

## **A15. Annual Accounts 2019/20**

The committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services presenting the audited accounts for 2018/19. The accounts had been audited by the Council's External Auditors Ernst and Young and were expected to be free from qualification. They would be submitted, following consideration by the Audit Committee, to Council, for approval.

The committee commented that the management commentary within the accounts was easy to read and informative. Following a question on the statistic that 23% of all children in the area were estimated to be living in poverty the Head of Planning and Resources undertook to provide more granular detail at a ward /catchment area level.

The committee noted that 5.3% of the Council's workforce was aged 15-24 and 19.1% was aged 25-34. Members asked what work was ongoing to increase the number of young people in the Council's employ. The Head of People, Tech and Transformation confirmed that there were actions set out in the Workforce Strategy to address this – for example through training places and apprenticeships.

The committee noted that there was a high risk that further significant costs (relating to the Covid-19 pandemic) will continue to be incurred beyond 2020/21 and that local government would not be the Scottish Government's top priority in its budget and asked if there had been any indication at this stage as to the likely settlement for Local Authorities. The Chief Finance Officer stated that it was unlikely that the Scottish Government would announce its settlement until January and that the Council would have to prepare its assumptions accordingly - in recent years late announcements had become common and the levels of funding had tended to change by the time the Scottish Government set its budget. Historically Local Authorities did not fare well with other sectors such as Health and the Police receiving more favourable allocations.

### **Decision**

**The Committee considered and recommended to Council that the Audited Annual Accounts of the Council to 31 March 2020 are approved.**