2014
• Apr – Audit Scotland: *Procurement in councils* report
• Jun – Audit Scotland: presentation to Scotland Excel (SXL)
• Sep – Scotland Excel: new Director, Julie Welsh

2015
• Scotland Excel: new *Procurement Commercial Improvement Programme*
• Jun – Scotland Excel: *Shared Vision Shared Strategy, 2015-18*
• Nov – Audit Scotland: impact assessment to Accts Com on *Procurement in councils*
• Nov – Scotland Excel: requisition increase of 9.4 % agreed for 2016/17

2016
• Feb – Accounts Commission: letter to Scotland Excel’s Joint Committee
Progress – councils

- Caveat – we used PCA assessments up to and including 2014 (no PCAs in 2015)

- Councils
  - Overall – general trend of continuing improvement
  - Some councils need to increase their pace of change
  - Some evidence that a small council is maybe disadvantaged
  - Yet some small councils are performing well

- Some procurement aspects are progressing well
  - Procurement strategy & objectives (77 %)
  - People (76 %)

- Some aspects are progressing more slowly
  - Contract and supplier management (46 %)
  - Key purchasing processes and systems (44 %)
Progress – Scotland Excel

• Vision – *Shared vision, shared success*: corporate strategy 2015-2018

• Credibility – well-respected by stakeholders

• A ‘shared services’ success story, delivering tangible benefits, eg:
  • Developing contracts with a customer focus – eg social care
  • Delivering a learning & development programme for officers & members
  • Facilitating improved value for money/sustainability
  • Supporting continuous improvement – PCA → PCIP
  • Engaging with centres of expertise outside local government
Challenges, opportunities, priorities

- Scotland Excel
  - Two ‘Red’ risks (reported to the Scotland Excel Sub-Committee, 13 May 2016)
    - Recruitment & retention of skilled, quality staff
    - Long-term financial sustainability
  - Broadening the client base – Associate members of SXL, eg councils’ ALEOs
  - Effective governance – Chief Executive Officers Management Group

- Councils
  - Financial support for SXL – annual agreements vs strategic commitment?
  - Procurement capacity & expertise – recruitment & retention of skilled officers?
  - Collaborative working and shared services?
  - PCIP assessments – every two years, from 2016?
  - Training and support for elected members?
Contacts

**Fraser McKinlay**  
Controller of Audit & Director of Performance and Best Value  
**T:** 0131 625 1620  **M:** 07748 333 660  
**E:** fmckinlay@audit-scotland.gov.uk

**Douglas Black**  
Audit Manager, Performance Audit and Best Value Group  
**T:** 0131 625 1856  **M** 075 99 99 66 98  
**E:** dblack@audit-scotland.gov.uk

Audit Scotland, 4th Floor, 102 West Port, Edinburgh EH3 9DN  
**W:** [www.audit-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk)