

APPENDIX 2

Argyll & Bute Council

Performance Management and Planning – Follow-up of the 2000/2001 Audit of Personnel Services

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Best Value has been progressing in Scottish Councils since late 1997, with the Best Value Task Force's second report issued in July 1998 requiring Councils to develop a performance management and planning (PMP) framework, which delivers continuous improvement.
- 1.2 As part of the auditor's statutory responsibilities, he is required to satisfy himself that a local authority has in place appropriate management arrangements to secure value for money from the resources available to it. With the introduction of the Best Value regime for councils, this element of the audit – the Performance Management and Planning audit - has been used to review the progress that councils are making in implementing the framework set out by the Best Value Task Force.

AUDIT SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

- 1.3 The audit required service managers to submit two reports to their auditors, namely:
 - an Improvement Action Progress Report (IAPR). This report is used to record progress in implementing the improvement actions agreed during the 2000/2001 audit
 - a Best Value Achievement Report (BVAR). This report is used to record tangible improvements, which have been, achieved overall since the introduction of Best Value.
- 1.4 The PMP follow-up audit has the following objectives:
 - to identify the extent to which planned improvements have been implemented
 - to provide independent, external assurance that the audited service is making progress in implementing Best Value and its PMP framework.

EVIDENCE BASE

- 1.5 A key requirement of the PMP audit is that it is evidence based and as part of the audit we sample checked a range of evidence to verify that progress was being made in implementing actions recorded in the IAPR and to substantiate achievements outlined in the BVAR.

OVERALL CONCLUSION

1.6 In general, our conclusion is that the service can demonstrate clear commitment and progress in implementing a Best Value PMP framework. We examined evidence, which confirmed that Personnel Services had made significant progress in implementing its IAPR and had also achieved a number of important service improvements.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

1.7 Eight out of eleven improvements (73%) agreed as part of last year's audit have been fully implemented as planned. The remaining three actions are substantially complete and are on target to be implemented by the agreed milestone dates.

1.8 The service has achieved a number of tangible service improvements since the introduction of Best Value including for example:

- Work experience monitoring takes place on a regular basis to review customer needs and provide a better quality of service
- Customer surveys are undertaken on a regular basis which gives customers the opportunity to comment on services provided
- A more structured approach to staff training and development through initiatives such as training for staff to minimise exposure of employees to dangerous/harmful conditions
- The Training and Management Services review was submitted to the Chief Executive.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1.9 The co-operation and assistance given by all officers contacted during the course of this review is gratefully acknowledged. There was a clear commitment given by officers at all levels within the service to the completion of the PMP follow-up audit.