

South Ayrshire Council

Report by Assistant Director - People  
to Audit and Governance Panel  
of 4 November 2020

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**Subject: Audit Scotland: Local Government in Scotland  
Overview 2020**

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**1. Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Panel of the Audit Scotland report 'Local Government in Scotland Overview 2020'.

**2. Recommendations**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Panel:**

2.1.1 considers the content and recommendations of the Audit Scotland report (attached as [Appendix 1](#));

2.1.2 considers the questions for Members (detailed in Appendices 1 and 2) and agrees any further specific actions for the Panel or recommendations for Members generally.

**3. Background**

3.1 This Accounts Commission issued a report that had been prepared by Audit Scotland entitled 'Local Government in Scotland Overview 2020'.

3.2 The report is intended to inform the public and its representatives and, in particular, to support local government Councillors and senior Council officers in their complex and demanding roles.

3.3 The report considers a number of challenges facing local government now, and in the future including:

3.3.1 **Political and Economic** – the Political and economic landscape continues to hold uncertainties;

3.3.2 **Community Needs** – population changes affect the need for and demands on many services;

3.3.3 **Policy** – local government is an important contributor to national outcome priorities; and

3.3.4 **Financial** – local government faces a range of financial challenges.

- 3.4 To assist Councillors, the report also includes a Supplement (attached as [Appendix 2](#)) which sets out:
- 3.4.1 The report's 'Key Messages';
  - 3.4.2 The report's Recommendations; and
  - 3.4.3 Includes questions for Councillors to consider that have been designed to prompt thinking on a range of issues to better understand South Ayrshire Council's performance compared to others.

#### **4. Proposals**

- 4.1 The report covers all areas of Council and Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCP) service provision drawing on information and observations from a range of sources, including recent Best Value Audit Reports and the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) Report.
- 4.2 The report recognises that local government in Scotland is under unprecedented pressure due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 4.3 The report further recognises that there are many examples of outstanding work by Councils and their partners in delivering vital services to our communities. The report notes the collective community partnership has sought to deal with the unprecedented challenges of the pandemic with professionalism, compassion and kindness.
- 4.4 It is proposed that the Panel considers the recommendations and questions raised for Members in the Audit Scotland report and agrees any further specific actions for the Panel or recommendations for Members generally.

#### **5. Legal and Procurement Implications**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

#### **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 Not applicable.

#### **7. Human Resources Implications**

- 7.1 None

#### **8. Risk**

##### ***Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations***

- 8.1.1 There are no risks associated with adopting the recommendations.
- 8.2/

## 8.2 **Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations**

8.2.1 Rejecting the recommendations may impact on the reputation of the Council.

## 9. **Equalities**

9.1 The proposals in this report allow scrutiny of performance. The report does not involve proposals for policies, strategies, procedures, processes, financial decisions and activities (including service delivery), both new and at review, that affect the Council's communities and employees, therefore an equality impact assessment is not required.

## 10. **Sustainable Development Implications**

10.1 **Considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme or strategy or document otherwise described which could be considered to constitute a plan, programme, policy or strategy.

## 11. **Options Appraisal**

11.1 An options appraisal has not been carried out in relation to the subject matter of this report.

## 12. **Link to Council Plan**

12.1 The matters referred to in this report contribute to Commitment 1 of the Council Plan: Fair and Effective Leadership/ Leadership that promotes fairness.

## 13. **Results of Consultation**

13.1 There has been no public consultation on the contents of this report.

13.2 Consultation has taken place with Councillor Peter Henderson, Portfolio Holder for Corporate, and the contents of this report reflect any feedback provided.

**Background Papers**    **None**

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