

## News release

**Embargoed until 00:01 hours, Wednesday 29 June 2016**

### South Ayrshire makes good progress

**Major improvements have been made at South Ayrshire Council over the last two years, says the Accounts Commission.**

A new report published today charts how the council has responded to a critical audit in February 2014 when the Commission voiced concerns about significant weaknesses in the management of the council which limited its ability to meet its statutory Best Value duty to deliver continuous improvement. Some progress had been made by December 2014 but it was too early to judge its impact.

Today's report says a new improvement framework is in place across the council. New staff have been recruited to key positions and there are better working relationships between councillors. Clear political and managerial leadership is making a positive difference.

In its findings, the Commission welcomes the strong culture of improvement at the council and its efforts to learn from other organisations in finding new ideas and fresh thinking. It is imperative that the council maintains its positive momentum in the light of difficult decisions that lie ahead in reshaping services in response to reducing resources.

Accounts Commission chair Douglas Sinclair said: "There is good evidence now that South Ayrshire Council has put its house in order. It now has a clear direction and knows what needs to be done to improve services.

"It has to keep on the course it has set out so that it can continue to deliver on the priorities that matter most to the people of South Ayrshire."

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#### Notes to editors

1. Today's report is the third on South Ayrshire Council in two years following those in: [February 2014](#) and [December 2014](#).
2. 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.