

News release on behalf of the Accounts Commission - reporting independently on the performance of local government in Scotland.

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South Ayrshire Council slow to improve and transform

South Ayrshire Council manages its money well and some services are improving, but the pace of change has been too slow.

In a new report, the Accounts Commission raises a range of concerns about South Ayrshire Council. The council must move faster to transform how it manages itself and services for local people. It must also improve the information it provides to the public about its performance.

The Commission says the council also needs to:

- improve how it measures and reports performance against its priorities
- be clearer about the financial and service benefits of the council's plans for change
- prioritise progressing a council-wide approach to evaluating where and how it needs to improve services
- clearly align its 2024/25 budget with its strategic priorities

Ronnie Hinds, Interim Chair of the Accounts Commission said:

"We note the progress the council has made to address the recommendations in our 2021 report. But our latest report highlights the pace of improvement has been too slow, and we're concerned about insufficient progress in delivering its transformation programme. The council must prioritise this and be clear about the anticipated financial savings and service benefits. Clear measures of progress against its key priorities are also needed, with accurate reporting to councillors and local communities.

"We will continue to monitor whether improvement is being made through our yearly audit reporting on the council."

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Notes to Editors:

1. This report is the first to reflect [the Accounts Commission's new approach to Best Value](#). It is fully integrated into annual audit work, reported in Annual Audit Reports, and includes detailed work each year on a national theme. For 2022-23 the national theme is strategic leadership.
2. The Controller of Audit will report to the Accounts Commission on each council's performance on their duty of Best Value at least once over the five-year audit appointment. The Commission will then choose how it wishes to respond.

3. The Accounts Commission last reported on Best Value in South Ayrshire Council in October 2021. The report is available on the Audit Scotland website.
4. The Accounts Commission holds councils and local government bodies in Scotland to account and helps them improve. It operates impartially and independently of councils and of the Scottish Government and meets and reports in public.
5. 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.
6. All reports by the Accounts Commission and Auditor Scotland published since 2000 are available on the [Audit Scotland website](#).