

Devon & Cornwall Police Authority

Reports issued by the Audit Commission since last meeting

- Use of resources report 2008/09 (Draft).
- Annual audit letter

Work completed

- Audit of the financial statements and whole of government accounts

Work in progress

- Liaison with Internal Audit and initial planning of pre-statement work on systems material to the financial statements.

Audit Commission events and national reports relevant to Police

- The Audit Commission has worked with the National School of Government to produce a unique web-based learning scheme on the core skills in financial management for local government. Top managers (both executives and non-executives) need to be financially literate and able to understand fully the fiscal environment their organisation operates in. This free programme gives managers who are not finance experts a grounding in the core financial management skills. A link to the tool was emailed to all local government bodies during the week beginning 26 October 2009.
- On 28 October the Audit Commission, following consultation, published its *New scales of audit and inspection fees for 2010/11 and indicative fee proposals for 2011/12 and 2012/13*. Scales for councils, fire authorities and the police will rise by six per cent to pay for additional work arising from the transition to new International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The one-off costs arising from this move will be subsidised by the Commission and refunds of 3% of the 2010/11 scale fees are being made in 2010.
- Police Authority Inspections which are taking place on a phased basis from September 2009 to 2011 are funded by the Home Office.
- A survey launched on 30 October 2009 will examine the extent of detected fraud and corruption in England's councils, police, fire and rescue and probation services. The Audit Commission is asking 500 organisations for data, in an effort to chart losses caused by fraud. The Commission's regular update on its anti-fraud work, *Protecting the Public Purse* was published in September 2009. The Audit Commission will use the survey results in the fight against fraud and corruption in public services, to raise awareness of fraud and to promote best practice in the public sector.
- On 5 November 2009 the Audit Commission released *Nothing but the truth?* This paper sets out important issues as the basis for discussion on how to ensure data about local public services is fit for purpose. It asks if citizens, along with frontline staff, managers, politicians, central government and local public service regulators, can have confidence in the data they rely on. And if not, what needs to be done about it?
- Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). The first results will be available on 10 December 2009 on the *Oneplace* website. CAA looks at the links between all those involved in improving community safety locally, and holds them collectively to account. If your area is getting exceptional results or has improved in a way

that others can learn from, this will be highlighted with a green flag. In places where there are significant concerns about the likelihood of improvement in agreed local priorities, there will be red flags.

Other recent reports issued by the Audit Commission

- On 9 September 2009 the Audit Commission published *Building better lives: Getting the best from strategic housing, our report on the strategic housing function of local authorities*. Following on from this report, the Audit Commission launched on 21 October 2009 a presentation that can be used by Directors of Housing with their Chief Executive, senior management team, Cabinet or portfolio holder to raise the profile of strategic housing within councils.
- On 15 October 2009 the Audit Commission launched a user-friendly online tool to help increase understanding of housing market issues and trends in local areas. The *Housing Market Analysis tool* provides a range of indicators, allowing users to look at issues in local housing markets, as well as demographic change, levels of deprivation, the local economy and local environment. The tool has been designed for all housing professionals to use from the district councillor to the local government housing officer.
- On 21 October 2009 the Audit Commission released its report *Lofty ambitions*. This report examines and reports on the progress made by councils to cut these emissions in their areas. It gives practical examples to show councils how they can tackle emissions, and at the same time help to reduce fuel poverty. The report also considers how councils can achieve improvements in value for money from their actions to reduce CO2.
- On 29 October 2009 the Audit Commission published its report *Means to an end - joint financing across health and social care*. The report reviews the joint financing and integrated care arrangements between NHS bodies and councils with adult social care responsibilities. It builds on the Commission's previous publication *Clarifying Joint Financing Arrangements* published in December 2008.

All the documents referred to are available from the Audit Commission website:
www.audit-commission.gov.uk

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