted Report No 76/25 by Service Leader – Internal Audit providing assurance to members through an update on Internal Audit matters including main findings from reports issued since the date of the last meeting, and progress with implementation on agreed Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Actions.

The Chief Executive provided members with an overview of the Report including Appendix 1 which detailed the progress of Internal Audit activity within the Council from January 2025, including an update on progress with planned audit work and implementing internal audit and counter fraud recommendations. The table within Appendix 1 noted the stage of progress of all audits in the agreed 2024/25 plan and those carried forward from 2023/24 in June 2024.

Within the Report it was noted that 15 duplicate payments totalling £16,826 had been made in October, one in November totalling £334 and two in December totalling £172. Some of these had been identified by services prior to the audit and £16,700 had been recovered at the beginning of February 2025, with the recovery of the outstanding duplicate payments being pursued.

Councillor Shepherd requested a further breakdown of the 15 overpayments and it was agreed that this information would be circulated to members.

The Service Leader – HR, OD & Business Support provided an update with regards to the introduction of the Digital Sickness Absence recording with positive feedback being received. This would enable more accurate reporting in the future.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the update on progress with the planned internal audit work, detailed within Appendix 1 of the Report; and

- (ii) to note management's progress in implementing Internal Audit and Counter Fraud recommendations, detailed within Appendix 1 of the Report.

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

With reference to Article 10 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 27 August 2024, there was submitted Report No 77/25 by Service Leader – Internal Audit, advising members of reports submitted to other Angus Council Committees, the Council and partner bodies that were relevant to the work of the Scrutiny and Audit Committee.

The Chief Executive provided members with an overview of Appendix 1, which provided a summary of reports submitted to other Committees which were relevant to the work of this Committee for the period 18 July 2024 to 3 February 2025 for key partnership bodies. An error was highlighted with regards to IJB Report No 84/24 which had called on 26 February 2025.

The Committee, having Reviewed the Reports listed within Appendix 1 of the Report, agreed to note the contents of the Report.

## **11. REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS (SCOTLAND) ACT 2000 – QUARTERLY REPORT**

With reference to Article 11 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 22 October 2024, there was submitted Report No 78/25 by the Acting Director of Legal, Governance and Change 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 15 October 2024 to 15 January 2025.

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 period 15 October 2024 to 15 January 2025 there were no directed covert surveillance activities authorised and no authorisations in respect of the use of a Covert Human Intelligence Source.

The Committee agreed to note that no authorisations had been granted for surveillance and other investigatory activities regulated by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000, in the period 15 October 2024 to 15 January 2025.