

Summary

Stirling Council

The audit of Best Value
and Community Planning

The logo for the Accounts Commission, featuring a stylized 'A' with a checkmark inside a circle.

ACCOUNTS COMMISSION

November 2011

What is a Best Value audit?

Best Value audits take a close look at how a council is organised to provide services that meet people's needs and also whether it is as efficient and effective as possible.

To carry out the audit, Audit Scotland works with the council and also other scrutiny bodies. Then it produces a report for the Accounts Commission. The Commission considers this report and makes findings, including recommendations to help the council improve.

Our overall view

Stirling Council's overall performance is good and it has good prospects for future improvement.

The table below shows how these judgements for Stirling compare to the other possible descriptions.

How good is my council's overall performance?	What are my council's prospects for future improvement?
Outstanding	Excellent prospects
Good	Good prospects
Satisfactory	Fair prospects
Not improving adequately	Poor prospects

Since the first Best Value report in 2005, Stirling Council has made substantial progress. It has good governance arrangements and its services are performing well across a number of areas.

What is the council doing well?

- There is strong collaborative leadership between councillors and officers and across the political groups. There is a clear vision and good self-awareness, which provide a sound basis for further improvement.
- Many services are performing well and improving, including education, adult learning, waste recycling and sports and leisure provision. Residents' satisfaction with services is good and improving, and the council engages well with service users.
- The council has made positive progress in improving important aspects of how it manages its

resources, notably with its workforce, assets and the purchasing of goods and services.

- The council has made good progress in working in partnership with other public bodies, and now jointly manages education and social work with Clackmannanshire Council covering these services across both council areas.

What needs to improve?

- There is a need to improve some services, particularly roads, waste management and some aspects of social care.
- There is considerable scope to better engage the council's workforce in developing the plans and actions to improve services.
- The council needs to make working with partners more effective, through simplifying partnership structures and joint working arrangements. This will help the council and its partners be clearer on the outcomes they're trying to achieve for the communities of Stirling.

What happens now?

The council will write an improvement plan based on our findings and the audit report. Audit Scotland and the Accounts Commission will keep track of how well the council carries out that plan.

Meanwhile, the audit and inspection organisations that look at the council are working together to agree what they will focus on in their work at Stirling Council. Their workplan, called an Assurance and Improvement Plan, will be reviewed and updated each year.

More information

The full Best Value findings and report on Stirling Council are available at www.audit-scotland.gov.uk

The Assurance and Improvement Plan, showing the main areas for audit and inspection of the council over the next three years, is also available at www.audit-scotland.gov.uk

Stirling Council's website is www.stirling.gov.uk

Background

Who are the Accounts Commission and Audit Scotland?

The Accounts Commission checks how well Scotland's councils perform. Audit Scotland carries out work for the Accounts Commission. Both organisations report their work to the public.

Other scrutiny and inspection bodies

The Accounts Commission leads the coordination of audit and inspection work in councils.

Organisations working together to coordinate audit and inspection activity in councils are: the Accounts Commission, Audit Scotland, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE), Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS), Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) and NHS Quality Improvement Scotland (NHS QIS).

Full report available online: Podcast • PDF • RTF • Black and white PDF



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