

Minutes of Meeting of the
Accounts Commission held in the
offices of Audit Scotland, 110
George Street, Edinburgh on
Wednesday 15 February 2006 at
10am.

PRESENT: A MacNish (Chair)
A Alexander
J Baillie
O Clarke
K Geddes
A Leslie
I Low
P McKinlay
M Raj
I Robertson

IN ATTENDANCE: C Gardner, Deputy Auditor General and Controller of Audit
D Pia, Director of Performance Audit (Local Government)
N Bridle, Assistant Director Performance Audit (item 2)
L McGiffen, Best Value Performance Auditor (item 2)
A Roberts, Director of Audit Services (Central Government) (item 3)
D Gill, Senior Manager Performance Audit (item 3)
W F Magee, Secretary

<u>Item No</u>	<u>Subject</u>
1.	Apologies
2.	Best Value Audit of Highland Council
3.	Council Housing Transfer Study

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Jean Couper and Ann Faulds.

2. Best Value Audit of Highland Council

There was submitted a report by the Secretary introducing the Controller of Audit's report on the Best Value audit of Highland Council. The Controller of Audit's report was made to the Commission under section 102(1)(c) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. The Controller of Audit and members of the Best Value team answered questions from members. After discussion the Commission agreed to continue consideration of the reports to its next meeting.

3. Council Housing Transfer Study

There was submitted a report by the Director of Performance Audit (Central Government) referring to the Performance Audit Committee's consideration of emerging findings from the study on council housing transfer and introducing a draft report of the study and key findings which reflected comments from the Auditor General, members of the study advisory group and the Commission members who acted as study sponsors. A draft of the study report accompanied the Director's report. In discussion a number of points were made:

- The report is well drafted and represents a high quality of work by the team
- It is beyond the scope of the study to comment on the objectives of the housing transfer policies
- It is too early to assess the performance outcome of transfers but this report will be a useful baseline for the future
- The report should include a final section which looks forward to further development
- The key messages can be sharpened by making fewer references to the historical background to the current situation.

Thereafter the Commission agreed:

- i. that the draft report be adjusted to take account of the comments made in the discussion, and
- ii. that the approval of the final version of the report be delegated to the Chairman in consultation with the Auditor General as this is a joint report.