

## **REPORT TO BUCHAN AREA COMMITTEE – 6 SEPTEMBER 2022**

### **ANNUAL SCRUTINY AND IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2021-22**

#### **1 Executive Summary/Recommendations**

**1.1** The Scrutiny and Improvement at Aberdeenshire Guidance in Part 4 of the Scheme of Governance requires each Committee to consider an Annual Scrutiny and Improvement Report. The report includes highlights of key scrutiny activity undertaken by the Committee over the past year and outlines areas for inclusion in the scrutiny programme for the coming year.

#### **1.2 The Committee is recommended to:**

- 1. consider and comment on the activities detailed in the report; and**
- 2. consider and agree the proposed programme of scrutiny activity for 2022-23**

#### **2 Decision-Making Route**

**2.1** Section 1.6, Part 4A of The Scheme of Governance provides that each Area and Policy Committee and Audit Committee should receive and review an annual report of the Committee's scrutiny and improvement activity. This report provides an opportunity for Members of the Buchan Area Committee to consider its scrutiny activity in the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

#### **3 Discussion**

**3.1** This report sets out the various types of scrutiny undertaken by the Buchan Area Committee for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. It provides detailed information regarding formal and informal activities that demonstrate how the Committee undertakes its scrutiny role. The report also provides an opportunity to reflect on approaches to scrutiny in Buchan and suggest potential improvements for future years.

**3.2** Key areas of the Committee's scrutiny activity over the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 are summarised below, with detail of actions taken as a result.

## Past Activity

### 3.3 Committee Review Process

3.3.1 Where Committees want to undertake further scrutiny, they can either seek a further report from the Chief Officer providing further detail on the issues identified or instigate the three stage process outlined in the diagram on page 6 of the 'Scrutiny and Improvement at Aberdeenshire Guidance' known as the Committee Review Process. The Committee did not undertake a Committee Review Process in 2021/22.

### 3.4 Member Promoted Issues

3.4.1 The Buchan Area Committee has not raised any issues through the Member Promoted Issues (MPI) process.

### 3.5 Petitions

3.5.1 The Buchan Area Committee did not receive any Petitions during this period.

### 3.6 Formal Scrutiny

3.6.1 Over the course of the reporting period, the Committee has also reviewed performance and monitored service delivery when considering management information reports, performance reports, policy development review plans and strategies and budget monitoring reports.

Examples of where the Committee has added value include the following areas of work where the Committee has considered the policies, strategies and plans and has provided comments to the relevant Policy Committee or Service:

- Road Safety and Action Plan
- Public Road Network – Bridges Work Bank Prioritisation – Draft Policy and Procedure
- Draft Gypsy Traveller Site Provision Strategy 2021-2026
- Roads, Bridges, Harbours, Coast & Flooding, Landscape and Transportation Works Programme 2021-2022
- Analysis of Attainment and Achievement in Accredited Awards of Young People in Buchan Secondary Schools During 2019-20
- Buchan Area Plan
- Draft Engagement and Participation Policy 2021
- Annual Scrutiny Report – 2020/21
- Taxis and Private Hire Car Licensing Review of Advertisement Policy
- Aberdeenshire Council Built Heritage Strategy 2018-21 Review and Built Heritage Strategy 2021-24

- Aberdeenshire Council Outdoor Access Strategy 2018-21 Review and Outdoor Access Strategy 2021-24
- Draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategies and Plan for the North East Local Plan District
- Strategic Housing Investment 2022-2027
- Town Centre First Principle
- Aberdeenshire Licensing Board Review of Statement of Licensing Principles 2022-2025
- Area Performance Update
- Aberdeenshire Council Early Learning and Childcare Admissions Policy
- Draft Aberdeenshire Council Pollinator Action Plan 2022 to 2027
- Roads Policy Review
- Aberdeenshire Council Planning Information and Delivery Team Strategy 2022-2025
- Tackling Poverty & Inequalities – Progress Report
- Aberdeenshire Council Empty Homes Advice and Information Service
- Aberdeenshire Charities Trust (ACT2) – Financial Management

### 3.7 Informal Scrutiny

3.7.1 In addition to formal meetings, the Committee has undertaken a large number of informal meetings which are not open to the public. These include informal seminars/briefing sessions and individual Ward Meetings. The fact that these meetings are not subject to the same time constraints as formal meetings means that Councillors are able to consider issues in more depth. The private nature of these sessions also means that Councillors are able to have open and detailed dialogue with Officers about activity and potential solutions to issues that have arisen.

3.7.2 **Seminars, Briefing Sessions and Site Visits** – In the past year the sessions as listed below have been held for Buchan Councillors. The subject matter of these were as follows:-

- SeaFit Programme Briefing
- Buchan Community Planning Joint Meetings
- Early Learning and Childcare Update
- CLD Briefing
- Meetings with Secondary Head Teacher's
- Informal Meeting re Infrastructure Services Work Programme
- Informal Briefing re Communities, Poverty & Health and Wellbeing Hubs
- Meetings of Chapel Street Member Officer Working Group
- Day Opportunities Review
- Informal Meetings with BDP re Area Committee Grant Scheme
- Ward Meetings
- Peterhead Development Partnership Meetings
- Liaison Group Meetings
- Quarterly Informal Meetings with Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- Levelling Up Fund Briefings

- Area Performance Discussion
- Visit to Dales Park Nursery
- Informal Meeting re Sustaining Choices
- Visit to St Andrew's School, Inverurie
- Discussion re Peterhead Traffic Management Proposals
- Introduction to Chief Officer, HSCP
- Informal Briefing with LLA
- Rights of the Child Presentation
- Discussion re Public Libraries in Buchan
- Crown Estates Funding Briefing
- Review of Scrutiny Arrangements & Programme of Scrutiny Activity
- Locality Plan Discussion
- Visit to Former Terex Site, Catto Drive, Peterhead
- MS Teams Training
- Informal Meeting with Partnership Manager, HSCP
- Informal Tackling Poverty and Inequalities Discussion

3.8 At its meeting on 5 October, the Area Committee received a report presenting performance management information in a revised format. The Committee agreed to note the new performance framework and provisionally agreed the performance indicators subject to a further report coming back to Area Committee showing updated targets. On 7 December 2021, the Area Committee considered the update report on Area Performance. The Committee agreed to acknowledge the reporting schedule and scope of performance reporting, and requested that the Area Manager provide progress updates.

3.8.1 The new performance framework reports commenced in 2022 on the following basis:-

11 January	Business Services
1 February –	Environment and Infrastructure Services
	Buchan Area Plan
15 March -	Education and Children's Services

3.8.2 The three directorates then met informally with the Area Committee for an in depth discussion about service activity in March 2022. Scheduled reporting and informal sessions are planned for the coming year.

3.9 **Partner Organisations** – Since changes were made to the structures of Scottish Fire and Rescue, Police Scotland and the Health and Social Care Partnership, the Area Committee has had a role in scrutinising their work at a local level. Initially this was done through reporting to Committee twice formally and twice informally throughout the year.

- 3.9.1 In the past year, Scottish Fire and Rescue has continued, to some degree, with this practice but Police Scotland indicated that it was no longer in a position to provide a formal report to Committee. The local Chief Inspector has, however, continued to meet with Members informally within Ward Meetings. No performance information was provided from the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) in the last financial year.
- 3.9.2 The HSCP has implemented a revised approach to performance reporting to the Integration Joint Board (IJB) in the last year. This continues to be refined and feedback sought to ensure IJB members have the assurance required in terms of progress against transformational projects under the HSCP's strategic delivery plan. Revised proposals for performance reporting under the HSCP's new strategic delivery plan are being presented to the Senior Management Team (SMT) and IJB over the next month. Subject to approval, revised performance reporting will commence from January 2023 in line with the HSCP's new strategic delivery plan, to include reinstatement of reports to Area Committees.
- 3.10 The Local Community Planning Group joins together with the Area Management Team (Council Officers) and the Area Committee twice a year to collectively consider opportunities, challenges and outcomes for Buchan communities. In 2021/22, three joint meetings took place virtually. In April 2021, the focus for the joint meeting was the refresh of the Buchan Community Plan and Peterhead Locality Plan, taking account of the recent Community Impact Assessment which asked residents, businesses and community how the pandemic had affected their communities. The meeting considered support required to assist communities through the crisis should be developed into actions within the plans and how the community spirit that had been established through the pandemic could be continued in the future. The second meeting in December 2021 focused on Community (Local) Wealth Building and the role this can play in supporting community enterprise and use of vacant properties. The final joint session of the year in March 2022 was codeveloped and codelivered by a group of young people from Peterhead and Mintlaw Academies and considered a partnership approach to developing youth provision in Buchan, focused on the priorities of young people.
- 3.11 **Statement of Outstanding Business (SOB)** – The Buchan Area Committee now operates a Statement of Outstanding Business; it was put in place to allow the Committee to request specific actions which were in addition to Officer recommendations in reports. More recently, a timescale column has been added to the Statement which is reported routinely to each meeting, allowing Councillors to better understand how issues are being progressed and how these are being actioned against timescales.
- 3.12 **Ward Meetings** – In Buchan there are 3 electoral Wards:-  
 Ward 4 – Central Buchan (4 Councillors)  
 Ward 5 – Peterhead North and Rattray (4 Councillors)  
 Ward 6 – Peterhead South and Cruden (3 Councillors)

3.12.1 Ward Meetings are arranged by the Area Manager and are generally held every 6 weeks. They are used both to brief Councillors on activity and issues within the Ward and to allow Councillors to raise issues or to seek updates on ongoing activity. Council Officers will attend these meetings as appropriate to provide information and to respond to the issues raised by Councillors. The structure of these meetings allow Councillors to scrutinise more carefully the work of the Council in their electoral ward.

### **Programme of Future Activity**

3.13 The proposed programme of performance activity for 2022/23 forms Appendix 1.

## **4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk**

4.1 Specify which of the Council's Priorities are relevant to the report.

<b>Pillar</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Our People	Education Health & Wellbeing
Our Environment	Infrastructure Resilient Communities
Our Economy	Economy & Enterprise Estate Modernisation

Underpinning the Priorities are a number of key principles. They are: right people, right places, right time; responsible finances; climate and sustainability;

Community Planning Partnership Local Outcome Improvement Plans; human rights and public protection; tackling poverty and inequalities; digital infrastructure and economy.

This report helps deliver the Strategic Priority "Economy and Enterprise" within the Pillar "Our Economy", having the right people, in the right place, at the right time.

4.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Financial			<b>X</b>
Staffing	<b>X</b>		
Equalities and Fairer Duty Scotland			<b>X</b>
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing			<b>X</b>
Climate Change and Sustainability			<b>X</b>
Health and Wellbeing			<b>X</b>
Town Centre First			<b>X</b>

- 4.3 The screening section as part of Stage One of the Integrated Impact Assessment process has not identified the requirement for any further detailed assessments to be undertaken as the report contains information about the scrutiny activity of the Committee which would not have any specific impact on any of the protected characteristics or direct implications on any of the elements detailed above.
- 4.4 Staffing resource will be required to support the Committee with the proposed future scrutiny activity. This will be provided within existing resources.
- 4.5 Various risks will have been identified as relevant to the areas of business covered in the content reports for this annual report and were identified when the individual matters were considered. There are no risks, either at a Corporate or Directorate level, relevant to this annual report on scrutiny.

## **5 Scheme of Governance**

- 5.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report. They are satisfied that the report complies with the fund relevant legislation.
- 5.2 The Committee is able to consider this item in terms of Section B.11.3 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it refers to scrutiny activity undertaken by this Committee.

**Ritchie Johnson**

**Director of Business Services**

Report prepared by Theresa Wood, Buchan Area Committee Officer  
August 2022

**List of Appendices – Appendix 1 – Programme of Scrutiny Activity**

## Appendix 1

## Programme of Scrutiny Activity

<b>Performance Reports to Formal Committee</b>	
<i>Meeting date</i>	<i>Item description</i>
7 June	Environment and Infrastructure Performance Report
28 June	Education and Children's Services Performance Report Business Services Performance Report Buchan Area Plan
27 September	Scottish Fire and Rescue
22 November	Area Plan Update Business Services Performance Report Education and Children's Services Performance Report Environment and Infrastructure Performance Report
22 February 2023	Scottish Fire and Rescue

<b>Informal Performance Sessions</b>	
<i>Meeting date</i>	<i>Item description</i>
30 August	Environment & Infrastructure Services Directorate
13 September	Education and Children's Services Directorate
20 September	Business Services Directorate
November 22	Area Plan
Sept/Oct 22	Scottish Fire and Rescue
November 22	Police Scotland
7 March 2023	Business Services Directorate
21 March 2023	Environment & Infrastructure Services Directorate Education & Children's Services Directorate
February 2023	Scottish Fire and Rescue
March 2023	Police Scotland



<b>Policy Reviews (policies expected to be reviewed in the 2022/23 financial year)</b>	
Directorate	Policy
Environment and Infrastructure Services	Waste Collection Policy (tbc)
	Tree and Planting on the Roads Boundary Policy
	Local Transport Strategy
Business Services	Housing Allocation Policy
	Non-Residential Charging Policy
	Corporate Asset Management Plan
	Community Asset Transfer Policy