
6th February 2008

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Audit Scotland Update

BACKGROUND

The 2003 Act introduced a new Best Value (BV) regime which provided for an in depth audit of best value and community planning to be conducted at each Scottish Local Authority on a 3 year cyclical basis by an Audit Scotland 'performance audit team'.

In June 2006 Audit Scotland issued a national report entitled "Community planning: an initial review". This report contained 21 recommendations 16 of which related to local authorities and 12 which also related to Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs). The report recognised that the priority given to the recommendations will depend on individual circumstances.

Based on the recommendations made in the report we have been working with our external audit colleagues to review progress made. Regular dialogue has taken place and we feel we have made positive progress in addressing the concerns raised in the initial report.

The Council's external auditor has reviewed progress against the Implementation Plan as part of the 2006/07 audit and reported good progress. Representatives of the Accounts Commission are expected also to review progress in December 2007.

The update below sets out the progress made against recommendations.

UPDATE

4.2.1 Website

It was reported last year that a new CPP website was up and running which linked all partners and was to be developed as resources allowed. In addition the Forward to the Community Plan indicates that the principles of Community Planning will continue to be promoted via the new website and that the site will be regularly updated.

However internal Audit recently tried to access the site but was unable to do so. The Community Planning Manager has confirmed that there are problems with the site and additional resources are required to bring the site on line and develop it. It is recommended that this problem is brought to the attention of the Management Committee and a decision taken as to the importance of this site and the steps necessary to bring it into full operation.

– a decision was taken by the management committee to progress with funding bid to develop an enhanced web based provision

4.3 – Matters Arising following a brief review of the CCPs Regeneration Outcome Agreement

It was found that this agreement was completed in 2005 but that since then arrangements have changed and the Agreement is no longer relevant. Further review was not therefore carried out.

- review was carried out as part of the Annual report and there is also a review/report on the ROA's

4.4 Matters Arising following from review of 2007/08 CPP and Management Committee Minutes

1 - Management Committee Minutes –8 August 2007 Item 7a

Partners were asked to present to the community Planning Manager what their organisations were doing to fit in with Community Plan reporting.

- reporting mechanisms in place and partnership review underway

2. - CPP Minute -6 July 2007 Item 4

Chairman of Committee questioned whether the Community Plan should highlight a number of achievable targets.

–.Targets identified

4.6 Other Matters

1. A partnership community talk board was to be set up and in place by --- 2007.
– work is underway to develop both the Community talkboard and an enhanced web based provision

134. CPP's should:

Agree a shared vision and a manageable number of priorities for their community plan.

A shared vision was agreed in the summer of 2006 and in June 07 the New Community Plan was delivered based on that shared vision.

Develop processes for managing performance and agree indicators to track progress in key local issues

There is a process in place for monitoring performance. There have been significant changes in structures and in the way we gather information and report back to committees

Develop their arrangements for scrutiny of community plans and expenditure

Scrutiny of expenditure for actions is the responsibility of the lead partner/partnership delivering on that action. The Management Committee oversees general expenditure.

Develop their approaches to risk management

Risk management responsibilities lie with the partner/partnership responsible for that action and partners/partnerships report to the Management Committee. Extensive consultation on CP have ensured that contents are realistic and achievable, giving us confidence that actions detailed are realistic. Operational risk is managed by individual partners and partnerships responsible for taking actions forward.

Review how effective they are operating in partnership

Partnership mapping and new structures and reporting arrangements responding to the need to be more effective as well as the identification of necessary changes and making the changes

135. Local authorities and local partners should:

Ensure that all relevant priorities and related actions agreed by the CPP are incorporated into their corporate plans

Links made with vision and priorities in Council Corporate Plan. The signing off of the community plan by partners and partnerships and the process of reporting back with progress on agreed actions has demonstrated the incorporation of core CPP actions into partners priorities. Where there is no reporting on action the CPP will focus on that action to ensure that it is taken forward. There has been a detailed assessment of all the partners plans and the CPP is satisfied that all partners are committed to deliver. The tracking mechanisms in place allow the CP management Committee to see this.

Consider providing an annual statement to the CPP explaining how the community plan is reflected in their own corporate plans

This was considered and it was agreed that it was not necessary as there were sufficient checks and measures in place to demonstrate links. It was felt that additional statements would be unnecessary bureaucratic and would add little value to the process. The Annual Report produces is based in part on the regular monitoring information provided by partners.

Contribute to joint risk registers related to community planning

There is no joint risk register. It was agreed that this was not necessary under the new CP structures as actions are devolved to partners/partnerships who manage the operational risk associated

2008/2008

In accordance with the Act, Audit Scotland is to return in 2008/2009 to repeat the review process.

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