

**WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

**Report by Executive Director of Corporate Services**

**Audit & Performance Review Committee  
24 September 2014**

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**Subject:     Audit Scotland Evaluation of Public Performance Reporting**

**1     Purpose**

- 1.1**   The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with the review of national and local public performance reporting (PPR) as carried out by Audit Scotland.

**2     Recommendations**

- 2.1**   It is recommended that members:
- Note the evaluation
  - Note the relative position of West Dunbartonshire across the range of service areas evaluated
  - Note the actions already underway for the publication of the 2013/14 annual report, which contains the PPR information required.

**3     Background**

- 3.1**   All 32 Scottish local authorities are required to publish performance information on an annual basis. The Accounts Commission has the statutory power to define the information requiring to be published and it does so through the annual Statutory Performance Information Direction & Guide.
- 3.2**   The Accounts Commission has emphasised the need to publish information on a broad range of service areas, including performance information required through the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF), while adhering to the principles for public performance reporting and the best value requirement to select and use performance data which drives continuous improvement.
- 3.3**   Since 2010 the Accounts Commission has received a report evaluating the approach taken to PPR across each Local Authority. This report is used as a means to assure the Commission that the Direction & Guide is being implemented and that Councils are striving to continuously improve how the publicly report on performance.

## **4 Main Issues**

- 4.1** The latest evaluation report (appendix 1) was considered by the Accounts Commission on 19 June 2014 and circulated to Chief Executives, Council Leaders and Audit Committee Chairs. It provides an evaluation of the PPR material published by each Council and identifies areas of good practice and sets out whether each Council fully, partially or did not meet the criteria used in PPR evaluation.
- 4.2** The overview report updates on general issues such as the development of the LGBF and the approach to evaluation of PPR. Overall there is evidence that Council's PPR arrangements are improving, with information more accessible and signposted with clear linkages.
- 4.3** While no council is fully meeting all criteria across the range of service and corporate headings the report highlights Angus Council as closest to achieving this. The report highlights best practice and those Council areas which should be used as good practice examples. The report also gives examples of general areas where improvement is still required across the board. These examples are being used to inform the West Dunbartonshire PPR for current and future years.
- 4.4** The Accounts Commission have also prepared an individual Council assessment of the West Dunbartonshire PPR (appendix 2) which details for each headline area of SPI1&2 whether the Council is fully, partially or not meeting the criteria. Of the 18 areas specified in the direction and guide, West Dunbartonshire is fully meeting criteria in 8 of these areas, and partially meeting the criteria in the remaining 10. There are no areas where the criteria are not being met.
- 4.5** The West Dunbartonshire evaluation demonstrates the Council is fully meeting the additional evaluation measures focused on inclusion of improvement targets and trends over time. It is highlighted that we are only partially meeting the general measure of comparison to other areas. However this will be addressed in future years through the inclusion of the LGBF information in the PPR.
- 4.6** Each Council area is required to review its own evaluation performance and look to areas highlighted as best practice to improve the PPR where this is required. This will inform the PPR for the 2013/14 year (required to be published by the end of this financial year) and is expected to lead to improvements in reporting across all areas.
- 4.7** In future years the Accounts Commission intends to provide more detailed analysis of where improvements are required, both generally and in individual Local Authority areas. More detail on this is expected in the 2014 Direction and Guide due to be published in December 2014.

## **Next Steps**

- 4.8** The evaluation was shared with performance staff from across the organisation and is being used to inform the development of the PPR for 2013/14. This PPR will be published alongside a Council Annual Report and will build on the best practice examples highlighted in the attached Accounts Commission report.
- 4.9** Work will also continue to enhance the use of the LGBF and all other internal benchmarking and performance information to ensure the Council meets its duty to publicly report on performance and areas of improvement.
- 4.10** Work will also progress on ensuring customer satisfaction and service user feedback can be captured and incorporated into PPR, using tools such as the Citizens Panel and the telephone survey.

## **5 People Implications**

- 5.1** There are no people implications.

## **6 Financial Implications**

- 6.1** There is a requirement to make the annual PPR publically available in an accessible format. Therefore there will be costs associated with the printing and publication of this. All costs will be kept to a minimum and the report will be made available and circulated electronically wherever it is appropriate to do so.

## **7 Risk Analysis**

- 7.1** PPR is a statutory duty and is assessed annually to ensure each Council area is meeting this duty. There is a requirement for the Council to report on a regular basis to the local population on how the Council is performing and any areas for improvement, a robust PPR is the most effective means for doing this. The Accounts Commission intends to enhance its evaluation process for PPR to focus in more on Council areas requiring improvement in relation to reporting, a strong process for PPR while ensure West Dunbartonshire is not an area requiring further improvement and support.

## **8 Equalities, Health & Human Rights Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 8.1** No issues were identified in relation to this report. However an EIA will be carried out on the publication of the annual PPR.

## **9 Consultation**

- 9.1** All service areas are involved and consulted in the development of the annual PPR, however no other services were consulted in the preparation of this report.

## **10 Strategic Assessment**

- 10.1** PPR forms a crucial element of the Council approach to public value in that it increases legitimacy and support by providing evidence of progress to date and ensuring customer and service user feedback is presented to services for continuous improvement purposes.

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**Date:**

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**Appendices:** Appendix 1: [Accounts Commission report – Statutory Performance Information 2012/13: An evaluation of Public Performance Reporting](#)

Appendix 2: Accounts Commission report – West Dunbartonshire PPR evaluation 2012/13

**Background Papers:** [Audit Scotland's Direction and Guide 2013](#)

**Wards Affected:** All wards