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Press release

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Commission acknowledges positive change at Inverclyde

The Accounts Commission for Scotland has published its findings today, based on Audit Scotland's progress report on Best Value at Inverclyde Council.

The Commission says that Inverclyde Council is moving in the right direction, following its critical report in 2005, and that there is a clear commitment and enthusiasm to improve. In particular the Commission acknowledges that the Council has:

- Appointed a new Chief Executive
- Established a new management structure
- Appointed a Corporate Management Team
- Established some new political management arrangements
- Seen an improvement in member/officer relations.

Isabelle Low, Deputy Chair of the Accounts Commission, said: "We recognise that much of the activity in the recovery period has had to focus on matters of governance, structures and management processes. The task for the Council now is to use these new structures and arrangements to benefit service delivery. Better services for local people is the principal objective of Best Value."

The Commission will receive a further report by the Controller of Audit on progress as at 30 June 2008.

Ends

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Notes to Editors:

1. In its initial best value report published 2 June 05 the Accounts Commission identified a number of key requirements which the Council would need to meet to move to a position where it can provide Best Value. These included:
 - better leadership from senior managers and councillors
 - more consistent decision-making by councillors based on information which clearly demonstrates how services are performing
 - more strategic management by the Chief Executive and the Corporate Management Team
 - the development of a culture, across the whole organisation, aimed at improving services for local people
 - the development of a clear approach to demonstrating value for money and competitiveness in services
 - learning from the good practice that exists, both inside and outside the organisation
2. The Accounts Commission for Scotland was set up in 1975 and is independent of both central and local government. The Commission checks whether local authorities, fire and police boards spend £9 billion of public money properly and effectively.

Audit Scotland provides services to the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission

3. The Audit of Best Value is undertaken by Audit Scotland on behalf of the Accounts Commission.
4. The report and a full press briefing on the process and aims of Best Value is available on the Audit Scotland website www.audit-scotland.gov.uk