

Report

8

Report to:	Risk and Audit Scrutiny Forum
Date of Meeting:	16 December 2009
Report by:	Executive Director (Finance and Information Technology Resources)

Subject:	Audit of Best Value and Community Planning - 2009/10 Quarter 2 update
----------	--

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ to provide the Risk and Audit Scrutiny Forum with an update on progress made, as at 2009/10 Quarter 2, on the improvement actions originating from the Accounts Commission Report (February 2009) on the Council's Audit of Best Value and Community Planning

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Forum is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that progress to date is noted and that a further update should be provided at Quarter 4, in order to confirm that all actions have been addressed

3. Background

- 3.1. Forum may recall that the Council agreed, at its meeting of 25 March 2009, a detailed response to the Accounts Commission's report on the Audit of Best Value and Community Planning.
- 3.2. The response comprised two parts, a narrative confirming the Council's acceptance of the Commission's findings, and an Improvement Action Plan which identified specific actions to be taken by individual Executive Directors to respond to the 14 Improvement Agenda Items noted within the audit report.
- 3.3. This report provides an update on progress made against these 14 items, as at Quarter 2 of 2009/10. The Improvement Agenda items were to be addressed through a variety of actions and associated measures recorded in Connect and Resource Actions Plans.
- 3.3. As the Council now uses Improve to provide performance management updates on a quarterly basis for Connect and Resource Plans, this same information has been used selectively to identify progress made on the Best Value Audit Actions.

4. Progress to date and next steps

- 4.1. Progress made on the 14 actions, as at Quarter 2, is detailed at Appendix 1. The detail within the appendix shows the original Accounts Commission Improvement Action, followed by the more detailed improvement action approved by the Council. This is then further refined to show specific Connect Actions and Measures, as well as identifying responsibility. As part of the 'golden thread' the actions cascade into Resource Plans as appropriate, however this level of detail has not been included in this report.
- 4.2. The appendix includes specific Quarter 2 update information and confirms the status (i.e. Red, Amber or Green) in line with principles used within Improve. The update for each of the measures is the same as that provided by Improve to inform the Council's Connect update. Where necessary an additional note has been added to further explain progress to date.
- 4.3. Overall, satisfactory and appropriate progress is being made on all actions. The majority of the measures are shown as Green – i.e. achieved, or due to achieve with no issues. A few measures are noted as 'To be reported later', which reflects their ongoing development.
- 4.2. Many of the actions will continue to be worked on into the second half of 2009/10, and a year end report will be prepared at the appropriate time. The information contained within this Quarter 2 update and at the year end, is available to the Council's external auditors who have responsibility to monitor progress on behalf of the Accounts Commission.
- 4.3. The original action plan returned to the Accounts Commission had a timescale of March 2010 for the majority of the actions and Executive Directors are working towards this date.

5. Employee Implications

- 5.1. There are no employee implications.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. There are no financial implications.

7. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 7.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and therefore, no impact assessment is required.

Linda Hardie

Executive Director (Finance and Information Technology Resources)

19 November 2009

Link(s) to Council Improvement Themes/Objectives

- Performance management and improvement

Previous References

- South Lanarkshire Council (25 March 2009) – Report on Audit of Best Value and Community Planning – recommendations referred by Executive Committee

List of Background Papers

None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

Helen Black, Improvement Manager

Ext: 4618 (Tel: 01698.454618)

E-mail: Helen.Black@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

Audit of Best Value and Community Planning - Improvement Action Plan

	Accounts Commission Improvement Agenda item	Improvement Action approved by Executive Committee	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Action	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Measure	Responsibility	Quarter 2 Update	Status
1.	Make scrutiny and decision-making more open and transparent by implementing good practice guidance and by having scrutiny forums in public.	Undertake a review of Member Scrutiny Forums, assessing the contribution which each makes, the quality and relevance of information provided, and whether operating arrangements should be changed. There will be a presumption that all Member Scrutiny Forums will be held in public, subject to access to information requirements.	Support and facilitate open and transparent governance and decision making arrangements.	Review and implement revised arrangements for the Council's member scrutiny forums and area committees in line with timetable for actions arising from the Audit of Best Value and Community Planning.	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Reports approved by Executive Committee 8 July 2009 on revised arrangements for area committees and member scrutiny forums. Implementation of revised arrangements commenced September 2009.	Green
		Review the operating arrangements of the Risk Management and Audit Forum in line with good practice guidance set out by CIPFA in 'Audit Committee Principles in Local Authorities in Scotland'.	Support and facilitate open and transparent governance and decision making arrangements	Review and implement revised arrangements for the Council's member scrutiny forums and area committees in line with timetable for actions arising from the Audit of Best Value and Community Planning. <i>Note: Finance and IT Resources' Resource Plan includes 'Review the operating</i>	Executive Director (Finance & IT Resources) (Risk and Audit Manager to provide support and advice on Audit Committee principles).	First meeting of new Risk and Audit Scrutiny Forum (RASf) on 30 September 2009. Further detailed report on gaps (when compared to CIPFA guidance) to go to future meeting of RASf.	Green

	Accounts Commission Improvement Agenda item	Improvement Action approved by Executive Committee	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Action	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Measure	Responsibility	Quarter 2 Update	Status
				<i>arrangements of the Risk Management and Audit Forum in line with good practice.</i>			
		Continue our approach to member learning and development to ensure members have the opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge to undertake their specific roles.	Support and facilitate open and transparent governance and decision making arrangements.	Annual programme of corporate and individual member learning and development.	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Report submitted to Corporate Resources Committee on 4 March 2009 highlighting areas of inclusion for forward programme. Resources consulted on topics for inclusion in programme. Courses identified as part of 2008 Personal Development Profiles incorporated. Programme being rolled out.	Green
		As part of this action, we will engage with members to inform how we take forward this improvement action.			Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Drop in sessions arranged for all members during October 2009 to discuss all aspects of learning and development.	
2	Determine the future role for area committees.	Complete current review of Area Committees and report to Standards and Procedures Forum.	Support and facilitate open and transparent governance and decision making arrangements.	Review and implement revised arrangements for the Council's member scrutiny forums and area committees in line with timetable for actions arising from the Audit of Best Value and Community Planning.	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Reports approved by Executive Committee 8 July 2009 on revised arrangements for Area Committees and member scrutiny forums. Implementation of revised arrangements commenced in September 2009.	Green

	Accounts Commission Improvement Agenda item	Improvement Action approved by Executive Committee	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Action	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Measure	Responsibility	Quarter 2 Update	Status
3	Ensure elected members are more fully engaged in community planning, risk management and the continuing review programme.	As part of this action, we will engage with members to help inform the development of proposals on improving member engagement in community planning, risk management, and the continuing review programme.	Support and facilitate open and transparent governance and decision making arrangements.	Undertake an annual survey of elected members to measure satisfaction and to enable feedback on governance issues.	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Consultation issued electronically for return by 31 August 2009. Feedback provided to members October 2009. Actions to take forward any improvement being developed.	Green
				Annual programme of corporate and individual member learning and development.	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Report submitted to Corporate Resources Committee on 4 March 2009 highlighting areas of inclusion for forward programme. Resources consulted on topics for inclusion in programme, i.e. including Community Planning, Risk Management, and Performance Management. Courses identified as part of 2008 Personal Development Profiles incorporated. Programme being rolled out.	Green
4	Make community planning more inclusive by involving more partners beyond main public sector agencies.	Continue to develop our engagement with the voluntary, community, and social economy sector in order to better understand any barriers to their participation in community planning and partnership activity.	Work with partners to enhance community planning, service planning and service delivery through the development and implementation of a Community Planning Single Outcome Agreement (SOA).	Review Community Planning Governance arrangements. <i>Note: Corporate Resources' Resource Plan also includes 'Undertake a refresh of the Community Plan and review Community Planning governance arrangements'.</i>	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	The draft timetable has been approved and the refreshed Community Plan is due to be launched in September 2010.	Green

	Accounts Commission Improvement Agenda item	Improvement Action approved by Executive Committee	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Action	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Measure	Responsibility	Quarter 2 Update	Status
				Approval of SOA in line with national timetable.	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Community Planning Single Outcome Agreement officially signed off by Council, community planning partners and the Scottish Government on 2 July 2009.	Green
		Review existing operation of the Community Planning Partnerships Community Engagement Framework to ensure improved awareness and consistency of use across the partnership.	Ensure that consultation and engagement activities initiated by partnerships are inclusive and take account of all communities of interest.	Ensure consistent use of Community Engagement Framework across the Community Planning Partnership, including voluntary, community and social economy partners to maximise their participation.	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	A position statement is to be produced as part of the refresh of the Community Plan in relation to community engagement across the partnership. This will lead to formal guidelines for use by Community Planning Partners when undertaking community engagement activity.	Green
			Ensure that consultation and community engagement are carried out to a consistent standard in the Council.	Apply national standards for community engagement to all aspects of the Council's consultation and community engagement programmes.	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Lean review of consultation undertaken and reported to Continuous Improvement Steering Group October 2009. Proposals to revise arrangements for coordination of community engagement with Resources for comment.	
5	Improve the reporting of the impact of Community Planning by developing more effective outcome measures.	Work already undertaken on the Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreement and the ongoing development of associated Theme Partnership Readiness Statements will provide	Work with partners to enhance community planning, service planning and service delivery through the development and implementation of a Community	Monitor progress of the SOA through an annual report against national and local outcomes and a quantitative assessment of the effectiveness of the SOA approach, in particular, covering	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	2008/2009 Single Outcome Agreement Annual Report approved by Executive Committee (7 October 2009) and issued to Scottish Government by due date. Work on the 2009/10 Annual Report is being progressed with internal Resources and external partners through	Green

	Accounts Commission Improvement Agenda item	Improvement Action approved by Executive Committee	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Action	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Measure	Responsibility	Quarter 2 Update	Status
		a greater focus on outcomes, with quantifiable baseline measures which will allow progress to be tracked.	Planning Single Outcome Agreement (SOA).	Community Planning and partnership working.		IMPROVe. <i>Additional note: Phase 2 development of Improve will focus on SOA information and analysis and will provide the opportunity to consider the effectiveness of measures and lead to change as appropriate. Work on contribution analysis may also inform.</i>	
6	Fully implement the Community Engagement Framework.	Review the management of community engagement and develop proposals to improve awareness and consistency of use.	Ensure that consultation and engagement activities initiated by partnerships are inclusive and take account of all communities of interest.	Ensure consistent use of Community Engagement Framework across the Community Planning Partnership, including voluntary, community and social economy partners to maximise their participation.	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	A position statement is to be produced as part of the refresh of the community plan in relation to community engagement across the partnership. This will lead to formal guidelines for use by Community Planning Partners when undertaking community engagement activity.	Green
			Report outcomes of community engagement to the public.	Record outcomes of community engagement and report on changes to service which result.	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	CMT report prepared for consideration in December 2009 reviewing community engagement activity across the Council. The report will include proposals on reporting outcomes and changes to service.	Green
			Ensure that consultation and community engagement are carried out to a consistent standard in the Council.	Apply national standards for community engagement to all aspects of the Council's consultation and community	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Lean review of consultation undertaken and reported to Continuous Improvement Steering Group October 2009. Proposals to revise arrangements for coordination of community engagement with	Green

	Accounts Commission Improvement Agenda item	Improvement Action approved by Executive Committee	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Action	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Measure	Responsibility	Quarter 2 Update	Status
				engagement programmes.		Resources for comment.	
7	Develop a forward looking workforce planning strategy and advertise senior management posts externally.	A more forward looking workforce strategy will be developed building on the actions contained within 'Connecting through People'. Annual reports on workforce planning to the Corporate Management Team and Corporate Resources Committee will be a feature of new arrangements.	Ensure our commitment to employees through the development and effective implementation of personnel policies and employee learning and development opportunities.	Develop a more forward looking workforce strategy by 2010. (Note: annual reporting thereafter)	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Personnel Managers Group taking forward development of workforce strategy.	Green
		Externally advertise all Executive Director and Head of Service vacancies except in exceptional circumstances where this would be contrary to Best Value or employment good practice.	Not included, now part of normal business. Evidence = recent adverts as part of recruitment procedure.	(Not applicable)	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Appropriate advertising arrangements in place.	Green
8	Review staff survey arrangements to improve the return rate.	Review arrangements for employee audits in other organisations. Set out new arrangements for future employee audits to significantly improve the rate of return.	Ensure our commitment to employees through the development and effective implementation of personnel policies and employee learning and development opportunities.	Increased response rate to employee audit by March 2010.	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Employee audit being undertaken during October/November 2009. <i>Additional note: Benchmarking was carried out with other Councils to determine how they attained higher response rates. This informed the revised arrangements within South</i>	To be reported later

	Accounts Commission Improvement Agenda item	Improvement Action approved by Executive Committee	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Action	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Measure	Responsibility	Quarter 2 Update	Status
						<i>Lanarkshire, including responsibility being taken by each Executive Director for percentage responses.</i>	
9	Fully implement the procurement strategy and guidelines across the council.	Reconfigure the procurement function into commodity teams reporting centrally to the Strategic Procurement Manager, and further development of the e-procurement system.	Implement a strategic response to the Scottish Government's Efficient Government Agenda.	Fully implement the procurement strategy and guidelines across the Council.	Executive Director (Finance and IT Resources)	Report on strategic procurement service approved June 2009. Head of Procurement now recruited. <i>Additional note: Quarter 4 report will confirm progress with implementation of strategy. Development of e-procurement is ongoing per the project implementation plan. Full implementation is timetabled for October 2010.</i>	Green
10	Improve the balance of Public Performance Reporting.	Review arrangements for public performance reporting to ensure appropriate balance.	Externally communicate our corporate plan, performance and service standards.	Incorporate mix of statistical data and public interest stories in PPR documents (namely SL Reporter and SL View) and signpost readers to more detailed information.	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Performance reporting has been prepared for the Connect insert in November 09 Reporter and is being planned for March 10 edition of Reporter. Service information also issued through news releases and the monthly SL View. In the first six months, we have recorded 231 news releases published in local papers worth £320,744 (using advertising rates). Information on many aspects of our services has been included the monthly SL View and uploaded to the website news. <i>Additional note: The November SL Reporter will include information on 'Hard Choices for Hard Times'</i>	Green

	Accounts Commission Improvement Agenda item	Improvement Action approved by Executive Committee	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Action	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Measure	Responsibility	Quarter 2 Update	Status
						<i>as an example of balanced reporting.</i>	
				Gather feedback on publications and focus groups perceptions of PR initiatives.	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Focus groups are being scheduled to follow up on those hosted earlier this year.	Green
11	Improve the condition of the roads and service performance in criminal justice services.	ROADS SERVICES					
		Continue with the roads investment programme and adjust funding strategy as required to take account of current market conditions.	Implement a major programme of carriageway resurfacing to reflect maintenance requirements across all classes of road.	Improve road condition by resurfacing 8.87% of the roads network each year.	Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)	5.6% at Quarter 2.	Green
				Reduce the percentage of red/amber roads requiring treatment to 37% by 2010/11 (baseline of 39.2% 2007/08 long term target to reduce to 28% by 2015/16).	Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)	136 carriageway schemes have been undertaken resurfacing 5.6% of the network during the first half of 2009/10. The percentage of the road network that should be considered for maintenance treatment is an annual measure.	To be reported later
				Reduce the percentage of red/amber roads in the rural areas requiring treatment to 42% by 2010/11 (baseline of 44% 2006/08, long term target to reduce to 34% by 2015/16).	Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)	Not available	To be reported later

	Accounts Commission Improvement Agenda item	Improvement Action approved by Executive Committee	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Action	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Measure	Responsibility	Quarter 2 Update	Status
				Adjust funding strategy to take account of market conditions in relation to continuation of roads investment programme.	Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)	The way forward has been agreed with Central Finance allowing continuation of the programme as originally proposed.	Green
		CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES					
		For criminal justice service relating to new probationers we will provide monitoring and guidance across the service area to ensure reduction in variation in local office reporting.	Reduce the risk of harm to individuals and communities by working in partnership to manage offenders in the community and reduce re-offending.	Achieve, then maintain 80% of offenders seen within one week of receiving a probation order.	Executive Director (Social Work Resources)	Have made good progress now above target. <i>Additional note: New reporting measures implemented in local teams from May 2009 are beginning to show improvements in seeing new probationers within 7 days. Good progress has been made over the past three months as we are currently above target.</i>	Green
		In order to increase the average number of hours per week to complete community service orders we will examine the most effective way of delivering this service and set a target of 3.6 hours next year, to match the national average.	Reduce the risk of harm to individuals and communities by working in partnership to manage offenders in the community and reduce re-offending.	Increase average number of hours per week to complete a community service order	Executive Director (Social Work Resources)	There has been an increase compared with the previous quarter which was 3.3 <i>Additional note: Whilst there has been an improvement from the previous quarter, this target remains a challenge. Additional Community Service Supervisors have recently been appointed to assist offenders to get through their orders faster.</i>	Green

	Accounts Commission Improvement Agenda item	Improvement Action approved by Executive Committee	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Action	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Measure	Responsibility	Quarter 2 Update	Status
12	Address the imbalance of customer satisfaction across the four main geographic areas.	Undertake targeted surveys to better understand reasons for variation in customer satisfaction across geographical areas.	Seek the views of all stakeholders regularly on services we provide, in particular specific efforts will be made to consult with hard to reach groups, and tell people what we have done as a result.	Targeted surveys carried out to understand differential responses.	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Further analysis of customer survey has been undertaken. This analysis will influence future strategy and implementation. <i>Additional note: Analysis was carried out in respect of Clydesdale area which identified concerns over roads and roads repairs. After isolating these particular issues it was concluded that customer satisfaction was similar across geographic areas. Further consideration is being given in Clydesdale area to how customer concerns are dealt with and responded to.</i>	Green
				Number of consultations carried out targeting hard to reach groups.	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Measure will be reported at Quarter 4.	To be reported later
				Increase in response rate for all cyclical consultations	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Measure will be reported at Quarter 4.	To be reported later
		Use outcomes from surveys and other relevant data to inform strategic planning process.	Seek the views of all stakeholders regularly on services we provide, in particular specific efforts will be made to consult with hard to reach groups, and tell people what	Number of consultations carried out which have resulted in a change to service delivery.	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	Measure will be reported at Quarter 4. <i>Additional note: The Councils' Governance Action Plan (Community Engagement) and Resource Planning Guidance (Section 4) also refers.</i>	To be reported later

	Accounts Commission Improvement Agenda item	Improvement Action approved by Executive Committee	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Action	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Measure	Responsibility	Quarter 2 Update	Status
			we have done as a result.	100% of completed consultations published on database with an outcome.	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)	All surveys are published on the internet. <i>Additional note: Database includes specific field of information relating to outcomes.</i>	Green
13	Review the continuous improvement activity taking place to ensure that it is being prioritised and coordinated effectively.	Corporate Improvement Unit will effectively prioritise and coordinate the Council's improvement agenda. A Corporate Improvement Plan will be prepared taking account of internal and external influences, and a recommendation will be made on the most appropriate self evaluation tool.	Develop and implement our Council Plan – Connect.	Mid term review of Connect completed/approved by June 2009.	Chief Executive	Connect mid term review completed and approved by Executive Committee June 2009 (<i>incl. CIP and revised Council priorities</i>).	Green
			Manage our performance	Research and implementation of self assessment model.	Chief Executive	Public Sector Improvement Framework (PSIF) system of self evaluation approved by Executive Committee June 2009. Detailed implementation and roll out arrangements to be considered by Executive Committee November 2009.	Green
14	Ensure that the recent efforts on sustainable development are maintained and tangible progress is achieve.	Action on sustainable development will continue to be developed in line with the detail included within the Sustainable Development Strategy.	Improve effective use of our buildings and transport in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.	Various measures from Sustainable Development Strategy (Connect) .	Executive Director (Community Resources)	Improvements are being made through the gradual implementation of a 4 year Sustainable Development Strategy, the document which provides a focus for all initiatives being taken to advance sustainable development across the Council. Progress is reported on a 6 monthly basis to a Sustainable Development Officer/Member Group, and annually to Executive Committee. The most recent report indicated that good progress being made across	Green
			Ensure efficient use of material resources and to increase recycling of waste and develop more sustainable waste management.		Executive Director (Community Resources)		
			Protect and enhance our natural environment, land and ecology.		Executive Director (Community Resources)		

	Accounts Commission Improvement Agenda item	Improvement Action approved by Executive Committee	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Action	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Measure	Responsibility	Quarter 2 Update	Status
			Foster responsible citizenship and awareness of sustainable development.		Executive Director (Community Resources)	the board with 85 out of 108 actions being reported as achieved or on target to achieve. The Strategy has now reached its half-way point and a further report on progress will be made to CMT in November. This report will identify priority areas where action is needed to bring slipping actions back on track.	
			Secure quality living and working environments for health, wellbeing and economic prosperity.		Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)		
			Manage our impact on the water environment.		Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)		
			Develop responsible procurement practices.		Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)		
		The Single Outcome Agreement will set out how South Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnership will work with the government in the delivery of its central purpose to promote sustainable economic growth.	Implement a major programme of carriageway resurfacing to reflect maintenance requirements across all classes or road.	Various measures relating to SOA local outcome creating a sustainable economy.	Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)	Satisfactory progress has been made in progressing efforts relating to creating a sustainable economy. However, the wider economic downturn and the Lanarkshire-wide strategic response has had a significant impact on the emphasis placed on business and employability related issues. Progress will continue to be managed via the SOA with local targets being revised as appropriate.	
					Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)		

	Accounts Commission Improvement Agenda item	Improvement Action approved by Executive Committee	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Action	Connect/Corporate Improvement Plan Measure	Responsibility	Quarter 2 Update	Status
			Promote the development of modern public transport facilities.		Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)		
			Develop the area's tourism potential and its image/profile.		Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)		
			Support the Clyde Gateway Regeneration Initiative.		Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)		
			Deliver support to local business.		Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)		
			Promote employability and access to jobs.		Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)		