

## ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL AUDIT OF BEST VALUE 2005 PREPARING THE SELF ASSESSMENT

*(Extracted from the guidance to Heads of Service issued by David Clements on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2005.)*

### **Introduction**

During the summer of 2005, Argyll and Bute Council will undergo an Audit of Best Value which is designed to audit all of the new duties for Councils relating to Best Value, Community Planning and Public Performance Reporting, as described in the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

The approach to the Audit, which will be conducted by Audit Scotland, includes a comprehensive self assessment of the current performance of the Council's main functions and services, and of the Council's corporate achievements. To this end, each Head of Service has been asked to undertake a Service-level self assessment, whilst the Corporate assessment will be undertaken by senior Officers and Members. This paper introduces the process which will achieve the comprehensive self assessments.

### **Process**

The statutory Best Value guidance provides details of each of the ten Best Value Criteria (the Statutory Criteria). The full document can be found on the Scottish Executive's website or from the Policy and Strategy Group at Kilmory. Consideration of the Council's performance against these ten Criteria (including Community Planning) will form the basis of a large part of the Best Value Audit. The starting point for the Audit team will be the Council's Submission document, containing their own assessment of how they are performing.

The self assessment for each Service should focus on what the Service is achieving, with the emphasis on core services. These Service self assessments will also inform the Council's Corporate assessment against the Best Value Criteria. Progress towards Community Planning will be highlighted as well as the outcomes of the Council's various partnerships across Argyll and Bute and beyond.

#### *In short:*

- The Council presents a Submission, laying out the Council's assessment of how well it is performing (June 2005)
- Auditors assess the evidence in support of the Council's submission
- The audit includes an overview of the Council as a corporate body and a detailed examination of selected parts of the Council's work (including Community Planning)
- A report is published at the end of the Audit (October 2005)

### **Phase one workshop**

Following completion of their initial self assessment, Heads of Service will be invited to share their assessments with the other Service Heads in a workshop setting. This has been arranged for 8<sup>th</sup> March.

### **Phase two workshops**

The second phase involves all managers with their Service Heads. Members and Community Planning Partners are also invited to participate. At the workshops, delegates will have the opportunity to learn about the Best Value Audit whilst contributing to the development of the Service and Corporate self assessments.

Although the focus of these workshops is to produce the self assessments for the Submission document, another aim is to bring Managers, Members and Community Planning Partners up to date with parts of the Council's work with which they may be unfamiliar or where they could make a contribution.

**PHASE TWO WORKSHOP CALENDAR (1<sup>ST</sup> REVISION DATED 24/03/05).**

<b>Workshops will take place between Monday March 21<sup>st</sup> and Friday April 1<sup>st</sup></b>	Work shop 1	Work shop 2	Work shop 3	Work shop 4	Work shop 5	Work shop 6
<b>Dates: All at Argyll Arms Hotel, Ardrishaig, 1400-1630@.</b>  <b># dates strange due to reschedule.</b> <b>@W'shop 1 (Apr 1<sup>st</sup>) may be 1000-1230.</b>	#Fri Apr 1 (TBC)	Tue March 22	Wed March 23	Tue March 29	Wed March 30	#Mon March 21
Personnel		X				
Communications				X		
Policy and Strategy				X		
Strategic Finance						X
Primary Education	X					
Secondary Education	X					
Community Regeneration	X					
Planning and Performance		X				
Housing Services			X			
Community Support				X		
Children and Families					X	
Integrated Care						X
Roads and Amenity Services					X	
Facility Services			X			
Planning				X		
Infrastructure and Transport		X				
European			X			
Democratic Services and Governance						X
Legal and Protective Services	X					
ICT and Financial Services					X	
SMT	X	X	X	X	X	X
Members	X	X	X	X	X	X
Community Planning Partners	X	X	X	X	X	X

Community Planning Partners are invited to attend any or all of these Phase Two Workshops. Please confirm your attendance with Mike Johnston (01546 604396), David Clements (01546 604205) or Lolita Lavery (01586 555225) who will advise of any further changes to dates and times.

Contribution from Community Planning Partners:

- To contribute to the Council's Service and Corporate self assessments through workshops with Council officers and Elected Members between March 21<sup>st</sup> and April 1<sup>st</sup> as outlined above
- To complete a self assessment for Community Planning (Community Planning Manager)
- To contribute to the Community Planning self assessment through a facilitated discussion at a future meeting
- To contribute a short example of the benefits of the Community Planning Partnership – a couple of paragraphs from each Partner for inclusion in the Submission.

Mike Johnston  
Argyll and Bute Council