

Report reference	Best Value 2 Audit 2010 Improvement area	Lead officer, supporting officers	Action proposed - Current action - New action	Timescale
<p>P.8 summary,</p> <p>P.28, para 94</p> <p>P.10 para.18</p>	<p><b>1. Co-ordination and prioritisation of performance improvement</b></p> <p>The methods it uses to improve performance could be more effective and have more impact if its approach is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- better coordinated</li> <li>- prioritised</li> <li>- within an overall improvement framework to ensure maximum impact</li> <li>- able to demonstrate better how its performance management arrangements are driving improvement</li> </ul> <p>Improvement activities listed are: CIP; cross party working groups; BV reviews; CharterMark and other awards; PSIF.</p>	<p>Lead Officer – Chief Executive</p> <p>Supporting Officer - Head of Policy &amp; Performance</p>	<p><b>New action</b></p> <p>Set out all improvement activity in a framework of change with the Senior Management Team (SMT) and review prioritisation.</p> <p>Improvement actions recorded in the electronic performance and risk management system.</p> <p>Monitor, review and report improvement actions in Quarterly Performance Reviews.</p>	<p>October 2010</p> <p>December 2010</p> <p>Quarter 4, 2010-11</p>
<p><b>CF7, p.3</b></p> <p>P.8 summary</p> <p>P.8 para.17</p> <p>P.10 para. 18</p> <p>P.30 para109, 110</p>	<p><b>2. Demonstrating VFM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve performance management capacity (not clear if performance management activities trigger reviews)</li> <li>- Have effective and consistent mechanisms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to test value for money</li> <li>- to provide robust and challenged options appraisal</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Demonstrate competitiveness in delivery of services in the current financial climate (e.g. BV reviews of Significant Trading Organisations)</li> <li>- Improve communication with the public specifically on demonstrating value for money in activities / the way services are delivered and explaining the choices made.</li> <li>- Review how difficult decisions are communicated to public, staff and media (SE)</li> </ul>	<p>Lead Officer – Head of Accountancy</p> <p>Head of Corporate Finance</p> <p>Directors of TECS/H&amp;P and ECS</p> <p>Head of Accounting, Head of Policy &amp; Performance</p>	<p><b>Current action</b></p> <p>SMT agreed approach to development of VFM indicators. VFM service specific indicators developed.</p> <p>Options appraisal for capital projects (2 x 5 year phases).</p> <p>Develop benchmarking for Service Area</p> <p>Market testing of selected services (TECs)</p> <p>Include in public performance reporting</p> <p>Report on results from the public consultation on budget savings</p>	<p>May 2010</p> <p>October 2010</p> <p>August 2010</p> <p>June 2011</p> <p>March 2011</p> <p>April 2011</p> <p>Sept. – Dec. 2010 onwards.</p> <p>Autumn 2010</p>



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			<p>Take forward improvement actions from self-assessment using SHR standards and PSIF scoring</p> <p>Undertake outstanding self assessment (using SHR standards and PSIF scoring)</p> <p><b>New action</b> Discuss priorities for further improvement with SHR</p>	<p>December 2010</p> <p>September 2010</p> <p>August - October 2010</p>
P.24 para.71	<p><b>4. Equalities</b> Senior managers recognise that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- diversity and equality need to be more consistently implemented across council services.</li> <li>- there is a need to deal with equality issues in a more strategic way</li> <li>- the equalities group should focus more closely on improving the council's performance on equality issues.</li> </ul> <p>Elected members should do more to engage in the council's equalities agenda, which they do not champion as actively or effectively as they do for sustainable development issues.</p>	<p>Lead Officer – Assistant Chief Executive</p> <p>Supporting Officer – Head of Policy &amp; Performance</p>	<p><b>Current action</b> Draft Single Equality Scheme (SES) approved</p> <p>Consultation on draft and final SES approved.</p> <p><b>New action</b> Agree Work Plan for Equalities Working Group &amp; SMT. Performance reporting in new electronic system.</p> <p>Implement action plan for SES</p> <p>Agree approach to political leadership for equalities (learning from the leadership approach on sustainability and climate change).</p>	<p>Completed June 2010</p> <p>April 2011</p> <p>September 2010</p> <p>June 2011</p> <p>September 2010</p>

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<p>p. 10 para 18, P26, para.85</p> <p>P.28 para.80</p>	<p><b>5 (a) Staffing</b> To progress as a matter of urgency its review of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- pay,</li> <li>- terms and conditions including continuing legacy issues from former district and regional council structures (bonus schemes, working hours, leave entitlement).</li> </ul> <p>To complete the job evaluation appeals process and harmonise terms and conditions. (SE)</p>	<p>Lead Officers – Head of Personnel &amp; Head of Accountancy</p> <p>Lead Officer - Head of Personnel</p>	<p><b>Current action</b> New pay structure was implemented w.e.f. 1 April 2008</p> <p>Collective agreement reached with trade unions on terms and conditions</p> <p>Stage 1 appeals to be completed. Stage 2 appeals completed.</p> <p>External Equalities Impact Assessments of both the Pay and Grading Structure and Harmonised and Non-discriminatory terms and conditions have been received.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Sept. 2010</p> <p>Sept. 2010 March 2011</p> <p>Completed</p>
<p>P.8 para. 17, P 26 para.83</p>	<p><b>5(b) Staffing</b> Improvement is needed in workforce planning</p> <p>To fully roll out staff Personal Development Plans to make sure staff have the opportunity to develop their job skills. (SE)</p>	<p>Lead Officer – Head of Personnel</p>	<p><b>Current action</b> Review the approach to corporate workforce planning ensuring accountability and integral link with service planning.</p> <p>Review workforce management plan.</p> <p>Systems team set up in Personnel to manage workforce data.</p> <p>Re-align HR services to support more effective workforce planning</p> <p>Services to report progress including % roll-out. (Employee Survey 2010 reports 59% of staff have a PDP)</p>	<p>September 2010</p> <p>September 2010</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>March 2011</p> <p>September 2010</p>

			Services required to record PDPs	March 2011
			Resourcelink to include record of PDP for each individual	March 2011
<b>CF8, p.3</b> P.10 para 18. P26, para.83, P28, para.93	<b>6(a) Staffing and Corporate Improvement Programme (CIP) work stream</b> To continue to develop its staff management processes (and increase pace of change in CIP related work streams): - human resources system implementation (absence management and recruitment processes) - mobile and flexible working and customer engagement	Lead Officers – Director of ECS & Corporate Manager RSL  Supporting Officers – Head of Personnel and CIP Project Managers	<b>Current action</b> Re-align HR services to support more effective staff management processes	March 2011
P.10 para 18, P28, para.93	<b>6(b) CIP work stream / customer engagement</b> Increase the pace of change in customer engagement	Lead Officer – Assistant Chief Executive  Supporting Officers – Head of eGovernment & CIP Project Manager	<b>Current action</b> Core Customer Service Process Redesign  New CRM system in place E -Payment system deployed  Delivery of outcomes and benefits as agreed in Project Plan  Progress Reports to CIP Programme Board (monthly) and Resources Committee (quarterly)	October 2010  February 2011 April 2011  April 2013
P.8 para. 17,  P26 para.86	<b>6(c) CIP work stream / asset management</b> Improvement is needed in corporate asset management  The council has not improved the proportion of properties that are not suitable for current use, which remains at 36 per cent.	Lead Officer – Director of Housing & Property  Supporting Officer – AMP Project Manager	<b>Current action</b> Adopt corporate approach to ownership of property  Approval to be sought to proceed to procurement of effective asset management information system.  Improve targeting of investment to achieve corporate asset objectives	April 2011  July 2010  April 2011

			Engage with partners for joint mapping of asset portfolios.	December 2010
P. 10 para. 18 P17, paras.34 and 35 P21 para.51 P29., para.98	<b>7 (a) SOA – further improvement to reviewing and refining targets and partnership performance for outcomes</b> With partners, to improve the management of performance for outcome areas in the SOA, through the development of improved monitoring, challenge and reporting arrangements.	Lead Officer – Head of Policy & Performance	<b>Current action</b> Complete the review of partnership arrangements for seven outcomes in the SOA.	June 2010 - April 2011
P. 10 para 18  P. 17 para 35  P28 para.90  P.29, para97	<b>7(b) SOA – further improvement / challenge to joint working arrangements</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- strengthen the communication links between the strategic and local partnerships</li> <li>- no clear monitoring and reporting structures in place for local partnerships to show how they contribute to the delivery of local and strategic outcomes</li> <li>- refresh area and local CPPs (SE)</li> <li>- complete the review of partnership arrangements to deliver the SOA outcomes</li> <li>- seek better alignment of financial frameworks with partners (SE)</li> <li>-</li> </ul>	Lead Officers - Corporate Managers	<b>Current action</b> Review current arrangements and identify gaps. Prepare implementation plan to show how local partnerships contribute to strategic outcomes.  Link to improvement action above on the review of partnership arrangements.	March 2011  April 2011
<b>CF9, p.3</b>  P.26, para.89	<b>8. Project – Caithness Heat and Power</b> The Commission notes the action taken by the council on issues relating to Caithness Heat and Power, and expects to consider a report on this separately.	Lead Officer – Chief Executive  Supporting officers- Depute Chief Executive & Director of Finance, Director H&P.	<b>Current action</b> Improvement actions arising from audit report to be implemented with a progress report to Highland Council.  Achieve contract award to successful bidder  Support implementation of new contract.	September 2010  September 2010  March 2011

CF: Accounts Commission finding

SE: Action noted in Highland Council's self-evaluation