

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

Strategic Prioritisation of Bridge Maintenance, Repair, Strengthening and Replacement

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 work aims to achieve best value by making sure that scarce resource are put to most effective use in sustaining the transportation network and that the maximum service life can be derived from well-maintained bridge structures.

How does this link to our priorities?

Have the best possible transport and digital links across our communities.

What research was undertaken to ensure best practice?

Working through SCOTS Asset Management Project with Bridges Asset Group to explore best practice

What was the background to the case study?

To get better long term investment planning and to maximise service life of bridge structures

What activity was undertaken?

Detailed review of bridge stock and development of a Red, Amber, Yellow Alert system to communicate resilience depletion of structural elements.

How did this contribute to improved outcomes?

Better targeting of spend to tackle long term objectives within available budget

How did this assist in delivering value for money?

Allows for modelling of different scenarios for budget allocations

What did we learn?

Complexity of the system derived from the age of the bridge stock.

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