

Project Brief: Supported Self-Assessment of Tayside Contracts

Commissioned by: Chief Executives of Angus, Dundee City and Perth & Kinross Councils, and Managing Director, Tayside Contracts

Independent Reviewer: Keith Winter

Context

With the significant challenges facing Scottish Councils over the next few years, it is more vital than ever to be reassured that public services are being provided through the most appropriate service delivery models; and that maximum attention is given to ensuring efficiencies, transformation and income generation, to mitigate against reductions in public service delivery, as much as possible, as well as considering the advantages of greater collaboration between organisations offering a route to reducing costs, whilst maintaining service quality (as recommended by the Scottish Government, the Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountancy, and Audit Scotland, amongst other bodies).

Purpose of Supported Self-Assessment

The assessment aims to

- build the capacity in Tayside Contracts to support evaluation of its own performance,
- continuously improve the quality of services delivered for partner authorities,
- offer independent evaluation and validation of Tayside Contracts' efficiency and effectiveness, within a contracting public sector framework.

It will do this by establishing:

1. Is Tayside Contracts currently fit for the intended purpose of the organisation and as efficient as it can be?
2. Is the quality of services provided by Tayside Contracts being delivered at an optimal level and what level of service options could it provide to the constituent Councils?
3. Is the organisation taking appropriate steps to improve; and to secure further business opportunities?

Detailed Brief

1. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the shared services delivery model provided by Tayside Contracts, in terms of whether:
 - the organisation is effective and efficient, when benchmarked with other organisations (e.g via APSE, ASSIST FM, or other benchmarking networks),
 - the strengths of the organisational model, organisational structure and functional arrangements/relationships with constituent Councils are being maximised,
 - appropriate PIs are in place to monitor and hold the organisation to account,

- there is sufficient skillset and capacity to actively market, deliver and expand Tayside Contracts services to other major customers,
 - a risk based approach is adopted to future commercial and/or income generating opportunities.
2. Review the measures undertaken and the further proposals of Tayside Contracts and the three constituent Councils to reduce costs, achieve efficiencies, deliver transformational change, and generate additional income; and provide conclusions on:
- a) The effectiveness of the measures carried out and the proposed actions;
 - b) Recommendations on any further measures that could be undertaken to achieve savings, efficiencies, transformational change, or income generation,
 - c) Identifying further measures that could be achieved, both led by Councils (e.g. service levels and standards), and those that would be led by Tayside Contracts (e.g. services provided to external customers/ new market opportunities),
 - d) An assessment of the whole system approach, including interaction with and direction given by the 3 constituent Councils and whether there is sufficient clarity on the ask from each of the 3 Councils, individually and collectively, for Tayside Contracts to work to an agreed set of realistic actions/desired outcomes,
 - e) Where there are further opportunities for collaboration with constituent Councils (particularly efficiencies through standardisation of services with constituent Councils)

Deliverables

Production of report for Managing Director of Tayside Contracts and Chief Executives, with recommendations

Timescales

- Project Brief agreed by commissioners by 20 March 2023
- Inception meeting (to set out reporting points, wider key contacts, initial programme for data capture and interviews, desk review of relevant documentation and materials) - week commencing 3 April 2023
- Interim meeting with Chief Executives – early June 2023
- Draft report to Managing Director, Tayside Contracts by 24 June 2023
- Final report to Chief Executives by 1 July 2023

Contacts

The independent reviewer will need a key set of contacts to provide information and/or direction to appropriate contacts in their organisations. The proposed contacts are the members of the Governance and Strategy Group:-

Angus Council	–	Mark Armstrong
Dundee City Council	–	Robert Emmott
Perth & Kinross Council	–	Fraser Crofts
Tayside Contracts	–	Keith McNamara

Reporting Arrangements

The independent reviewer will produce a final report to the three Chief Executives and the Managing Director of Tayside Contracts.

The final report will be submitted to the Tayside Contracts Joint Committee with recommendations and an action plan as necessary.