



**Final  
Internal Audit Report**

Chief Executives Unit - Strategic Finance

**Community Planning Review 2007 - 2008**

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### **APPENDIX 1 - ACTION PLAN**



## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The 2003 Act introduced a new Best Value (BV) regime which provided for an in depth audit of best value and community planning to be conducted at each Scottish Local Authority on a 3 year cyclical basis by an Audit Scotland 'performance audit team'.
- 1.2 This Council's first in depth audit was carried out in 2005/06 and a report was presented to the Council by Audit Scotland in February 2006 covering all aspects of Best Value. With regard to Community Planning, the report, whilst praising the good start made by the Council in addressing the Community Planning aspects of the Act, indicated that more needed to be done to capture and measure the benefits of partnership working in terms of improved services for users. It went on to say that in doing this it was important that accountability was maintained for the resources contributed by the Council and the resulting outputs or outcomes.
- 1.3 The Council responded by producing an Implementation Plan which addressed all Best Value matters raised in Audit Scotland's report. With regard to Community Planning matters the Council has now implemented all of the actions included in the plan and the Council's Policy and Strategy Unit have been monitoring progress against the plan, and kept a record of the evidence of all actions implemented.
- 1.4 The Council's external auditor Grant Thornton LLP has reviewed progress against the Implementation Plan as part of the 2006/07 audit and reported good progress. It is understood that the Accounts Commission have accepted the report from Grant Thornton LLP and will no longer be visiting to review progress in December 2007 as originally planned. In accordance with the Act, Audit Scotland is expected to return in 2008/2009 to repeat the review process.
- 1.5 In June 2006, Audit Scotland issued a national report entitled, "Community planning: an initial review". This report contained 21 recommendations, 16 of which related to local authorities and 12 which also related to Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs). The report recognised that the priority given to the recommendations depended on individual circumstances.
- 1.6 Last years the internal audit concentrated on reviewing progress made addressing and implementing the recommendations of the Audit Scotland national report referred to above. As a result an audit report was issued with recommendations.
- 1.7 This years audit has updated the progress against those recommendations made in 2006/07 as well as covering some other matters set out below.

## **2. AUDIT SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES**

- 2.1 The audit scope and list of objectives for Internal Audit's 2006/2007 review of the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) are set out below.
- 2.2 To review progress made against the recommendations in Internal Audits 2006/07 report;

- 2.3 To critically review the 2007/2017 Community Plan;
- 2.4 To consider critically reviewing the CPPs Regeneration Outcome Agreement;
- 2.5 To review the 2007/08 minutes of CPP and the Management Committee meetings and follow up any matters which require further investigation;
- 2.6 To update the position with regard to relevant actions relating to the CPP included in the Council's BV Implementation Plan.

### **3 AUDIT APPROACH**

- 3.1 A questionnaire was compiled as an agenda to a meeting with the CPM incorporating matters to be discussed arising from the matters reviewed as set out below.
- 3.2 The Community Planning Manager was interviewed to obtain her views on progress to date with the 2006/07 report action plan and any other matters which required to be discussed.
- 3.3 The 2007/2017 Community Plan was briefly reviewed.
- 3.4 The Regeneration Outcome Agreement was briefly reviewed.
- 3.5 The 2007/08 minutes of the CPP and the CPP Management Committee available to November 2007 were reviewed with a view to understanding the issues the Partnership was involved in and how it was addressing them.
- 3.6 Progress with the BV Implementation Plan actions with regard to CPP issues was updated.
- 3.7 A draft report was prepared for discussion with management and any comments made have been added into the report where appropriate.

### **4 SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND OVERALL CONCLUSIONS ARISING FROM THE AUDIT**

#### **4.1 Progress addressing actions in the 2006/07 Internal Audit report.**

There were 4 actions in last years report. All of the actions arose out of Audit Scotland's national report of June 2006. The Community Planning Manager (CPM) has intimated that all of the actions are being addressed and are in various stages of implementation. In particular it was pointed out the steps being taken to carry out a "health check" review. Internal Audit considers that achievement of the actions is not altogether clear and that it would be helpful if a report was made to the CPP Management Committee on how the CPP and/or the Council is already progressing with them, proposes to progress them, or does not need to address them (with explanations). Achievement dates should be included. The Policy and Strategy has

said that he will ask the CPM to take a report to the CPP Management Committee early in 2008.

**Refer to Action Plan No 1**

**4.2 There were three matters arising following a internal audit review of the 2007/2017 Community Plan:**

**1. Website**

It was reported last year that a new CPP website was up and running which linked all partners and was to be developed as resources allowed. In addition, the Forward to the Community Plan indicates that the principles of Community Planning will continue to be promoted via the new website and that the site will be regularly updated.

However, internal Audit recently tried to access the site but was unable to do so. The Community Planning Manager has confirmed that there are problems with the site, but that a decision has been taken by the CPP Management Committee to progress a funding bid to develop an enhanced web based provision.

**2. Tackling Disadvantage**

Page 5 of the Community Plan says that the CPP is committed to tackling disadvantage wherever it occurs and regeneration work plays a vital roll in this. Additional resources from the Scottish government have funded activities aimed at tackling disadvantage. A Regeneration Outcome Agreement 2005/2008 has been prepared identifying the main partners involved and the nature of the investment. Work is now being developed by the CPP to progress this. A brief review of the ROA was carried out as at paragraph 4.3 below.

**3. Measuring Progress and Performance**

Page 20 of the Plan sets out how progress and performance is to be measured by the CPP. It says a monitoring framework will be developed to assess the impact of Community Planning and that in the future as targets are being reviewed community inputs will be included when setting objectives. This will be achieved by setting up a Local Community Planning Group ( LCPG) in each administrative area of Argyll & Bute. It is planned to set up 9 such Groups over a period of the next 3 years. A number of facilitators are to be trained and funded by the Government to assist the formation and operation of these Groups.

The Community Planning Management Committee is to monitor progress of the Community Plan and key performance indicators (KPIs) are to be identified to ensure outcomes can be measured over time. The CPM has confirmed that there has been a detailed assessment of all the partner's plans and the CPP is satisfied that all partners are committed to deliver. The tracking mechanisms in place allow the CPP Management Committee to see this.

Nevertheless, in view of the importance of measuring progress and performance

it is recommended that high importance is given to this process and regular reports are made to the CPP Management Committee as to the progress with the setting up of LCPGs, the training of facilitators and the development of KPIs.

**Refer to Action Plan No 2**

#### **4.3 Matters arising following a brief internal audit review of the CCPs Regeneration Outcome Agreement**

It was found that this agreement was completed in 2005, but that since then arrangements have changed. The CPM has advised that a review was carried out as part of the Annual Report.

#### **4.4 Matters arising following an internal audit review of 2007/08 CPP and Management Committee Minutes.**

1. Management Committee Minutes –8 August 2007 Item 7a  
Partners were asked to present to the community Planning Manager what their organisations were doing to fit in with Community Plan reporting. The CPM has advised that this is now on course
2. CPP Minute -6 July 2007 Item 4  
The Chairman of Committee asked whether the Community Plan should highlight a number of achievable targets. The CPM has advised that targets have been identified.

#### **4.5 Update of Progress with Council's BV Implementation Plan**

1. The Council's Policy and Strategy Unit have been monitoring and gathering evidence of progress against the Council's BV Implementation Plan. It has recently reported that as at September 2007 all of the actions relating to the CPP have been completed and it has informed Internal Audit that the External Auditors have expressed their satisfaction with the actions completed.
2. Because of the view expressed by the External Audit the Unit has ceased to gather any further evidence of progress against the BV Implementation Plan.

It is concluded that very satisfactory progress has been made implementing the relevant actions but that the evidence of implementation should be retained as the Accounts Commission may require sight of the evidence at their next visit.

## **5 ACTION PLAN**

- 5.1 The action plan attached at Appendix 1 has been compiled with the co-operation and agreement of the Policy & Strategy Manager and the Community Planning Manager.
- 5.2 Internal Audit considers that, in an effort to improve the quality of information, monitoring and control, the recommendations should be implemented in accordance with the agreed action plan. Where management decides not to implement recommendations it must accept the risks associated with that decision.



## 6 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS AND ASSESSMENT AGAINST OBJECTIVES

6.1 Figure 1 below sets out a summary of the overall conclusions arising from the audit in terms of the specific objectives in section 2.1.

**Figure 1: Summary of overall conclusions**

Specific Objectives	Assessment
Review progress addressing recommendations in the 2006/07 Internal Audit Report	✓✓✓✓
To critically review the 2007/17 Community Plan	✓✓✓✓
To review the 2007/08 minutes of CPP and the Management Committee meetings and follow up any matters requiring further investigation;	✓✓✓✓
Review progress made to date to address the contents of the Councils BV Implementation Plan arising from Audit Scotland's BV audit report of February 2006	✓✓✓✓✓
<b>Key:</b>	
✓✓✓✓✓	Arrangements accord with good practice and are operating satisfactorily.
✓✓✓✓	Arrangements accord with good practice, but certain matters noted as requiring further consideration / improvement.
✓✓✓	Adequate arrangements in place, but certain matters noted as requiring further consideration / improvement.
✓✓	Arrangements in place offer scope for substantial improvement.
✓	Concern is expressed about the adequacy of the scope of these arrangements.

## 7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 7.1 Thanks are due to the Community Planning Manager and the Policy and Strategy Manager for their co-operation and assistance in the completion of the review and the preparation of the report and action plan.
- 7.2 Argyll & Bute Council's Internal Audit department has prepared this report. Our work was limited to the scope in paragraph 2 of this report. We cannot be held responsible or liable if information material to our task was withheld or concealed from us or misrepresented to us.
- 7.3 This report is private and confidential for the Council's information only and is solely for use in the provision of an Internal Audit service to the Council. This report is not to be copied, quoted or referred to, in whole or in part, without prior written consent from the Internal Audit Manager.

**APPENDIX 1  
 ACTION PLAN**

<b>ACTION PLAN NO</b>	<b>PARAGRAPH REFERENCE</b>	<b>GRADE</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>AGREED ACTION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b>	<b>DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION</b>
1	4.1	Material	The recommendations made in Audit Scotland's national report of June 2006 may not yet be fully addressed	The Community Planning Manager is to address the recommendations in the Audit Scotland national report that are relevant to the Council and report to the management committee on how the CPP and/or the Council is already progressing with them. The report will be ready early 2008.	Community Planning Manager	Completed. February 2008.
2	4.2.3	Material	It is not clear whether adequate arrangements are in place to monitor progress of changes/improvements to the performance management process	In view of the importance of measuring progress and performance high importance is given to this process and regular reports are to be made to the Management Committee as to the progress with the setting up of LCPGs, the training of facilitators and the development of KPIs.	Community Planning Manager	Immediate commencing February 2008