

## News release

**EMBARGOED until 00:01 hours, Thursday 28 March 2019**

### South Lanarkshire Council performs well and continues to improve

**South Lanarkshire Council demonstrates strong leadership, has a good approach to the way it manages its finances and has delivered improvements to many services. Now the council needs to ensure that service redesign is driven by engagement with local communities.**

A report on the council by the local authority watchdog, the Accounts Commission, says the council delivers major capital projects on time and on budget, has redesigned services and has a culture of continuous improvement. This will help them to meet the financial challenges that all councils continue to face.

The report says the impact of taking a longer-term approach to improving services is clear in education; attainment has improved since 2011/12 and an increased proportion of 16 to 19-year-olds are now participating in learning, training or work. The council also has a comprehensive and forward-looking approach to workforce planning that helps to prepare for future workforce pressures.

The Commission says the council should do more to talk to and work with local communities as it looks to redesign services in the future, as well as seeking a better understanding of how residents view the services they receive.

Graham Sharp, chair of the Accounts Commission said: "We are pleased to recognise the sustained and continuous improvement demonstrated by South Lanarkshire Council. Their ability to deliver on major projects, comprehensive approach to managing their workforce and focus on ensuring financial sustainability, at a time of increased demand and tightening budgets, is acknowledged. Now the council must focus on engaging more with residents, ensuring they are integral to the ways in which local services are delivered."

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#### Notes to editors

1. [Read the 2009 Best Value report on South Lanarkshire Council.](#)
2. The Controller of Audit has prepared this report for the Accounts Commission. It is the thirteenth of the new-style Best Value Assurance Reports (BVAR), which aim to offer a rounded and comprehensive analysis of a council's performance. The new reports cover how effectively councils are managing changes in services; involving the public in decisions; ensuring enough skills and time to deliver clear priorities; and providing clear information so the public can gauge improvement.
3. Until now, some councils may not have had a Best Value audit for a decade or more, whilst others have had several. In future, we aim to ensure all 32 councils will have a BVAR at least once every five years. All councils will continue to have their accounts independently audited annually, leading to a published audit report.

4. Audit Scotland has prepared this report for the Accounts Commission for Scotland. All Audit Scotland reports published since 2000 are available at [www.audit-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk)
- The Accounts Commission is the public spending watchdog for local government. It holds councils and various joint boards and committees in Scotland to account and help them improve. It operates impartially and independently of councils and of the Scottish Government, and meets and reports in public
  - Audit Scotland is a statutory body set up in April 2000, under the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act, 2000. It provides services to the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission for Scotland.