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## News release

Embargoed until 00.01 hours, Thursday 28 June 2012

### Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary and the police authority perform well and are committed to making further improvements

Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary performs strongly and provides a good service. Both the force and the police authority demonstrate most aspects of Best Value. The authority monitors the force effectively but should develop scrutiny of risks and value for money.

The *Best Value Audit and Inspection: Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary and Police Authority* provides an overview of how both these bodies are meeting their duties to deliver Best Value in what they do. It is a joint report from the Accounts Commission and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland (HMICS).

**The force**, which is the smallest in Scotland, performs to a high standard. Overall crime rates are amongst the lowest in Scotland and detection rates above average. It has developed standards of service for engaging with the public and the highest increase in Scotland for user satisfaction about being kept informed about the progress of their case.

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary, Andrew Laing, said: "Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary is performing to a high standard. The force executive provides effective and visible leadership supported by a clear strategic vision encapsulated in its Community Promise which addresses the issues which most affect its communities."

His findings highlight opportunities for further improvement, including continuing to develop its human resources and finance strategies which are responsive to community needs, maintain and improve performance and work with the police authority on an asset management plan as part of the transfer to a single Scottish force.

The Accounts Commission found that **the police authority** is effective and demonstrates most aspects of Best Value. Working relationships with the chief constable are strong and there is good leadership and links with communities and partner agencies. Councillors are well informed on policing issues and monitor the force's responsibilities but could have provided better oversight of longer term police resource planning.

Chair of the Accounts Commission, John Baillie, said: "Dumfries and Galloway Police Authority does a good job. It should now develop its scrutiny of risks, value for money and equalities. It must also ensure that it provides oversight and direction over the transfer to a single force, including the management of assets and finances."

#### For further information contact

#### Notes to Editors

1. The Accounts Commission for Scotland was set up in 1975. The Commission checks whether local authorities, fire and police boards spend public money properly and effectively.
2. HMICS operates independently of police forces, police authorities and the Scottish Government and exists to monitor and improve the police service in Scotland.
3. Dumfries and Galloway is one of two forces in Scotland whose borders match a single local authority area. So it carries out its police authority functions through a council committee – the Police, Fire and Rescue Committee of Dumfries and Galloway Council.
4. Both the Accounts Commission and HMICS have the power to examine how well Scottish police authorities are delivering best value. HMICS also has a statutory duty to inspect police forces and report on their state

and efficiency. Both organisations would have been entitled produce their own report on each police authority but this would have created duplication of work and is not in keeping with the spirit of the recommendations of the Crerar report and with the current drive to streamline scrutiny. Also, a joint report gives the public an overall view of how well the police authorities in their area are meeting their duties to provide best value. It was decided that a joint report would be the most efficient way for both bodies to exercise their best value duties.

5. Best Value is the duty placed on local authorities by the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. It requires local authorities to demonstrate their on-going commitment to providing better services to local people