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Foundations laid to improve Glasgow lives

Glasgow Community Planning Partnership (CPP) has a clear sense of purpose and direction for tackling some of the city's deep-seated social and economic problems, according to the Accounts Commission.

Responding to a report for the Commission and the Auditor General for Scotland, the Commission says it is encouraged by the CPP's clear strategic direction for the next ten years with its focus on three priorities: alcohol, youth employment and vulnerable people. There is a strong emphasis on prevention and addressing inequalities by concentrating efforts on some of the most deprived areas and good potential for engaging with communities at a local level.

But while there have been improvements over the last decade in areas like health, education and safety, Glasgow still lags behind other Scottish and comparable English cities for many key indicators, in part reflecting the complexity of the challenges it still faces.

Public sector partners in the CPP collectively spend more than £4 billion a year, most of which is already committed to their individual programmes. Shifting and sharing more resources to specifically meet the longer-term preventative approaches in the CPP's three priorities will be difficult.

The report says the Partnership needs to improve its understanding of how to best use its resources and move quickly from planning to implementation, and establish clear targets and effective systems of monitoring and scrutiny.

Accounts Commission chair Douglas Sinclair said:

"Glasgow CPP faces enormous challenges not only due to its size but also in the complexity and deep-seated nature of the problems it faces.

"It has a clear focus on three priorities over the next ten years. That's a solid foundation but it is essential the momentum is maintained, joint working strengthened and clear targets set for its three priorities."

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Notes to editors

1. Audit Scotland has prepared this report for the Accounts Commission for Scotland and the Auditor General for Scotland. All Audit Scotland reports published since 2000 are available at www.audit-scotland.gov.uk

- The Accounts Commission is the public spending watchdog for local government. It holds councils and various joint boards and committees in Scotland to account and help them improve. It operates impartially and independently of councils and of the Scottish Government, and meets and reports in public

- The Auditor General appoints auditors to Scotland's central government and NHS bodies; examines how public bodies spend public money; helps them to manage their finances to the highest standards; and checks whether they achieve value for money. The Auditor General is independent and is not subject to the control of the Scottish Government or the Scottish Parliament
- 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 for Scotland.