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News release

Embargoed until 00:01 hours, Thursday 4 June 2015

East Dunbartonshire Council still has much to do

There is a gap between East Dunbartonshire Council's ambitions and delivering these on the ground, says the Accounts Commission.

In a report published today the Commission says the council delivers good services but there is an increased risk of these not being maintained in the longer term without improvements in the way it is run.

The council needs to save £23.3 million - around ten per cent of its budget - over the three years to 2017/18. At the same time its overall financial reserves are low and are projected to fall further.

Deficiencies include financial control and management of resources. There is also an urgent need for clearer priorities in the council's transformation programme to ensure key projects are delivered and bring savings and benefits.

Although recognising the council's commitment to improvement, the Commission says it has serious concerns about the pace of this improvement. New scrutiny arrangements are ineffective in operation. Councillors should specify what information they need and be provided with jargon-free and understandable reports so that they can hold officers to account.

Accounts Commission chair Douglas Sinclair said: "There is a gap between the council's ambition and seeing evidence of that on the ground. This is what East Dunbartonshire needs to address if it is to continue to deliver good quality services in the future."

The Commission has asked the Controller of Audit for an update on the council's progress by the end of 2016.

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Notes to editors

1. The Controller of Audit has prepared this report for the Accounts Commission for Scotland.

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

- 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.