

AUDIT SCOTLAND NATIONAL REPORTS TO AUDIT COMMITTEE 2009 - 2010

1. SUMMARY

The Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government (the Code) issued by CIPFA in 2000 and further revised in 2006 sets out good practice in delivering internal audit services. Grant Thornton UK LLP, in May 2007 carried out a Code compliance review and in their resultant report recommended that external audit reports (including Audit Scotland reports) be reported to the Audit Committee. Attached in Appendix 1 is the most recent report from Audit Scotland.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The contents of this report are noted and are to be followed up by Internal Audit.

3. DETAILS

3.1 On the 15th of October 2009 the Accounts Commission released a report entitled, "An overview of the audits of Best Value and Community Planning, Making an impact".

The Report provides an overview of the audits of Best Value and Community Planning across the 32 councils in Scotland. The first Best Value (BV) audit report was published in September 2004, and the last was published in May 2009. Much has changed in those four and a half years, both in local government and in the way the Accounts Commission has worked with Audit Scotland to evolve and improve the audit.

The key messages can be summarised as follows:

- The audit of Best Value and Community Planning has, for the first time, provided the Scottish public with an overall picture of how well their councils are performing.
- Best Value has had a positive impact on local government in Scotland.
- Effective political and managerial leadership is central to good performance.
- Councils work well with partners at a local level, but need to show what this is achieving.
- Effective performance management is essential to improve services.
- Good councils scrutinise performance, challenge existing ways of doing things and demonstrate value for money.
- Best Value councils manage their people, property and money in a way

that improves services and delivers value for money.

- Good customer care, listening to and working with local people helps improve services.
- The impact of equalities activity needs to be demonstrated.
- Sustainable development activity needs to be more coordinated.

3.2 On the 5 November 2009 the Accounts Commission released a report entitled, 'Scotland's public finances – Preparing for the future'.

The report covers the following areas;

- The current public spending environment.
- Financial management in the Scottish Government
- Scrutinising, agreeing and monitoring the budget.

3.3 The full reports can either be viewed at http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/work/local_national.php 2009/10 or viewed in the Members room where copies of the above reports are available for review.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This report is submitted to the Audit Committee for consideration.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1	Policy:	None
5.2	Financial:	None
5.3	Personnel:	None
5.4	Legal:	None
5.5	Equal Opportunities:	None

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