

# EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

## GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 15 FEBRUARY 2008

### 2006/07 STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – COUNCIL PROFILES

#### Report by Executive Head of Finance & Asset Management

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with summary information relating to the Council's relative position in respect of the 2006/07 Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) as reported by Audit Scotland.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Audit Scotland published on its website full details of all 2006/07 Statutory Performance Indicators in December 2007.
- 2.2 These have been produced in the form of profiles for all Scottish local authorities, and they show trends in performance against the Statutory Performance Indicators specified by the Accounts Commission. In view of the reporting arrangements put in place by Audit Scotland, the Corporate Management Team, in considering a report on this matter at its meeting on 16 January 2008, agreed that a report on East Ayrshire's relative performance should also be submitted to this Committee for consideration.

#### **3. COUNCIL AND SERVICE PROFILES**

- 3.1 The Council profiles and the Service profiles published on Audit Scotland's website, give a summary of a council's position over the 3 financial years 2004/05 to 2006/07, and an indication of a council's relative position for each SPI when compared with all other Scottish Local Authorities. The Profiles highlight the extent to which councils recorded a significant decline or improvement in their level of performance over the three years between 2004/05 and 2006/07. Not all measures were applicable throughout this period because some SPI's have been deleted, some have been modified and a number of new SPI's have been introduced. Of the 82 measures in the Profiles, 51 allow comparison of relative performance over time.
- 3.2 The Profiles are based on 82 measures, and exclude a small number of SPI's where national standards are largely being met, problems are very rare, reported numbers are very small or where a large number of councils are not providing robust information.

## **4. CONTEXTUAL SETTING**

- 4.1 All Local Authorities have a statutory requirement to collect and report on their performance against SPI's. However, it should be recognised that Statutory Performance Information forms only a limited part of the Council's wider Performance Management Framework. Members, through the respective Committees on which they serve, receive regular reports throughout the year on the Council's wider performance. The figures published in relation to SPI's provide a retrospective picture of how the Council performed during 2006/07.
- 4.2 It should also be recognised that some of the indicators are more useful than others and that the percentage improvement parameters determined by Audit Scotland for reporting purposes may, for some indicators, be very difficult to achieve. As a consequence, any subsequent analysis and comparison across the 32 Scottish Authorities can at times be of limited value. Nonetheless, SPI's are clearly important as they allow for a comparison of the Council's performance within the wider national picture and provide an impetus for all councils to continually improve their performance against SPI's.

## **5. EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE**

- 5.1 The Profile information indicates a ranking out of 32 for each measure considered, as set out at Appendix 9. East Ayrshire Council has 26 measures in the first quartile (best in class), 24 measures in the second quartile, 19 measures in the third quartile and 13 measures in the bottom quartile. Analysis by Council service for 2006/07 reveals a number of high-performing services that have significant proportions of their indicators appearing in the upper two quartiles, particularly Protective Services, Housing, Adult Social Work and Waste Management (see Appendix 1).
- 5.2 Appendix 2 shows trend information on the number of indicators within the top quartile. Year-on-year performance in this area has improved significantly. In 2006/07, 26 of our measures were in the first quartile, compared with 23 in 2005/06 and 19 in 2004/05. It is also worth noting that, relative to our comparator authorities (see Appendix 9), East Ayrshire Council has the highest number of indicators appearing in the top 2 quartiles.
- 5.3 Under the duty of Best Value, there is a requirement to demonstrate continuous improvement in performance. Audit Scotland produces a summary report which looks at overall performance across Scotland's 32 councils and highlights key trends. The 2006/07 report shows that in terms of the overall ratio of improvement to decline between 2004/05 – 2006/07, for the second year running East Ayrshire is ranked as the best performing local authority in Scotland, jointly with South Lanarkshire. As Appendix 3 shows, over this period the Council's performance in 26 indicators improved by more than 5%, with just 7 indicators declining by the same amount. This means that the overall ratio of improvement to decline was 3.71, compared to the Scottish average ratio of 1.48.

- 5.4 As Appendix 4 illustrates, East Ayrshire Council's performance has improved by 15% or more on 17 measures. Of the 17 measures demonstrating this level of improvement, 4 had improved by at least 50%, as shown in Appendix 5. Conversely, our performance worsened by 15% or more on 4 measures, as shown in Appendix 6. Details of these indicators, together with Audit Scotland's comments on potential influencing factors and an explanatory note from the appropriate Executive Director (in italics) on the reasons for the improvement or decline in performance are provided within Appendices 5 and 6 respectively.
- 5.5 The Profiles also draw attention to five specific indicators which, in 2004/05 were ranked in the bottom quartile (25<sup>th</sup> – 32<sup>nd</sup>) and, by 2006/07 had not improved by at least 5%. Again, details of these indicators, together with Audit Scotland's comments on potential influencing factors and an explanatory note from the appropriate Executive Director (in italics) are contained in Appendix 7.
- 5.6 It should be noted that East Ayrshire Council is one of only nine authorities in Scotland that had no indicators classified as failure to report (FTR) or where unreliable data was found (see Appendix 10). This is the seventh consecutive year in which East Ayrshire Council has maintained this position. Moreover, there were no indicators where the Council did not provide a service, a position that has been maintained since 2002/03.
- 5.7 The Profiles also contain a table indicating the extent to which councils have improved in poorly performing service areas. East Ayrshire had a total of 16 indicators ranked 25 (out of 32 Councils) or lower in 2004/05 and 11 of these had shown improvement by 2006/07. The table at Appendix 8 shows the extent to which all councils have improved in poorly performing service areas between 2004/05 and 2006/07.
- 5.8 In certain service areas, the Scottish Government groups councils into 'Family Groups'. In preparation for the Audit of Best Value and Community Planning in 2006, Professor Arthur Midwinter was engaged by the Council as a 'critical friend' to assist in undertaking the strategic self-assessment of the Council's performance. During this process, Professor Midwinter suggested that an appropriate family grouping for East Ayrshire would be Inverclyde, Clackmannanshire and North Ayrshire Councils, based on a comparison of certain demographic factors such as population size, rural settlement patterns and poverty.
- 5.9 Clearly, comparison of our own performance against the identified councils within our Family Group provides more meaningful information than national comparison with all Councils. As a consequence, Appendix 9 shows how we are ranked against our family grouping in terms of a quartile-breakdown of SPI results. In order to provide further analysis for the purpose of this report, our 'extended' family grouping has been used. This includes the Family Group as well as South Ayrshire, our neighbouring authority, and West Lothian and East Renfrewshire Councils, both of whom were recognised in their Best Value Audit reports as being well managed and strongly performing councils.
- 5.10 Analysis of our performance against our comparator councils reveals that East Ayrshire has the highest proportion of its indicators appearing in the top two quartiles (50 out of 82 possible indicators are in the top two quartiles, representing 61% of all indicators). In this regard, this performance is better than any of the other councils who make up our 'extended' family grouping.

## **6. LEGAL, FINANCIAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The collection and publication of this information is a statutory requirement. The publication of this data by Audit Scotland enhances the Council's accountability and facilitates comparisons between the standards of performance achieved by this Council and other Scottish councils between 2004/05 and 2006/07.
- 6.2 There are no financial implications associated with this report.
- 6.3 The Council's Corporate Management Team has considered and approved the contents of this report.

## **7. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no implications for the East Ayrshire Community Plan arising from this report.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 It is recommended that the Governance and Scrutiny Committee:-
- (i) note East Ayrshire Council's improving relative performance in the 2006/07 Statutory Performance Indicators, as reported in Audit Scotland's SPI Council Profiles document;
  - (ii) request that Executive Directors take appropriate management and performance improvement related action designed to drive up third and fourth quartile SPIs into the upper and second quartiles for 2007/08 and beyond, whilst maintaining our 50 SPIs currently in the upper/second quartile; and
  - (iii) otherwise note the contents of this report.

**Alex McPhee**  
**Executive Head of Finance & Asset Management**  
**1 February 2008**

### **Background Information**

The full SPI Profiles document can be accessed at:  
[www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/performance/profiles](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/performance/profiles)

Any person wishing to inspect the above background papers or seeking further information on this report should contact Jim Farrell, Performance, Development & Projects Manager (Tel: 01563 576223) or Jacqueline Creighton, Best Value & Performance Officer (Tel: 01563 576261).

**Implementation Officer:** Jim Farrell, Performance, Development & Projects Manager.

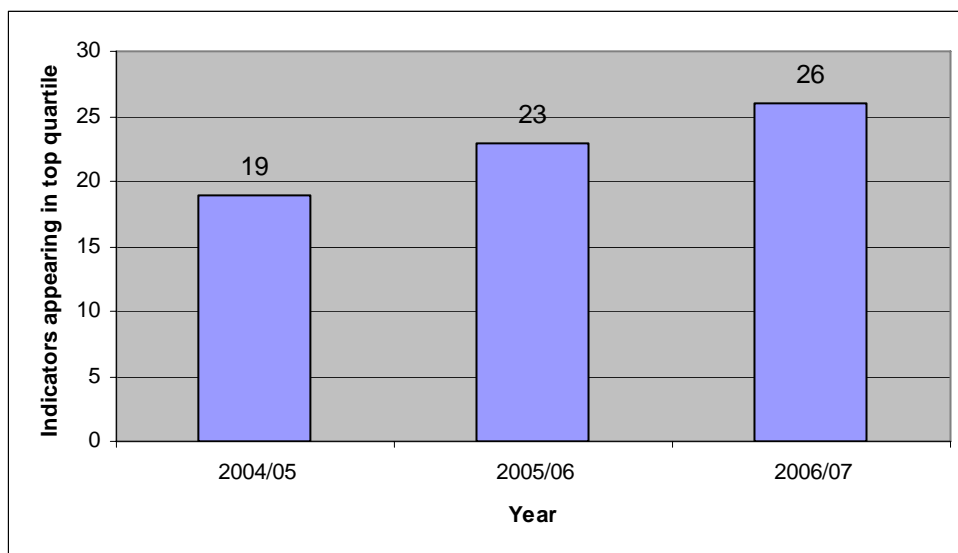
## 2006/07 STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – COUNCIL PROFILES

Quartiles Table of SPI Data 06/07 – East Ayrshire Council

Service	No of Indicators	First Quartile	Second Quartile	Third Quartile	Fourth Quartile	Total
		1-8	9-16	17-24	25-32	
Adult Social work	21	7	8	5	1	21
		71%		29%		
Benefits Admin	2	0	0	2	0	2
		0%		100%		
Education and Children's Services	8	3	1	2	2	8
		50%		50%		
Corporate Management	12	4	3	3	2	12
		58%		42%		
Cultural and Community Services	10	2	3	0	5	10
		50%		50%		
Development Services	2	0	0	1	1	2
		0%		100%		
Housing	11	6	2	1	2	11
		73%		27%		
Protective Services	6	3	2	1	0	6
		83%		17%		
Roads & Lighting	4	0	2	2	0	4
		50%		50%		
Waste management	6	1	3	2	0	6
		67%		33%		
Totals	82	26	24	19	13	82
		61%		39%		

**2006/07 STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – COUNCIL PROFILES**

**Indicators where East Ayrshire Council is ranked in the top quartile (1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> out of 32 Councils) – Improvement since 2004/05**



## 2006/07 STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – COUNCIL PROFILES

## Performance Change in Councils

	Performance change between 2004/2005 and 2006/2007		
	Total number that declined by >5%	Total Number that improved by >5%	Overall ratio of improvement to decline
East Ayrshire	7	26	3.71
South Lanarkshire	7	26	3.71
Inverclyde	9	25	2.78
West Dunbartonshire	9	25	2.78
Clackmannanshire	8	22	2.75
Dundee City	10	23	2.30
East Lothian	11	23	2.09
City of Edinburgh	12	23	1.92
Perth & Kinross	13	24	1.85
North Lanarkshire	14	25	1.79
Glasgow City	12	19	1.58
Stirling	11	17	1.55
Renfrewshire	13	20	1.54
Midlothian	14	21	1.50
North Ayrshire	12	18	1.50
Orkney Islands	14	20	1.43
Falkirk	12	17	1.42
Dumfries & Galloway	14	19	1.36
Shetland Islands	13	17	1.31
Moray	16	21	1.31
Fife	15	19	1.27
South Ayrshire	15	18	1.20
East Dunbartonshire	16	19	1.19
Argyll & Bute	13	14	1.08
Highland	16	17	1.06
Aberdeenshire	19	20	1.05
West Lothian	16	16	1.00
East Renfrewshire	16	15	0.94
Aberdeen City	15	14	0.93
Scottish Borders	18	16	0.89
Angus	15	13	0.87
Eilean Siar	16	11	0.69
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>623</b>	<b>1.48</b>

Source: Audit Scotland

Note: The higher the ratio = greater level of Improvement

## APPENDIX 4

### 2006/07 STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – COUNCIL PROFILES

East Ayrshire Council: 17 measures have improved by more than 15% since 2004/05 and these were:-

	Measure	06/07 1 to 32 Rank	04/05	05/06	06/07
1	Adult Social Work –Privacy – the percentage of residential care places occupied by older people that have en-suite facilities	14	63.2	70.1	73.2
2	Adult Social Work –Privacy – the percentage of residential places occupied by other adults that have en-suite facilities	21	13.6	23.3	35.7
3	Adult Social Work – Home care – number of home care clients aged 65+ receiving personal care as a percentage of clients	9	76.4	81.4	88.8
4	Adult Social Work – Community Service – the average hours per week taken to complete community service orders	8	3.1	3.5	4.1
5	Education & Children’s Services – Primary schools – percentage of schools in which the ratio of pupils to available places is between 61% and 100%	23	41.3	41.3	54.3
6	Corporate Management – Equal opportunities policy – percentage of highest paid 2% of earners among council employees that are women	23	23.3	26.1	28.4
7	Corporate Management – Public access – percentage of public service buildings that are suitable and accessible to disabled people	21	26.6	40.6	45.9
8	Cultural and Community Services – Sport and Leisure Management – the number of attendances per 1,000 population for all pools	28	2,179	2,568	2,689
9	Cultural and Community Services – Learning centre and learning access points – number of users as a percentage of the resident population	29	4.7	5.1	6.1
10	Cultural and Community Services – Learning centre and learning access points – number of time terminals are used per 1,000 population	26	401.9	460.1	547.1
11	Housing – Tenancy changes – the percentage of rent loss due to voids	13	1.90	1.80	1.60

12	Housing – Rent arrears – the percentage of current tenants owing more than 13 weeks' rent at the year end, excluding those owing less than £250	1	0.9	0.8	0.7
13	Housing – Council house sales – the percentage of sales completed within 26 weeks	4	56.0	62.2	93.3
14	Housing – Homelessness – percentage of cases reassessed as homeless or potentially homeless within 12 months of previous case being completed	28	20.3	9.2	11.6
15	Roads & Lighting – Road network restrictions – the percentage of council and private bridges assessed that failed to meet the European standard of 40 tonnes	10	8.1	7.3	5.1
16	Waste Management – Refuse collection – the net cost per property (£) of refuse collection	16	74.48	75.65	59.54
17	Waste Management – Recycling – of the municipal waste collected by the authority, the percentage that was recycled	4	18.4	32.7	36.6

## APPENDIX 5

### East Ayrshire Council: 4 measures have improved by more than 50% since 2004/05:-

Of the 17 measures highlighted in appendix 4 that have improved by more than 15% since 2004/05, 4 of them have recorded improvements of at least 50%. These represent significant and ongoing improvements. These 4 measures are detailed below along with an explanation of the indicators, Audit Scotland's comments on potential influencing factors and supporting contextual analysis (written at time of submission of SPI figures).

1				
Measure	06/07 1 to 32 Rank	04/05	05/06	06/07
<b>Adult Social Work –Privacy – the percentage of residential places occupied by other adults that have en-suite facilities</b>	21	13.6	23.3	35.7

The indicator measures one aspect of the quality of residential services purchased by councils.

***Since 2004/05, performance has improved by 163%.***

Audit Scotland explains that the measure is likely to be affected by a number of factors. Firstly, councils and the owners of homes have limited capital resources with which to improve homes by increasing the number of single rooms or by providing en-suite facilities. Furthermore, the physical layout of an existing home may limit the scope for creating single rooms. Lastly, greater provision of privacy is often built into the design standards of new homes.

- *The variance report explains that the ability to place people in units with single rooms and en-suite facilities is influenced by the availability of units, suitability of the unit according to the persons needs and the person's right to exercise choice in where they wish to reside.*
- *The variance report also explains that the significant increase in the provision of ensuite rooms within Council accommodation is a direct result of the closure of two care homes and the modernisation of Ross Court. Furthermore, within the independent sector, there is a continuing upward trend in the provision of single rooms and a significant increase in the availability of ensuite rooms in accommodation for adults.*

2				
Measure	06/07 1 to 32 Rank	04/05	05/06	06/07
<b>Corporate Management – Public access – percentage of public service buildings that are suitable and accessible to disabled people</b>	21	26.6	40.6	45.9

The indicator reflects the extent to which councils have been successful in meeting the requirement of Part 3 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to facilitate access to their buildings for disabled people for the purpose of service delivery.

Audit Scotland explains that performance in this area is expected to improve over time, as a higher proportion of councils' buildings are assessed and relevant adaptations are made.

- ***Since 2004/05, performance has improved by 73%.***  
*The variance report explains that issues relative to DDA and public accessibility issues are given a high priority within the Council, with regular reports on the investment programme and priorities being reported to the Corporate Management Team. It should also be noted that there appears to be a lack*

of consistency in how different Councils define accessibility.

3				
Measure	06/07 1 to 32 Rank	04/05	05/06	06/07
<b>Housing – Council house sales – the percentage of sales completed within 26 weeks</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>56.0</b>	<b>62.2</b>	<b>93.3</b>

The indicator measures the overall performance of a council in processing council house sales against the national target time of 26 weeks.

***Since 2004/05, performance has improved by 67%.***

Audit Scotland explains that the period after the council makes an offer to sell is included in the indicator and, therefore, applicants' responses to offers is a factor that affects the time taken. However, it is the council's own management processes (resting primarily with legal staff), and the level of resources devoted to this activity which are the more significant in determining performance.

- *The variance report explains that the Housing Best Value Service Review resulted in a refinement of systems and processes which culminated in continued performance improvements in 2006/07. A continued reduction in applications, coupled with a streamlining of resources has resulted in more targeted performance delivery within all services deployed in council house sales.*

4				
Measure	06/07 1 to 32 Rank	04/05	05/06	06/07
<b>Waste Management – Recycling – of the municipal waste collected by the Authority, the percentage that was recycled</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>18.4</b>	<b>32.7</b>	<b>36.6</b>

The indicator measures the overall performance of a council in recycling the municipal waste it collects from its area other than by incineration or composting.

***Since 2004/05, performance has improved by 99%.***

- *Recycling rates have risen dramatically in East Ayrshire over the last 3 years. This is largely due to the full implementation of household kerbside recycling. With further development to the service, improvements to Recycling Centres / Points and a localised material specific marketing campaign, the Council is taking proactive steps towards attaining future landfill diversion and recycling targets whilst providing a comprehensive service.*

## APPENDIX 6

### 2006/07 STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – COUNCIL PROFILES

**East Ayrshire Council: 4 measures worsened by more than 15% between 2004/05 - 2006/07. These are detailed below along with an explanation of the indicators, Audit Scotland's comments on potential influencing factors and supporting reports contextual analysis (written at time of submission of SPI figures).**

1				
Measure	06/07 1 to 32 Rank	04/05	05/06	06/07
<b>Corporate Management – Litigation claims – number of claims per 10,000 population</b>	27	25.0	43.9	44.2
<p>This indicator reflects the number of claims against the council – not their validity and as such does not have a direct relationship with performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>The variance report explains that the incidence of claims is outwith our control and may vary from year to year as well as vary over time for any particular year. The figures for East Ayrshire Council are within the range of these reported by other authorities.</i></li> </ul>				

2				
Measure	06/07 1 to 32 Rank	04/05	05/06	06/07
<b>Corporate Management – Council tax – the cost of collecting council tax per dwelling (£)</b>	6	8.89	8.15	10.53
<p>This indicator looks at the costs incurred by councils in collecting council tax due to them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>The indicator is calculated after deducting any surplus income received from summary warrants from costs. This income is uncertain and varies from year to year and results in ongoing fluctuations in this indicator. In 2006/07 this income decreased and this fall in income accounts for an increase of £1.06 (or 13%) in the cost per dwelling. A further £0.35 (or 4%) of the 2006/07 increase was caused by the accounting treatment of pension valuations. The remaining underlying change was an increase of £0.97 (or 12%) and reflects the reduction in the number of vacancies in the section during 2006/07.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>It should be noted that collection performance has continued to improve in 2006/07 from 92% to 92.4%.</i></li> </ul>				

3				
Measure	06/07 1 to 32 Rank	04/05	05/06	06/07
<b>Housing – Homelessness – average time (weeks) between presentation and completion of duty by the council for those cases assessed as homeless or potentially homeless</b>	12	9.3	11.4	16.6
<p>This indicator deals with aspects of the council's duty in relation to the current homelessness legislation. It shows the efficiency of the council in fulfilling its responsibility to those who present themselves as homeless or potentially homeless.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>The variance report explains that the availability of stock to re-house applicants has continued to</i></li> </ul>				

*reduce. Subsequently, there has been an increase in time in the completion of duty, as the matching process may be dependent upon suitable properties becoming available.*

4				
Measure	06/07 1 to 32 Rank	04/05	05/06	06/07
<b>Waste Management – Refuse collection – the net cost per property (£) of refuse disposal</b>	23	58.61	57.59	76.51
<p>This indicator shows how much it costs the council to dispose of refuse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>The variance report explains that additional expenditure was incurred due to the landfill tax accelerator and increased landfill contract charges.</i></li> </ul>				

## 2006/07 STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – COUNCIL PROFILES

The Profiles draw attention to five specific indicators in which East Ayrshire Council, in 2004/05 had a ranking of 25 (out of 32 Councils) or below and, by 2006/07 had not improved by at least 5%. These are detailed below along with an explanation of indicators, Audit Scotland's comments on potential influencing factors and variance reports contextual analysis (written at time of submission of SPI figures).

1				
Measure	06/07 1 to 32 Rank	04/05	05/06	06/07
<b>Corporate Management – Sickness absence – the percentage of working days lost through sickness absence for chief officers and local government employees</b>	23	6.1	5.6	6.0
<p>This indicator is a measure of sickness absence within councils.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>The variance report explains that departments have continued to comply with the Council's Managing Absence Policy. Regular reports on Absence Management are submitted to the Council through appropriate reporting mechanisms. The continued development of the Council's Corporate Managing Absence Information System has ensured that the gathering of accurate sickness information is a main priority. Departments generate monthly reports on procedural control information which is then distributed to all relevant managers for action as necessary.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>The Council continues to further develop its Corporate Managing Absence Information System. Guidance/Information Booklets on Managing Absence Policy and Procedures continue to be issued to new Line Managers and employees highlighting respective responsibilities.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>An alternative method of managing the recording and management of employees who report as absent commenced in January 2007. The service will be piloted initially for a 12 month period within Onsite Services which was selected as a suitable pilot as it can be segmented into standalone groupings of 500 employees based in a Learning Partnership cluster. This will allow a direct comparison with another control group within the same operating environment. Following the evaluation of the pilot project, a decision will be made to determine whether the service could be introduced in all Council departments</i></li> </ul>				

2				
Measure	06/07 1 to 32 Rank	04/05	05/06	06/07
<b>Corporate Management - Council Tax – the percentage of council tax income for the year that was collected in the year</b>	29	91.3	92.0	92.4
<p>This indicator looks at how efficient councils are at collecting the council tax due to them.</p> <p>Audit Scotland explains that the efficiency of the council's collection systems may be affected by the ability and willingness of taxpayers to pay, and the extent of enforcement action taken by the council to recover tax due to it.</p> <p>Audit Scotland also concedes that it is more difficult to improve if performance is already relatively high.</p>				

▪ *The variance report explains that the increase in income due reflects increased council tax charges of 4.9% combined with changes in the numbers of dwellings, exemptions and reductions. The ongoing increases in % received reflect the target to improve collection rates year on year.*

3				
Measure	06/07 1 to 32 Rank	04/05	05/06	06/07
<b>Cultural and community services – use of libraries – the number of borrowers as a percentage of the resident population</b>	28	20.3	18.7	17.9

This indicator measures the number of people who make use of the libraries as a percentage of the resident population.

▪ *The variance report explains that the borrowers as a percentage of the resident population in East Ayrshire continue to decline. In 2006/07, the number of borrowers as a percentage of the resident population fell by 0.8% compared to 2005/06. The continued decline in borrowers matches the Audit Commission’s findings that show a national decline in borrowers over the past five years.*

4				
Measure	06/07 1 to 32 Rank	04/05	05/06	06/07
<b>Development Services - Planning Processing Times – the percentage of all applications dealt with within 2 months</b>	25	57.7	49.5	55.4

This indicator provides information on how long it takes each council to deal with all planning applications including those from householders, builders & developers. In dealing with planning applications, councils: take a number of steps to consult on and assess the application, decide whether to approve the application, notify the applicant of the decision.

Audit Scotland explains that the time taken to deal with an application will be affected by: the extent to which councillors delegate responsibility for approving applications to staff (greater delegation will generally allow applications to be processed more quickly), whether there are any objections to the application (e.g. from neighbouring property owners), the proportion of cases where an applicant needs to submit amended plans before the planning officer feels able to recommend approval. Some cases, particularly those in conservation areas or affecting listed buildings, may take longer to deal with because of the need for additional advertising and consultation. The proportion of such applications varies between councils.

▪ *The variance report explains that during 2006/07, the marginal increase in delegated determinations was accompanied by a 5% drop in overall application numbers which led to a partly consequential increase in the percentage of applications determined inside the statutory 2 month timescale, particularly in respect of householder applications. A strong management drive to secure improved performance through monitoring and supervisory measures has also been a strong factor. The gradual implementation of the new Planning Act will significantly impact on the service in future as will the continuing difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified, experienced staff.*

5				
Measure	06/07 1 to 32 Rank	04/05	05/06	06/07
<b>Protective Services – Consumer complaints – the percentage of complaints processed within 14 days of receipt</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>63.4</b>	<b>63.8</b>	<b>64.4</b>

This indicator provides a measure of the efficiency of the council in dealing with consumer complaints and requests for advice from businesses.

Audit Scotland explains that movement in the indicator will be affected by changes in the efficiency of staff in dealing with complaints, the number of staff available for this work, and the number and complexity of complaints and requests for business advice. The indicator relates solely to the time taken to complete a complaint or enquiry irrespective of the outcome.

- *The variance report explains that not all consumer complaints made to the Trading Standards Service can be resolved within a 14 day period. In fact, it is becoming increasingly more difficult to improve the consumer complaints measure as the Trading Standards Service deals with the more complex complaints provided to them following the Consumer Direct filtering process.*

## 2006/07 STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – COUNCIL PROFILES

The extent to which councils have improved in poorly performing service areas

The extent to which problem areas have improved varies among councils. The figures in brackets show the number of indicators that were ranked 25 or lower in 2004/05 and the number of these that had improved in 2006/2007.

Improvement in at least 75%	Improvement in between 50 and 75%	Improvement in fewer than 50%
Dundee City (11 of 14) East Lothian (6 of 6) Midlothian (13 of 14) Renfrewshire (6 of 7) Shetland Islands (10 of 13) West Dunbartonshire (12 of 15)	Aberdeenshire (6 of 9) Angus (6 of 9) Clackmannanshire (7 of 11) Dumfries & Galloway (7 of 11) <b>East Ayrshire (11 of 16*)</b> East Dunbartonshire (6 of 11) City of Edinburgh (12 of 17) Eilean Siar (7 of 11) Falkirk (3 of 5) Fife (6 of 9) Glasgow City (8 of 14) Highland (6 of 9) Inverclyde (11 of 18) Moray (4 of 6) North Ayrshire (1 of 2) North Lanarkshire (9 of 13) Orkney Islands (8 of 14) Perth & Kinross (6 of 10) South Lanarkshire (5 of 8) Stirling (5 of 7) West Lothian (4 of 6)	Aberdeen City (4 of 10) Argyll & Bute (2 of 9) East Renfrewshire (3 of 7) Scottish Borders (5 of 12) South Ayrshire (3 of 10)

Source: Audit Scotland

## 2006/07 STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – COUNCIL PROFILES

'Extended Family Group' Comparisons

	No of indicators reported on (out of possible 82)	Upper Quartile 1-8	Second Quartile 9-16	Third Quartile 17-24	Fourth Quartile 25-32	Explanation of missing results
East Ayrshire	82	26	24	19	13	82
		50		32		
West Lothian	79	32	16	19	12	79 (1 Failure to report, 2 Unreliable data)
		48		31		
North Ayrshire	82	22	26	23	11	82
		48		34		
East Renfrewshire	75	26	19	22	8	75 (4 No service, 2 Failure to Report, 1 Unreliable data)
		45		30		
Clackmannanshire	75	24	16	26	9	75 (1 No service, 5 Failure to reports, 1 Unreliable data)
		40		35		
South Ayrshire	79	22	17	26	14	79 (3 Unreliable data)
		39		40		
Inverclyde	78	18	19	19	22	78 (2 No Service, 2 Unreliable data)
		37		41		

## 2006/07 STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – COUNCIL PROFILES

### Total number of indicators declared as 'no service', 'failure to report' or 'unreliable data' by individual council

Council	No. of indicators reported on	No service*	Failure to report**	Unreliable**
East Ayrshire	82	0	0	0
Falkirk	82	0	0	0
Fife	82	0	0	0
North Ayrshire	82	0	0	0
North Lanarkshire	81	1	0	0
Dundee City	80	0	0	2
East Lothian	80	1	0	1
Perth & Kinross	80	2	0	0
South Lanarkshire	80	1	0	1
Stirling	80	0	0	2
Aberdeenshire	79	1	2	0
Angus	79	0	1	2
East Dunbartonshire	79	1	2	0
Midlothian	79	3	0	0
South Ayrshire	79	0	0	3
West Dunbartonshire	79	1	0	2
West Lothian	79	0	1	2
Inverclyde	78	2	0	2
Highland	77	1	0	4
Moray	77	4	1	0
Renfrewshire	77	0	1	4
City of Edinburgh	76	1	5	0
Clackmannanshire	75	1	5	1
East Renfrewshire	75	4	2	1
Shetland Islands	73	1	1	7
Dumfries & Galloway	72	10	0	0
Glasgow	72	10	0	0
Orkney Islands	72	4	2	4
Scottish Borders	70	11	0	1
Argyll & Bute	69	11	0	2
Aberdeen City	63	0	0	19
Eilean Siar	62	11	1	8

\* There are a few instances where a council did not provide a particular service and therefore did not report a corresponding PI measurement.

\*\* For services that were provided, the PI data reported by each council may have been qualified by its external auditor in one of two ways. Firstly, where a council failed to report specific items of data, relevant cells within tables are marked FTR (failure to report). Secondly, the external auditor may have expressed reservations about the council's arrangements for producing reliable performance information.