

Project scope

Challenges and performance 2019

Local government in Scotland



ACCOUNTS COMMISSION 

Prepared by Audit Scotland
September 2018

Each year the Accounts Commission publishes two reports that set out a review of Local Government in Scotland:

- Local government in Scotland – Financial overview
- Local government in Scotland – Challenges and performance.

The first report, published in the autumn each year, assesses the financial position and issues for local government. The second report, published in the following spring each year, builds on the financial overview and assesses the wider performance and challenges facing local government.

In the challenges and performance 2019 report, we will comment on:

- The challenges councils face such as:
 - increasing demands on services, mainly associated with changing demographics
 - financial pressures arising from reducing budgets
 - impact of national priorities and policies, as well as the UK's withdrawal from the EU.
- How well councils are responding to the challenges eg, through transformation programmes and by embracing digital solutions.
- How well councils are performing by considering the impact these challenges have had on the services they provide.

Why is this audit important?

Local government provide a diverse range of important services to the people of Scotland. Councils spend around £11,500 million of public money each year and local government is one of Scotland's largest employers with around 245,000 staff. Demand for services and pressure on budgets continue to increase making good fiscal planning, management and governance as critical as ever. The current financial pressures facing the Scottish public sector mean it is important to report publicly on how local government in Scotland is managing the financial challenges.

How will we carry out the audit?

Our report will draw on the audited annual accounts and annual audit reports of councils, integration joint boards and local government pension funds. We will also draw on Audit Scotland's national performance audit reports, and information from other sources including published data, such as the local government benchmarking framework.

What impact will the audit have?

The report will provide an independent assessment and assurance to the public about how effectively Scottish local government is currently performing and responding to the challenges it faces as well as planning for the future. It will also act as a prompt for councillors to help them with their scrutiny role.

Report timing

We will publish the *Local government in Scotland – Challenges and performance 2019* in the spring 2019. Alongside the report we will also provide a useful checklist of questions for councillors to support effective scrutiny.

Previous local government overview reports can be found on the Audit Scotland website.

Contact

For further information on the local government overview reports contact Kathrine Sibbald, Audit Manager, on 0131 625 1811 or ksibbald@audit-scotland.gov.uk .



Audit Scotland, 4th Floor, 102 West Port, Edinburgh EH3 9DN
T: 0131 625 1500 E: info@audit-scotland.gov.uk 
www.audit-scotland.gov.uk 

For the latest news, reports and updates, follow us on:

