

Address:  
110 George Street  
Edinburgh  
EH2 4LH

Telephone:  
0845 146 1010

Website:  
[www.audit-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk)



## News release

Embargoed until 00:01 hours, Friday 21 September 2012

### **Aberdeenshire Council shows progress in its benefits service**

Aberdeenshire Council has made significant improvements in the service it offers for housing and council tax benefits.

The Accounts Commission called for an update on its earlier report from August 2011 which criticised councillors for lack of scrutiny and failing to ensure robust arrangements were in place to improve the service.

The update published today says scrutiny of performance has improved and there is faster and more efficient processing of cases. The council now demonstrates awareness of areas where it could improve including intervention activity, reviewing how it receives feedback from customers and appeals performance. It also recognises that it needs to continue to plan for the impact of welfare reform.

Chair of the Accounts Commission, John Baillie, said: "We recognise the progress made by the council against the risks and improvement actions identified and are particularly encouraged by the improvements to scrutiny of the service by councillors. We urge Aberdeenshire to continue this positive momentum to help further improve performance."

**Media contact: Chris Holme, Tel: 0131 625 1653 [cholme@auditscotland.gov.uk](mailto:cholme@auditscotland.gov.uk)**

#### **Notes to editors**

1. The earlier report from August 2011 can be accessed here: <http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/media/article.php?id=173>
2. The Accounts Commission for Scotland checks how well Scotland's councils, fire and police boards perform. It operates independently of local and central government.
3. Audit Scotland provides services to the Accounts Commission for Scotland and carries out work as directed by the Accounts Commission.