

Title of Report:	Audit Commission Annual Audit and Inspection Letter	Item 12
Report to be considered by:	Governance and Audit Committee	

Purpose of Report:

To inform the Committee of the outcome of the work of the Audit Commission for 2006

Recommended Action:

To review the report and consider the recommendations made by the Audit Commission and ensure that the Council acts on those recommendations

List of other options considered:

Key background documentation:
(bulleted list format)

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Supporting Information

1. Background

1.1 The Audit Commission are required to report to “those charged with Governance” on the outcomes of their audit and inspection. The Audit Commission do this through their Annual Audit and Inspection letter. Overall the message from the Audit Commission is very positive, and the Council is now rated as a three star Council.

1.2 Page 5 of the letter sets out a number of actions for the Committee to consider. The present position with each recommendation is outlined in the table below:

Recommendation	Present position
Look at why waste collection costs are high and increasing, to see if savings can be achieved or to confirm that costs are in line with the quality of service the Council aims to provide	The D4 programme group led by John Ashworth (Corporate Director) is reviewing VFM across the Council and will give specific focus to this issue
Make sure that the level of waste recycling increases through the integrated waste management contract.	This will be covered in the Waste PFI contract
Look at the results from user surveys, consider how they fit in with the improvements the Council has tried to make in services and see what else could be done to reduce people’s concerns.	The Council carries out an annual satisfaction survey and responds to concerns raised in the survey
Identify the reasons for the increase in crime levels and work with other organisations to reduce crime.	This issue is one of three key priorities in the Council Plan. The Council’s response is being led by the Chief Executive
Keep the performance of the benefits service under review and make sure that claims are processed quickly.	The service is currently being reviewed and actions taken to improve the processing of benefit claims
Introduce a data quality strategy and make sure that the arrangements for producing reliable performance information are used throughout the Council	A Data Quality Strategy has been produced as in the process of being approved

1.6 The Committee may wish to consider what further information it requires from officers to be assured that the actions identified above are progressed satisfactorily

- 1.7 On page 12 of the report the Audit Commission have identified a number of areas for improvement. These are being progressed by the D4 Group led by John Ashworth and the Finance and Governance Group led by Andy Walker.

Appendices

Annual Audit and Inspection Letter.