

Address:  
110 George Street  
Edinburgh  
EH2 4LH

Telephone:  
0131 477 1234  
Fax:  
0131 477 4567

Website:  
[www.audit-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk)



## Press release

Embargoed until 00.01 Thursday, 10 November 2005

### Need for better monitoring of new initiatives funding

**Last year the Scottish Executive launched new initiatives amounting to £1.4 billion. The management of these projects is generally sound, but making changes could help to improve control of the funding and allow better assessment of whether the money is helping to achieve policy aims.**

This is the conclusion of a report published today by Scotland's Auditor General, entitled *How Government Works: The Scottish Executive - Supporting New Initiatives*.

Last year the Executive announced funding for 74 projects including initiatives to support community regeneration, develop sport facilities, prevent youth crime and develop new businesses. Most of the funding is distributed through a range of partners including local authorities and the voluntary sector.

Deputy Auditor General Caroline Gardner said:

"This report comes at an important time with the Executive increasingly working with partner organisations to assist in delivering some of its policy goals.

"The report concludes that the arrangements in place for most projects comply with good practice principles established by Audit Scotland. However, there is scope for improvement in areas such as objective setting, links with delivery partners and monitoring and evaluation arrangements."

"This report could help the Executive measure more accurately the impact of this substantial amount of money."

Today's report recommends a number of ways in which the funding arrangements could be made more consistent and effective. These include that:

- the Executive should improve guidance to staff on setting objectives, contracting and monitoring;
- measures of success need to be defined in a way that will allow monitoring of progress against objectives;
- formal agreements with partners, where appropriate, must cover all aspects of delivery;
- arrangements for monitoring and evaluation need to be clearly defined from the outset.

The report states that there may be scope to better promote the use of existing guidance by Executive staff involved in delivering the initiatives. There may also be areas where guidance could be developed or improved during the development and implementation of initiatives.

ENDS

**For further information contact Leon Thompson on 0131 624 9974 or Simon Ebbett on 0131 624 9924.**

#### Notes to editors

1. *How government works* is a series of reports which comment in detail on specific aspects of the business of the public sector in Scotland which cut across a range of organisations. The reports comment on the way the cross-cutting issues are handled by different parts of the public sector and the impact they have on the delivery of services.

This report is the second in the *How government works* series. In November 2002, the Auditor General published the first, *How Government Works in Scotland*, which explained the organisation of government in Scotland, the responsibilities of public servants and how they are held accountable, and the role of public audit in both holding public bodies to account and supporting democratic scrutiny.

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

2. Audit Scotland is a statutory body set up in April 2000, under the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act, 2000. It provides services to the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission.

3. The Auditor General is responsible for securing the audit of the Scottish Executive and most other public bodies in Scotland, except local authorities. He investigates whether spending bodies achieve the best possible value for money and adhere to the highest standards of financial management. The Auditor General is independent and is not subject to the control of the Scottish Executive or the Scottish Parliament.

4. The full report can be found on Audit Scotland's website – [www.audit-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk)