

## Best Value Introduction

Audit Scotland describes Best Value as “ensuring that there is good governance and effective management of resources, with a focus on improvement, to deliver the best possible outcomes for the public.” The duty of Best Value applies to all public bodies in Scotland. It is a statutory duty for local authorities, such as councils.

In 2016 a revised framework for the auditing of Best Value was approved by the Accounts Commission. A key element of the framework is the publication of a Best Value Assurance Report (BVAR) for the council at least once during a five-year period. It is informed by the Annual Audit Report, other statutory reports and Audit Scotland reports including the Local Government Overview series (performance, finance) published annually.

The BVAR will be considered by the Commission, in public, and action may be required of the council. The fieldwork for the BVAR for Aberdeenshire Council will take place between February and April 2019.

The fieldwork for the development of the BVAR includes:

- Interviews with councillors, senior officers and partner organisations;
- Observation of council, committee and board meetings;
- Review of documents and performance data and;
- Focus groups with councillors, officers and community groups.

Each council’s BVAR incorporates an analysis of the Best Value characteristics aligned to the themes of:

- Vision and strategic direction;
- Performance;
- Use of resources;
- Partnership working;
- Improvement and transformation

## Case Study Criteria

As part of our preparation for our Best Value Assurance Report we will be compiling a narrative to show the council's transformation since the last Best Value Audit. In order to do this, the Best Value Key Officer group will be sourcing case studies from all services. To ensure that the case study stays relevant to Best Value's key themes, the below criteria has been set out:

- Please ensure that a relevant link with BV criteria is demonstrated throughout
- Where relevant, please complete each section of the template as fully as possible
- Each section must contain narrative along with relevant links of evidence
- Each case study should show a consistent and clear link to at least one of the council's [11 priorities](#) ( point 6).

## Case Study Template

### Infrastructure Services –

How does this link with the criteria of Best Value?

“ensuring that there is good governance and effective management of resources, with a focus on improvement, to deliver the best possible outcomes for the public.”

- Vision and strategic direction;
- Performance;
- Use of resources;
- Partnership working;
- Improvement and transformation

The Recycling centre Policy sets out the arrangements for taking recyclable materials and non-recyclable waste to Recycling Centres operated by the Council. It aims to improve performance at Recycling centres by increasing recycling rates and using the waste service’s resources more efficiently and focusing on improvement and diversity of the material sent for recycling to ensure Aberdeenshire maximises the environmental, community and financial benefits from the waste it produces. The policy and procedure also diverts business waste from Recycling Centres, where previously waste could be disposed of, illegally, as household waste to fit for purpose transfer stations, in accordance with the Environmental protection Act 1990 and charged according to weight disposed of.

How does this link to our priorities?

- Deliver responsible, long-term financial planning – reducing the amount non-recyclable waste will significantly reduce the cost of disposal as recycling is much cheaper. Ensure that all business waste that is collected is charged at the appropriate rates
- Have the right people, in the right place, doing the right thing, at the right time – ensuring our limited resources are used where they are most required and make the biggest difference to maximising the recycling rate.
- Protect our special environment, including tackling climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions recycling waste instead of landfilling it will reduce greenhouse gas emissions from waste produced by Aberdeenshire residents.

What research was undertaken to ensure best practice?

In the process of developing the Policy and Procedures, information from other councils were used for modelling the extent of expected impacts of introducing a permit system and banning business waste from our sites. Best practice guidance from Waste and Resources Action Programme's (WRAP) Household Waste Recycling Centre Guide were used to plan out improvements at recycling centres.

What was the background to the case study?

There was a disparity across the Shire in acceptance of Trade Waste at our Recycling Centres which made enforcement of trade waste a challenge. The new Policy and Procedures were introduced to ensure consistency of service across the Authority area. Household Recycling Centres contribute a significant proportion of the recycling collected throughout the Shire but there was a variance in recycling rates by sites. A new approach was needed to maximise recycling at all out sites.

What activity was undertaken?

The Recycling Centre Policy places focus on the following:

- Maximise recycling of waste produced by households by allowing recycling of material not collected at the kerbside.
- Continually assessing opportunities to introduce new materials
- Providing advice to householders to maximise recycling by segregating waste.
- Specifying that sites are for acceptance of household waste only not business waste.

How did this contribute to improved outcomes?

Increased recycling and reduced landfill will reduce costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions– these will be measured as part of the Policy and Procedure delivery.

How did this assist in delivering value for money?

Recycling is more cost effective than sending waste to landfill, therefore reducing annual costs – this will be measured as part of the Policy and Procedure delivery.

What did we learn?
To be assessed when the Policy and Procedure is fully implemented.

***\*\*Please attach any supporting documents/evidence relevant to the case study\*\****