

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of HYBRID MEETING of **ANGUS COUNCIL** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Thursday 7 September 2023 at 2.00pm.

Present: PROVOST BRIAN BOYD, DEPUTE PROVOST LINDA CLARK, Councillors CHRIS BEATTIE, JULIE BELL, KENNY BRAES, DAVID CHEAPE, LYNNE DEVINE, HEATHER DORAN, BRENDA DURNO, CRAIG FOTHERINGHAM, IAIN GALL, ROSS GREIG, MARK MCDONALD, IAN MCLAREN, GEORGE MEECHAN, LLOYD MELVILLE, GAVIN NICOL, LOUISE NICOL, RONNIE PROCTOR MBE, JILL SCOTT, MARTIN SHEPHERD, LOIS SPEED, TOMMY STEWART, DEREK WANN and BETH WHITESIDE.

PROVOST BOYD, in the Chair

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Serena Cowdy, Bill Duff and David Fairweather.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OR STATEMENTS OF TRANSPARENCY

There were no declarations of interest or statements of transparency made.

3. MINUTES OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES

(i) Minutes of Council Meetings

(a) Angus Council

The minute of meeting of Angus Council of 22 June 2023 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

(b) Special Angus Council

The minute of Special meeting of Angus Council of 24 August 2023 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

(ii) Minutes of Committees

(c) Development Standards Committee

The minute of meeting of the Development Standards Committee of 13 June 2023 was submitted and noted.

(d) Development Management Review Committee

The minute of meeting of the Development Management Review Committee of 13 June 2023 was submitted and noted.

(e) Development Management Review Committee

The minute of meeting of the Development Management Review Committee of 15 June 2023 was submitted and noted.

(f) Scrutiny and Audit Committee

The minute of meeting of the Scrutiny and Audit Committee of 15 June 2023 was submitted and noted.

(g) Civic Licensing Committee (Special)

The minute of Special meeting of the Civic Licensing Committee of 20 June 2023 was submitted and noted.

(h) Development Management Review Committee

The minute of meeting of the Development Management Review Committee of 29 June 2023 was submitted and noted.

(i) Development Standards Committee

The minute of meeting of the Development Standards Committee of 15 August 2023 was submitted and noted.

(j) Development Management Review Committee

The minute of meeting of the Development Management Review Committee of 15 August 2023 was submitted and noted.

(k) Communities Committee

The minute of meeting of the Communities Committee of 15 August 2023 was submitted and noted.

(l) Civic Licensing Committee

The minute of meeting of the Civic Licensing Committee of 17 August 2023 was submitted and noted.

4. MOTION IN TERMS OF STANDING ORDER 25(1)

Scottish Youth Parliament Elections

Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor Melville, moved the following motion:

'This council recognises that elections to the Scottish Youth Parliament are taking place in November 2023 and congratulates all the young people in Angus who have put themselves forward as candidates. It is vital that young people understand citizenship and democracy from an early age and engage in democracy and the Scottish Youth Parliament is central to that.

Therefore, Angus Council:

1. Recognises the Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) as the democratically elected voice of Scotland's Young People;
2. Notes that any young person in Scotland aged 14 to 25 can apply to be candidate in the SYP elections either for their constituency or national voluntary organisation and that this council area covers both Angus South and Angus North and Mearns constituencies;
3. Encourages young people aged between 12 to 25 to vote in the SYP elections and to participate in this vital sphere of local and national democracy;
4. Highlights that the Scottish Youth Parliament has made significant contributions towards public life and young people's representation in Scotland by campaigning on issues important to young people and calling upon the Scottish Government to meaningfully engage with young people;
5. Affirms that members of the Scottish Youth Parliament for Angus South, and the member of the Scottish Youth Parliament for Angus North and Mearns will continue to be supported by Angus Council to make contributions to public life and representation of young people in Angus, whilst also representing the views of young people in Angus on a national level;

6. Agrees that elections to the Scottish Youth Parliament will be instrumental in promoting the opportunities the Scottish Youth Parliament can offer to young people in Angus - hopefully inspiring young people with a passion for community, charity, politics and democracy to have their voices heard;
7. Instructs officers to continue to support and promote these important elections to young people across our county; and
8. Wishes all candidates the very best in their campaigns.'

The Council resolved to approve the motion.

5. APPOINTMENTS

(i) Tayside Contracts Joint Committee

The Council was advised that Councillor Stewart had intimated his resignation from the Tayside Contracts Joint Committee with immediate effect.

The Council resolved to appoint Councillor Fotheringham to the Tayside Contracts Joint Committee.

6. ANGUS CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of the Scrutiny and Audit Committee of 22 August 2023, there was submitted Report No 212/23 by the Chief Executive and Members of Angus Chief Officers' Group presenting the Angus Child Protection Committee Annual Report for the period August 2021 to July 2022.

The Annual Report presented the work undertaken across Angus by individual agencies and in partnership to deliver national, Tayside-wide, and local child protection outcomes to improve the lives of children at risk of harm. The Angus Child Protection Committee had continued to work together to improve child protection practice in Angus and the Report highlighted a number of areas of work together with the key trends and areas for future development and progression.

Alison Todd, the Independent Chair of the Child Protection Committee was present and highlighted the work undertaken across Angus by individual agencies and in partnership to deliver National, Tayside wide, and local child protection outcomes to improve the lives of children at risk of harm.

Having heard a number of members pay tribute to Mrs Alison Todd, Independent Chair and the members of the Child Protection Committee, the Council resolved: -

- (i) to note and endorse the contents of the Angus Child Protection Committee (ACPC) Annual Report 2021 to 2022 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report; and
- (ii) to note the Council's cross departmental responsibilities in relation to Child Protection.

7. ANGUS VOILENCE AGAINST WOMEN PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2021 - 2022

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of the Scrutiny and Audit Committee of 22 August 2023, there was submitted Report No 213/23 by the Chief Executive presenting the Angus Violence Against Women Partnership (AVAWP) Annual Report for April 2021 to March 2022. Equally Safe was Scotland's national strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls, with local Violence Against Women Partnerships providing the multi-agency forum to deliver this. Chief Officers across Angus individually and collectively had responsibility to ensure that there were clear reporting processes in place between AVAWP and the Chief Officers Group.

The Report presented the work undertaken in Angus by a range of partners to deliver local, Tayside and national initiatives, policies and frameworks to improve the lives of women and children living with Gender Based Violence.

Mr Ewen West, Independent Chair of the Angus Violence Against Women Partnership highlighted the main points within the Report.

The Council, having welcomed the Report, resolved: -

- (i) to note and endorse the contents of the Angus Violence Against Women Partnership Annual Report 2021 to 2022 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report; and
- (ii) to note the Council's cross departmental responsibilities in relation to Gender Based Violence.

8. ANNUAL CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER REPORT 2022-2023

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of the Scrutiny and Audit Committee of 22 August 2023, there was submitted Report No 214/23 by the Chief Social Work Officer presenting the Angus Council Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report for 2022 to 2023.

The Report indicated there was a requirement to ensure oversight and accountability within the local authority for all social work and social care services, including those delegated to the Integration Joint Board.

The Report and Appendix provided an overview of how Angus Council performed in the delivery of a wide range of social work and social care services, including commissioned services during 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

The Chief Social Work Officer thereafter provided a summary of the key priorities for social work and social care for 2023-24 including work to ensure sufficient provision of local care options for children, young people and adults, continued development of support for carers and whole family support alongside managing the implications emerging from the National Care Service Bill and other significant policy and legislative developments.

The Council resolved to note and endorse the contents of the Chief Social Work Annual Report for 2022/2023 as outlined in Appendix 1 to the Report.

9. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of the adjourned meeting of the Scrutiny and Audit Committee of 29 August 2023, there was submitted Report No 219/23 by the Director of Finance detailing the Council's treasury management arrangements, activity and performance during 2022/23.

The Report indicated that the financial year 2022/23 had seen significant events that impacted on treasury operations related to the Economy and Interest Rates. As a result, Angus Council continued to hold higher temporary cash balances in 2022/23 which was due mainly to additional grants received from Scottish Government and increased levels of slippage of a number of projects within the capital programme. In a bid to combat inflationary pressures within the economy the Bank of England implemented a series of increases to the Bank Base Rate, which rose from 0.75% in April 2022 to 4.25% in March 2023. Investment returns followed this upward trend which allowed the Council to benefit from improved returns as investments matured and surplus cash was re-invested. The full benefit of those higher returns would not be realised until these new investments matured in the 2023/24 financial year.

The Director of Finance provided a brief overview of the Report and also highlighted the significant events that had impacted on treasury operations during 2022/23.

The Council, having reviewed the Report, resolved: -

- (i) to note the 2022/23 Treasury Management Annual Report and associated Appendix to the Report, and
- (ii) to note the updated Treasury Management Practices as detailed in the Report.

10. ANGUS COUNCIL PLAN ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2022/23

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 8 September 2022, there was submitted Report No 239/23 by the Chief Executive presenting the Angus Council Plan Annual Performance Report for 2022-2023 covering the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

The annual performance report for 2022/23 focused on what had been achieved over the previous 12 months including key statistics, improvements and how they were progressing. The performance report was designed to show how the Council was delivering on the Council's vision to make Angus a great place to Live, Work and Visit. The Report built on the work undertaken on the Strategy on a Page and the Best Value Audit which was shown highlighted throughout the document and would be the focus on the performance reporting moving forward.

A number of members spoke and generally welcomed the Plan and what was seen as an excellent Report.

The Council, having reviewed the Report, resolved to approve the 2022/23 Angus Council Plan Annual Performance Report, as appended to the Report.

11. SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE 2022/23 ANNUAL REPORT

With reference to Article 17 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 8 September 2022, there was submitted Report No 240/23 by the Chief Executive presenting the Scrutiny and Audit Committee 2022/23 annual report for comment and approval.

The Annual Report, provided at Appendix 1 to the Report, had been prepared to inform Angus Council of the work undertaken by the Scrutiny and Audit Committee during 2022/23. It included an action plan for 2023/24 and an update on the actions identified in last year's annual report.

The Report concluded "As Convener of the Scrutiny & Audit Committee, I am satisfied that the Committee complies with the Cipfa Position Statement. The work undertaken by the Committee during 2022/23 fulfils the Committee remit and provides reasonable assurance that the Council's control environment, risk management arrangements, and governance framework operated effectively and efficiently during 2022/23. Actions have been put in place to address any weaknesses identified and the Committee will continue to monitor completion of these actions. Significant weaknesses identified have been included in the Annual Governance Statement and Corporate Governance action plan as appropriate."

The Council resolved:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Scrutiny and Audit Committee 2022/23 Annual Report, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report;
- (ii) that no further detail or assurances were required from the Scrutiny and Audit Committee; and
- (iii) to approve the Scrutiny and Audit Committee 2022/23 Annual Report.

Councillor Bell left the meeting during consideration of the following item.

12. LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK (LTFPF)

There was submitted Report No 241/23 by the Director of Finance presenting a long term financial planning framework for the Council to adopt and use to aid future service and financial planning.

The Framework was intended to complement existing service and financial planning arrangements such as the annual preparation of a Medium Term Budget Strategy and the annual Review of the Long Term Affordability of the Council's Capital Budget Plans. The Framework was the first such long term financial planning tool prepared for the Council and also included the Council's first detailed financial resilience assessment.

The purpose of the Longer Term Financial Planning Framework (The Framework) was to assess in broad terms what issues and circumstances may affect the Council's finances over the next 5 to 10 years and to use the assessment to help plan more detailed work on medium term financial planning and budget preparation alongside medium term corporate and service planning. The Framework was intended as a strategic planning tool which focused on key themes rather than detailed financial calculations. It was envisaged The Framework would be reviewed and updated on a 3 to 5 year cycle or more regularly if required.

The Council resolved: -

- (i) to note the contents of the Report and Appendix A, and in particular the need to continue to plan over the medium to long term to meet the significant financial challenges which the Council faced;
- (ii) to note the results of the financial resilience assessment, as outlined in Section 4 of Appendix A;
- (iii) to note the challenges and concerns regarding the Council's long term financial sustainability, as outlined in Section 13 of Appendix A;
- (iv) to approve the Long Term Financial Planning Framework, attached as Appendix A to the Report, as a forward planning tool to inform future service and financial planning; and
- (v) to note the intention to update the Framework every 3 to 5 years or more regularly if required.

13. 2024/25 BUDGET COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 24 June 2021, there was submitted Joint Report No 242/23 by the Director of Finance and the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth advising members and seeking approval of a plan for communication and engagement as part of the Council's 2024/25 planning and budget setting process.

The proposed plan for communication and engagement was attached as Appendix A to the Report and covered the period September 2023 to March 2024 and the variety of activity it was intended take place over that 7 month period. It was also proposed that implementation of the plan be monitored through the Policy & Budget Strategy Group (PBSG).

The Council resolved: -

- (i) to note the background to the proposals and that these would be taken forward in line with the Council's Communication, Engagement and Consultation Policy;
- (ii) to approve the 2024/25 budget engagement plan, as set out in Appendix A to the Report; and
- (iii) that implementation of the plan be monitored through the Policy & Budget Strategy Group.

Councillor Bell re-joined the meeting at this point.

14. LOCAL AUTHORITY COVID-19 ECONOMIC RECOVERY LACER FUNDING

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 13 March 2023, there was submitted Report No 243/23 by the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth which provided an update on projects funded using Scottish Government Local Authority Covid-19 Economic Recovery (LACER) funding.

The Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth introduced the Report and advised of a typographical error on page 2 of the Appendix and that the funding available for town centres was £10,000 each therefore, the figure for Carnoustie and Forfar should read £20,000. She also advised that an application form had now been received from Carnoustie and officers were awaiting final information from Forfar which meant that six out of the seven Angus towns had now applied for the available funding.

Members asked questions in relation to the Child Poverty Welfare Rights and Social Care discretionary funds and the Director responded. Discussion also took place on the low uptake in relation to the Targeted Free Bus Transport.

Thereafter, the Council resolved:

- (i) to note the update on progress with previously approved projects using LACER funding set out in Appendix 1 to the Report;
- (ii) to note that a future report would be brought to members to provide a further update on progress with these schemes; and
- (iii) to note ongoing discussions to develop proposals for use of the £275,000 allocated as part of the budget setting 2023/24 to deliver further projects aligned with LACER principles and that a Report would be brought back to Committee with proposals for approval.

15. CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM AND DIRECTORATE REDESIGN

There was submitted Report No 244/23 by the Chief Executive providing an update on changes being made to the Corporate Leadership Team and Directorate structures as a result of the retirement of the Director of Strategic Policy, Transformation and Public Sector Reform. The Report also provided an overview of the savings being made to contribute to the target within the Change Plan.

The Report indicated that in seeking to streamline the Corporate Leadership Team it had been decided not to replace the post of Director Strategic Policy, Transformation and Public Sector Reform but to reallocate the roles and functions of that directorate to other directorates within the Council. This would result in a saving being made that would contribute towards the £2m target set against Organisational Design in the Finance & Change Plan.

The Council resolved: -

- (i) to note the changes being made to the Corporate Leadership Team and Directorate structures within the Council following the retiral of the Director of Strategic Policy, Transformation and Public Sector Reform; and
- (ii) to delegate authority to the Director of Legal & Democratic Services to update the scheme of governance of the Council, in particular the Scheme of Delegation to Officers to reflect the changes being made to the Corporate Leadership Team and Directorate structures as detailed in the Report.