

News release

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Perth and Kinross Council makes progress, but must drive forward improvements

Perth and Kinross Council continues to improve many services. The council must now demonstrate it has plans in place to tackle underperforming areas.

A report by the Accounts Commission, Scotland's local authority watchdog, says the council demonstrates robust financial planning, putting it in a good position to tackle a projected budget shortfall of £52 million over the next five years.

Residents are more satisfied with their council services than the Scottish average. Many services are improving, particularly in the council's priority areas such as household waste recycling and care services. But national data suggests around one third of services are declining and some are performing below the Scottish average.

Elma Murray, Deputy Chair of the Accounts Commission said: "Whilst the council has made many steady improvements, it needs to tackle underperforming services. The council can do this by developing action plans from its own evaluation and performance reports. It can also build on excellent existing partnerships and demonstrate how its engagement with communities influences decisions about services and budgets.

"An ambitious new way of working more closely with citizens and communities, the 'Perth and Kinross Offer', has the potential to achieve considerable change in how services are designed and delivered. This will require significant drive and commitment from the council to ensure they reap the full benefits of this new initiative."

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Notes to editors

1. Best Value Assurance reports, prepared for the Accounts Commission, aim to offer a rounded and comprehensive analysis of a council's performance. These reports cover how effectively councils are managing changes in services; involving the public in decisions; ensuring enough skills and time to deliver clear priorities; and providing clear information so the public can gauge improvement.
 2. Audit Scotland has prepared this report for the Accounts Commission 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

- 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.