

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of HYBRID MEETING of the **SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Tuesday 22 October 2024 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors CRAIG FOTHERINGHAM, GAVIN NICOL, CHRIS BEATTIE, JULIE BELL, SERENA COWDY, LYNNE DEVINE, IAIN GALL, ROSS GREIG, LOUISE NICOL, RONNIE PROCTOR (MBE), LINDA CLARK, LOIS SPEED and DEREK WANN.

Councillor FOTHERINGHAM, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor Martin Shepherd with Councillor Linda Clark substituting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/STATEMENTS OF TRANSPARENCY

Councillor Greig made a statement of transparency in relation to item 5, in that he was a Councillor for the Forfar area, which had no bearing on the report submitted.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the meetings of this Committee of 27 August 2024 and 24 September 2024 were approved as correct records and signed by the Convener.

4. REQUEST TO SPEAK

The Chair intimated that a request to speak had been received from Mr Ian Nimmo White, in relation to Report No 300/24 – Petition – Traffic Calming, Gowanbank, Forfar. The Committee noted that Mr Nimmo White was the petitioner and agreed to hear from Mr Nimmo White

Mr Nimmo White addressed the meeting and provided background information on his involvement with the petition headed “Traffic Calming, Gowanbank, Forfar” which requested members consider various traffic calming measures. Mr Nimmo White provided members with detailed reasons for the petition being submitted by residents.

Following a number of questions from members, the Chair thanked Mr Nimmo White for his presentation, following which he withdrew from the meeting.

5. PETITION – TRAFFIC CALMING, GOWANBANK, FORFAR

There was submitted Report No 300/24 by the Director of Legal, Governance and Change, advising members of a petition which had been received in connection with residents’ concerns with the speeding of vehicles at Gowanbank, Forfar.

The Petition requested members to consider various traffic calming measures, which were outlined within the Report along with details of the rationale for the proposed measures. A copy of the petition documentation was attached as Appendix 1 to the Report.

The Committee agreed to refer the matter to Angus Council for consideration.

6. ANGUS HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

With reference to Article 2 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 29 August 2023, there was submitted Report No 301/24 by the Chief Finance Officer updating members on Angus Health and Social Care Partnership’s performance during 2023/24.

The Report built on previous performance reports presented to this Committee and demonstrated some of the improvements being made across the Health and Social Care Partnership and how progress was being made towards delivering the vision, strategic shifts and planned improved outcomes for the people of Angus.

The Head of Community Health and Care Services provided an overview of the key areas of the Report and highlighted the four Priority areas which were embedded within the core work of

the Partnership. Annex A of the Report provided members with a summary of Core National Indicators and how Angus performed relative to the national average.

Following a number of questions, the Committee agreed , to note the 2023/24 Angus Integration Joint Board Annual Performance Report.

7. CHANGE PROGRAMME UPDATE

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee of 3 September 2024, there was submitted Report No 243/24 by the Director of Finance providing a progress update in relation to the Council's Change Programme, covering the 3-year period, 2024/25 to 2026/27.

The Report indicated that while good progress had generally been made, there had also been some adjustment and slippage to several savings resulting in an updated target position of £5.938m for 2024/25, an in-year decrease of £0.370m, and the overall 3-year total reducing by £0.030m, to £12.175m (originally £12.205m). The amended position was due to a review of projects being undertaken to measure the deliverability of the full savings target as work continued towards achieving the 2024/25 position.

The Director of Finance provided members with an update with regards to the value of change programme. The Report stated a completed position however a number of other projects had since been completed with the overall position now 61% against this target. He also informed members that at the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 3 September, the decision of the Committee was to remove the planned saving of £150,000 in financial year 2024/25 from the Economic Development Review with the financial impact of that cancelled saving being met from the Council's uncommitted general fund reserve.

Following questions, the Committee noted the progress update in relation to the Council's current Change Programme 2024/25 to 2026/27, along with the summary included within Appendix 1 of the Report, having noted the updated position as detailed above.

8. ANNUAL CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER REPORT 2023-2024

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of the Family, Education and Justice Committee of 24 September 2024, there was submitted Report No 283/24 by the Chief Social Work Officer presenting the Angus Council Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report for 2023 to 2024.

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 2023-2024, and highlighted the pressure on services, with high service demand continuing over the year and the delivery of high-quality services within the budgetary restraints experienced across the council and Health and Social Care Partnership.

Following questions and comments from members, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the Annual Chief Social Work Officer Report for 2023/2024 as outlined in the Appendix to the Report.

9. ANGUS COUNCIL PLAN ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023/24

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 12 September 2024, there was submitted Report No 272/24 by the Chief Executive presenting the Angus Council Plan Annual Performance Report for 2023/2024 covering the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

The annual performance report for 2023/24 focused on what had been achieved over the previous 12 months including an overview of performance and progress with improvement actions, provided an update in relation to the Performance Indicators and included case studies which reflected examples of the work progressed over the year to 31 March 2024.

Following a number of questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the 2023/24 Angus Council Plan Annual Performance Report, as outlined in the Appendix to the Report.

10. NATIONAL FRAUD INITIATIVE UPDATE

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 28 October 2023, there was submitted Report No 303/24 by the Service Leader - Internal Audit advising members of the publication of Audit Scotland's Report 'The National Fraud Initiative in Scotland 2024', providing members with information on the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) planning for 2024/25 as well as providing members with a final update on the outcomes of NFI 2022/23

The Report set out a summary of NFI 2022/23 recommendations and Angus Council's position to these. The Report provided a summary of the national and local outcomes with estimated costs and savings which totalled £21.5(M) nationally and £0.221(M) for Angus, which included 0.181 notional figure for blue badges which should have been cancelled. Members were asked to also note errors made within Creditors of £22,597 and Council Tax Reduction of £15,135 with an assurance that actions were in place to recover this money.

Participation in NFI was an integral part of the Council's corporate approach to the prevention and detection of fraud and error. The 2024/25 NFI exercise was due to start in autumn 2024 and would be reported within the courter fraud update reports to this Committee.

Following questions, the Committee agreed:

- (i) to note the Audit Scotland report 'The National Fraud Initiative in Scotland 2024';
- (ii) to note the self-appraisal checklist within Appendix 1 of the Report;
- (iii) to note the local outcomes from National Fraud Initiative 2022/23: £15,135 from incorrect council tax reduction; £22,597 from duplicate payments and a notional value of £181,350 from 279 cancelled Blue Badge permits; and
- (iv) to note the continued participation of Angus Council in National Fraud Initiative.

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

With reference to Article 12 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 27 August 2024, there was submitted Report No 304/24 by the 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 1 August 2024 to 15 October 2024.

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 1 August 2024 to 15 October 2024 two covert surveillance activities had been authorised and there were no authorisations in respect of the use of a Covert Human Intelligence Source.

The Committee agreed to note that two authorisations had been granted for surveillance and other investigatory activities regulated by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000, in the period 1 August 2024 to 15 October 2024.