Shared risk assessment: Assurance and improvement plan 2010–13

Clackmannanshire Council

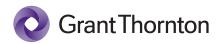social work inspection agency

THE SCOTTISH HOUSING REGULATOR

care commission

HMIe
improving Scottish education
leasachadh foghlam na h-Alba

AUDIT SCOTLAND

Grant Thornton

Contents

1. Introduction

The Assurance and Improvement Plan

1. This Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP) is the product of a collaborative approach adopted by the following scrutiny bodies operating in Clackmannanshire Council:

    - Audit Scotland

    - Care Commission

    - HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE)

    - Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)

    - Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA)

    - Grant Thornton, the council's appointed auditors.

2. The AIP sets out the planned scrutiny activity for Clackmannanshire Council for the period April 2010 to March 2013 based on our scrutiny risk assessment of the council. The scrutiny activity is proportionate to the assessed scrutiny risks.

Why have we prepared this AIP?

3. The overall objectives of this collaborative approach are to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of scrutiny work and minimise the impact of scrutiny activity on the council. This will be achieved by:

    - Jointly identifying and monitoring key scrutiny risks through the sharing of intelligence and information.

    - Coordinating the timing and approach of our audit, inspection, regulation and improvement support activity.

    - Drawing on, and taking account of each other's work to avoid duplication of effort.

    - Building on each other's work to maximise its value.

4. The AIP draws on a number of sources of information, including:

    - the audit of Best Value and Community Planning in Clackmannanshire Council

    - the annual audit report to the Controller of Audit and elected members for 2008/09

    - the council's own website, self-evaluation and supporting evidence

    - reports and data from HMIE, SWIA, SHR and the Care Commission (including published inspection reports and other supporting evidence).

What do we mean by a scrutiny risk assessment?

5. All local government scrutiny bodies have agreed the definition of shared risk assessment as:

    'A joint approach using key information about local government to plan scrutiny activity that is proportionate and based on risk'

6. When we determine 'risk' we mean risk that will trigger scrutiny work and not inherent risk for example as in the risk of harm to an individual. We define risk as:

    *   Red, where there are significant concerns which would indicate that we would need to undertake some scrutiny activity in order to provide public assurance.

    *   Amber, where there are areas of uncertainty or gaps in the information available to us to determine whether or not we need to undertake some scrutiny activity.

    *   Green, where we have no significant concerns.

7. We recognise that risk levels will change as significant events occur and as councils take action to address identified risks. Scrutiny bodies, through local area network (LAN) contacts, will maintain awareness of activity, including unit level inspection. As new information comes to light the LAN lead, in consultation with other LAN members will update the AIP as appropriate. LAN members will draw any significant matters to the attention of the LAN lead as they arise. The LAN lead will determine what action should be taken in terms of initiating contact with other LAN members.

8. The council is expected to initiate contact with the LAN lead where significant events occur that are likely to influence scrutiny activity. Councils are encouraged to maintain contact with LAN leads to discuss any concerns arising from the AIP or any joint scrutiny activity.

What does proportionate scrutiny mean?

9. When considering the appropriate level of scrutiny activity for each council we consider the following points to ensure that is proportionate:

    *   Is scrutiny activity the best driver for improvement?

    *   If so, how can we tailor that activity to the areas where it will have the most impact?

    *   How can we tailor that activity in terms of its frequency, intensity and scope?

    *   What is the minimum level of scrutiny required to provide assurance to the public?

    *   How can we work together to minimise the impact of the scrutiny activity on the council?

10. The overall objectives of this collaborative approach are to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of scrutiny work and minimise the impact of scrutiny activity on the council. This will be achieved by:

    *   Coordinating the timing and approach of our risk assessment work.

- Helping to identify and monitor key risks through the sharing of intelligence and information.

- Building on each other's work to maximise its value.

- Drawing on, and taking account of each other's work.

- Avoiding duplication of effort.

Baseline scrutiny activity

11.   The focus of the AIP is strategic scrutiny activity, that is scrutiny activity which is focused at corporate or whole service level, but there will also be baseline scrutiny activity at unit level ongoing throughout the period of the AIP. This will include, for example, school and residential home inspections. Scrutiny bodies also reserve the right to make unannounced scrutiny visits. These will generally be made in relation to care services for vulnerable client groups. The annual audit of local government also comprises part of the baseline activity for all councils and this includes work necessary to complete the audit of housing benefit and council tax benefit arrangements.

2. Summary

The council's corporate assessment is largely positive with a number of areas of strong performance and good practice. The council faces a particularly acute financial challenge, but is responding well to this with shared officer and member commitment to a programme of change based on prioritised outcomes for people who use services. Although the council still faces some high risk issues, it is well aware of what these are and is managing the risks appropriately. For that reason, the level of scrutiny activity proposed is minimal. This scrutiny activity will be targeted in those areas assessed as highest risk and these are set out in the remainder of this AIP. The AIP gives an overview of the information that informed the risk assessment and shows how this links to the proposed scrutiny response.

12. The aim of the shared risk assessment process is to focus scrutiny activity where it is most needed and to determine the most proportionate scrutiny response over the next three years.

Outcomes

13. The council is currently engaged in a major transformation programme covering all services with a focus on improving outcomes for people who use services. Within this framework the council has defined its local outcomes in the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) and Community Plan. These outcomes clearly reflect the key challenges facing the council including population growth, relatively high levels of deprivation, and the high rate of increase in older people (especially 80 years and over) in the context of a challenging financial outlook.

14. The council has made good progress in defining performance measures, targets and baseline information, and can demonstrate good progress across a range of outcomes, including some areas of good practice. The council has improved its performance year-on-year for the past five years, and records the highest average performance of any council in Scotland as measured by statutory performance indicators (SPIs).

15. Our overall risk assessment in terms of the delivery of its local outcomes is low. As a result we do not intend to undertake any specific scrutiny activity in Year 1 in respect of the council's approach to or progress in delivering outcomes for its communities.

Services

16. Across all services the council is making good progress in managing and improving performance. Recent SWIA work indicates the overall picture in respect of social work is positive with good practice identified in many areas. However, there are a few services, such as foster care and out of authority placements, which either remain fragile and lack resilience, or face important strategic challenges. Strengthening service capacity is a key development issue which needs to be addressed against a difficult financial backdrop. We therefore propose that in year one of the plan SWIA will carry out an initial scrutiny level assessment of the council's Social Work Services to enable appropriately targeted scrutiny support to be delivered.

17. In respect of Housing, the council has confirmed that it is on track to meet or exceed the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015. The 2007 SHR inspection report was fairly positive although a number of weaknesses were identified as areas for improvement. An Improvement Plan was subsequently agreed with the council. Its reported performance shows a significant improvement over the last year. Early in year 1 SHR will ask the council to submit a self-assessment of its progress against the plan. Following appraisal of this, SHR will liaise with the LAN Lead and discuss with the council the need for any resulting validation or further inspection work.

18. The council's education team are well regarded and the performance is good or improving across this service with primary school education and partnership working a particular strength. However, educational attainment has been identified as an area for improvement as a consequence of the below national average attainment levels in the secondary sector. In response to these scrutiny risks in year 1 of the plan the HMIE local district inspector will provide support to the council in developing an improvement strategy for this sector. In year 2 of the plan the council will be asked to prepare a report setting out progress that is being made in improving attainment levels as a consequence of the improvement actions it has implemented.

Corporate assessment

19. The council is undertaking a challenging transformation programme ('Growing in Excellence') following the recent appointment of a new chief executive. The council is trying to achieve a wide range of significant changes and improvements through its transformation programme against a difficult financial backdrop. As a consequence of the scrutiny risks that flow from this we propose that Audit Scotland will collaborate with the external auditors to assess the progress and impact of this programme in year three of the plan. This work will both provide public assurance about the progress that is being made and support the council in refining and better targeting its improvement activity.

20. The council is small and able to react quickly and respond effectively to new challenges, however, its scale may limit its capacity and ability to deliver economies of scale. In the past some improvements have been prompted by external drivers such as inspection, rather than internally identified. That is now less evident as a result of the action the council is taking to improve corporate capacity and secure improved service delivery and better outcomes for local people. The council has good performance management systems in place with a number of areas of very strong performance and good practice. As a result we do not plan to undertake any scrutiny work in addition to the routine annual external audit, which will monitor progress of the council's Best Value Improvement Plan.

National risk priorities

21. A number of core national risk priorities will be applied to all 32 councils. These are:

- The protection and welfare of vulnerable people, including access to opportunities, which is encapsulated in the council's defined outcomes of 'vulnerable people and families are supported', 'our communities are safer', and 'substance misuse and its effects are reduced'.

Whilst overall we have identified this as an area of low risk in Clackmannanshire, specific scrutiny risks in relation to home care, risk assessment and management in social work services have been identified and we propose undertaking focused work in these areas in Year 1 of the AIP.

- Assuring public money is being used properly, which forms a key strand of the council's approach to excellence. The council has already taken difficult choices in implementing plans to address the financial challenges it faces in delivering a balanced budget. Grant Thornton, the council's appointed auditors, will assess progress in this area as part of the routine annual audit activity.

- The impact of the greater financial pressure faced by all councils associated with the current economic climate. We have assessed this as low risk given the council's track record in making difficult choices to address the financial challenges it faces and its evolving wide-ranging service transformation agenda under the 'Growing in Excellence' banner. Grant Thornton, the council's appointed auditors, will assess progress in this area as part of the annual audit activity.

Summary of planned scrutiny activity

22. The planned activity for Clackmannanshire Council as described throughout the text is detailed in Appendix 4. In summary this includes:

Specific work:

- Year 1 - SWIA focused activity around risk assessment and management in Social Work Services (including the strategy for the management of 'out of authority' placements), with SWIA carrying out an initial scrutiny level assessment (ISLA) to enable appropriately targeted scrutiny to be identified (paragraphs 40, 42 and 55)

- Year 1 - SHR's appraisal of the council's self-assessment of its progress against its Improvement Plan for the Housing Service (paragraph 57)

- Year 1 – targeted work by Grant Thornton on the council's approach to demonstrating competiveness in its services (paragraph 64)

- Year 2 – HMIE evaluation of progress that is being made by the council in improving attainment levels through implementation of the improvement strategy for the secondary sector to be prepared by the council in year 1 of the plan. (paragraphs 20 and 54)

- Year 3 – Audit Scotland and the external auditors targeted work to assess the impact of the Transformation Programme in embedding performance management throughout the council and securing improved services and better outcomes for local people (paragraph 65).

On-going work:

- Grant Thornton will continue to monitor finance, governance and accountability matters as part of the annual audit process.

- Year 2 - Care Commission and SWIA monitoring and regulatory support in respect of Care Services[1] including monitoring of progress in self-evaluation through the SWIA link inspector role.

- The LAN will also be monitoring progress towards local health improvement outcomes (paragraph 46) and if sufficient progress is not made will consider undertaking review work in Year 2 of the programme. The same approach will be taken to local public service improvement targets (paragraph 51).

National work:

- Year 1 – Ministerially-driven national inspection of prison-based Social Work Services, which includes Glenochil prison in Clackmannanshire (SWIA) (paragraph 40).

- Year 1 – Fostering and adoption inspection (Care Commission)

- Year 2 - Mandatory ministerially-directed inspection of Child Protection Services (HMIE Services for Children Unit) (paragraph 40).

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[1] Subject to the safe passage of the Public Service Reform Bill, this work will be undertaken by the new body Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS)

3. The council's context

23.   Clackmannanshire Council is the smallest mainland authority in Scotland, covering an area of 159 square kilometres, with a population of 50,480. Its population is growing rapidly with an increase of 24 per cent expected[2] between 2008 and 2033, the second fastest growth in Scotland, behind Perth and Kinross.

24.   The council and its area are in a period of significant change. Recent improvements in transportation links, such as the new Clackmannanshire Bridge, the Stirling-Alloa-Kincardine rail link and improved road links are having a positive impact on the local economy and providing a competitive advantage. The area is also benefiting from significant investment in Alloa town centre. There has been a corresponding rise in new housing developments, with young families in particular attracted to the area by relatively lower house prices, good schools and improved transport links.

25.   Until recently, Clackmannanshire's 0-15 year old population was expected to decline at a sharper rate than the national average. Revised estimates suggest that the number of young people below the age of 16 will increase by 16.7 per cent (nationally this is expected to decline by 1.5 per cent). Correspondingly, the demographic profile indicates that the 65+ age group is expected to increase by 85.8 per cent by 2033, which is significantly higher than the national figure of 64.5 per cent. The area's success in attracting significant new housing, and therefore families moving into the area, has presented a challenge to the council to respond to the changing demand profile for services. These changes are placing increasing demands on council services such as Education provision, Housing and Social Care.

26.   Deprivation is a significant factor. Around a quarter of the population live in areas categorised as amongst the most deprived in Scotland and median gross weekly earnings are just 91 per cent of the Scottish average. Unemployment is higher than average and there are significant health inequalities across the area, from one of the most healthy data zones in Scotland, Dollar and Muckhart, to one of the least healthy data zones in Alloa Mar.

27.   These issues, challenges and pressures are reflected in the council's local outcomes detailed in its SOA, and the objectives and priorities described in the corporate plan. Clackmannanshire is currently working on an updated and refreshed community plan due to be published in 2010, to take the area through to 2020. The Community Planning Partnership, Clackmannanshire Alliance, has signed up to the nine priority outcomes articulated in the 2009 – 2012 SOA.

28.   Gross expenditure on services in 2008/09 was £160.8 million, or £3,185 per head of population, which is slightly higher than the Scottish average.

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[2] General Registers Office of Scotland, 2008 Mid-Year Estimates

Self-evaluation

The Clackmannanshire Improvement Model, based around the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF), provides a clear framework for performance improvement and a strong basis for self-review. There is a clear commitment from management and members to improve performance and implement recommendations for improvement across council services. The available self-evaluation evidence from the council is reliable and accords with the LAN's risk assessment of the authority.

29. The council has recently adopted the Clackmannanshire Improvement Model, incorporating the PSIF and a focus on external accreditation such as Investors in People and Customer Service Excellence. Most services have self-assessed their performance over the last year. It is too early to assess if self-evaluation is fully embedded across the council, but early signs are that self-assessments have been honest and evidence-based.

30. Whilst the council recognises that further development of performance and risk management systems is required to support the efficiency and improvement agenda, we are satisfied that sufficient reliance can be placed on the council's own performance information and improvement plans as part of our assessment as it accords with existing scrutiny evidence and other available performance data. Our use of local self-evaluation evidence has enabled the LAN to focus on those areas where scrutiny activity will add greatest value. This reflects the clear commitment from the council's management team to continue to identify and manage improvement on an ongoing basis, and the council's 'delivery teams' which are driving forward change clearly linked to improvements in service outcomes.

4. Delivering outcomes for communities

Outcomes

Clackmannanshire Council can demonstrate it is making good progress in delivering across all its outcomes for local communities. Those outcomes clearly relate to the council's context, and to feedback received from the council's citizen's panel. There are no significant areas of concern and therefore in year 1 we do not plan any additional scrutiny work over and above the nationally-driven inspection of prison-based Social Work Services and targeted social work scrutiny activity which will be identified from completing the initial scrutiny level assessment (ISLA). Routine monitoring of progress against outcomes will also be undertaken as part of the annual external audit.

31. A short summary of performance against each outcome is included below. Further detail is contained within Appendix 1.

The area has a positive image and attracts people and business

32. The council can demonstrate a strong commitment to regeneration, with some notable successes. Significant new build projects have brought more families to the area, and more are planned in a major new development at Forestmill. Although the number of new house completions failed to meet targets, these reflect national statistics as a result of the recession. The council has also successfully applied for BID funding for business parks and is making good progress in improving Alloa Town Centre.

33. Although there are fewer jobs in the area compared to the Scottish average (0.52 jobs per head of working age population compared to 0.84 for Scotland) and median gross weekly earnings are lower, the council and its partners point to increasing business start up rates and better business survival rates, both exceeding the partners' targets. In addition, residents' express high satisfaction levels with the area as a place to live (87 per cent) and their neighbourhood specifically (92 per cent). We do not consider there to be significant risk in this area and so we will not be undertaking any scrutiny activity.

Communities are more cohesive and inclusive

34. The council and its partners have focused on developing approaches to tackle the cause of poverty and improving employability to make communities more cohesive and inclusive. Performance indicators or targets relating to cohesiveness or wellbeing within the SOA or corporate plan remain under development. However, perceptions of community cohesion are high and there has been a significant rise in the proportion of citizen panel members who feel Clackmannanshire has a strong sense of community (from 25 per cent to 47 per cent).

35. Although the standard of council housing has improved as the council has invested to meet the SHQS, the proportion of dwellings in council tax Band A remain higher than the national average. Communities within the area continue to rely on the social rented sector. Targets for local employment have not been met and there has been a 50 per cent increase in the level of benefits claimed as a

result of the recession. We are, however, confident that the council is working to address these areas through, for example, the employability service. The council is managing the risk associated with the financial climate well and so we will not be undertaking any scrutiny activity.

People are better skilled, trained and ready for learning and development

36. Significant progress has been made against the council's targets to improve educational attainment, and to improve adult literacy rates, which are covered in more detail in paragraphs 53 and 54. The council is now the only local authority in Scotland to have all secondary school pupils educated in new buildings. Forth Valley College has also recently commenced work on a new college within Alloa, expected to be completed for the 2011-12 academic year. We do not consider there to be significant risk in this area and therefore we will not be undertaking any scrutiny activity.

Our communities are safer

37. In 2008/09 there were reductions in the number of recorded crimes across all crime groups in Clackmannanshire. Whilst recorded crime and disorder offences are below the national average, performance against SOA targets in 2008/09 were disappointing, with only two out of nine targets achieved. Fear of crime remains an important issue as 75 per cent of local respondents said that they were fearful about becoming a victim of crime in the last year, although only a third had actually experienced crime in the year. There was an increase in the rate of fire incidents both in Clackmannanshire, and in Central Scotland as a whole.

38. Clackmannanshire Alliance has a range of plans in place to tackle the perception of safety within the area, including a new model of community policing and improvements in communication between community police officers and members of the public. The partnership is also increasing its programme of Home Fire Safety checks. Whilst we do not consider there to be significant risk in this area for the council, SWIA will carry out a ministerially-driven national inspection of prison based Social Work Services across all prisons in Scotland, including Glenochil, during 2010. In addition, Criminal Justice Social Work Services will be considered as part of the SWIA ISLA in quarter 3 of year 1 of the AIP.

Vulnerable people and families are supported

39. Significant progress has been made in response to the council's 2007 child protection inspection and the January 2008 multi-agency inspection of services for older people was very positive, with attainment of targets with services for older people rated very good in five areas and good in one. The council continued to demonstrate strong performance in relation to community care referral responses, caring for elderly people in their own home and providing prompt services to those within Adult Care Services where situations are less complicated. However, there is still progress to be made to improve the quality of assessments of some people with more complex needs.

40. The lack of foster care placements and subsequent use of 'out of authority' placements for looked after children continues to represent a significant ongoing financial pressure for the council. The council is

addressing this issue within its corporate parenting strategy where they have set a target to reduce out of authority placements by five per cent. Child Care Services has recruited a worker for the fostering and adoption team whose aim is to recruit new carers. Whilst working towards reducing the number of out of authority placements it is acknowledged that the needs of some young people with more complex needs will continue to be best met by out of authority placements.

41.	Recent staffing changes in Social Work Services is one reason for the delays in moving forward recommendations from inspection reports. We propose that SWIA will complete further scrutiny work, in collaboration with HMIE and the Care Commission, in Year 1 Quarter 3 to assess progress in this area and seek assurance that these ongoing risks are being effectively managed.

Substance misuse and its effects are reduced

42.	The council's 2008-09 SOA report highlights this as a significant area for the council and its partners. Admissions to hospital for alcohol and substance misuse are below average but the council recognises that the very small numbers involved make it difficult to establish meaningful performance targets.

43.	A number of teams provide services for people with substance misuse problems, including an addiction team led by the NHS, a wider network and a recently piloted Youth Addiction Service. All are seen as providing good quality of services, however, a multi-agency procedure and assessment framework to ensure consistency among services supporting children in families affected by substance misuse is not yet in place. In the future, drug and alcohol service performance data will be collected via the new Alcohol and Drugs Partnerships (ADP) at Clackmannanshire and Forth Valley levels. We do not consider there to be significant risk in this area and therefore we will not be undertaking any scrutiny activity.

Health is improving and health inequalities are reducing

44.	Despite effective integration of local performance planning on health improvement targets, significant progress is required on this priority. Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy are significantly below the Scottish average. Surveys suggest that adult physical activity remains low, and the council has failed to meet targets on physical education in schools.

45.	The Joint Health Improvement Plan is currently being refreshed to better link with targets in the SOA. There are strong and effective relations between the council and its health partners and it is therefore anticipated that the recently launched initiative, Clackmannanshire Healthier Lives, will have a positive impact in this area. We intend to keep a watching brief on this area. If outcomes continue to appear disappointing we may undertake a joint review with scrutiny partners in Year 2 of the programme.

The environment is protected and enhanced for all

46.	The council has been successful in reducing their annual carbon emissions, and has plans in place to reduce emissions further. The council has the best recycling rates in Scotland and reduced the amount

of waste sent to landfill by over 1,000 tonnes in 2008-09. We do not consider there to be significant risk in this area and therefore we will not be undertaking any scrutiny activity.

Public services are improving

47.   Overall, the council's non-inspected services perform well. It is a top performer in relation to recycling and composting; regulatory services tend to be well managed. A new strategy has been adopted to improve Cultural and Leisure Services and in areas where service performance is more mixed (eg Roads and Street Lighting) plans for improvement are in place. This is reflected in SPIs which are good, and generally improving. Between 2006/07 and 2007/08 the number of SPIs in the top quartile has gone up from 29 per cent to 42 per cent.

48.   For 2008/09, some areas of comparatively good performance (eg high ranking) are:

- educational attainment of looked after children

- adult residential care and respite

- culture and community services (with exception of museums, levels of borrowers and use of access point terminals)

- development services (processing of applications)

- protective services

- recycling.

49.   Some areas of comparatively weaker performance (eg lower ranking) are:

- social enquiry reports, supervision orders and community service

- waste management in general (with exception of recycling).

50.   The 2008/09 SOA progress report indicates that all public service improvement targets were met. However, the council acknowledges that the next round of the SOA will need to incorporate public service improvement targets that are broader than just council services and provide a clearer assessment of the impact of service improvement on local people. We will continue to monitor progress in this area, in particular the impact that the Clackmannanshire Improvement Model has on service performance. We do not intend to conduct any specific scrutiny work in year 1 other than that conducted by local external auditors as part of best value follow-up, and SPI annual work. We will consider looking more closely at this area in year 3 of the plan when undertaking our refresh of the AIP later in 2010.

Services

Clackmannanshire Council can demonstrate it is making good progress in managing and improving performance. Services are generally performing well and where performance is less good, this is being actively managed. There are two service areas within housing and social care where we have identified scrutiny risks and will be either undertaking focused scrutiny work or gathering additional intelligence to improve our understanding of performance and progress.

51.   A short summary of performance against each service area is included below. Further detail is contained within Appendix 2.

Education and children's services

52.   Education is seen as a strength of the council. Around 93 per cent of the public in Clackmannanshire rate the primary schools as 'good', with secondary schools achieving 88 per cent. The council has established strong partnerships with the voluntary and private sectors to deliver effective pre-school services. The service has a good understanding of how well its schools are performing, and there is evidence that attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is improving in the primary sector.

53.   Attainment within secondary schools remains below the national average, but the gap between the lowest and highest achievers is narrowing. But, direct comparisons with other authorities are difficult because of the small number of schools in the local authority area and as a proportion of pupils attend independent schools, such as Dollar Academy. In response to these scrutiny risks in year 1 of the plan the HMIE local district inspector will provide support to the council in developing an improvement strategy for this sector. In year 2 of the plan the council will be asked to prepare a report setting out progress that is being made in improving attainment levels as a consequence of the improvement actions it has implemented.

Social work/health

54.   Current evidence suggests that performance within social services at the council is uneven. Adult Care Services have continued to provide good quality services, although a recent follow-up inspection found that there is a continued need to improve risk-assessments. The joint inspection of services to protect children and young people in February 2008 found a failing service. Since then, two further follow-through inspections noted that new appointments have been made and the services has been restructured, and that progress continued to be made in improving services. More work was still to be done to improve planning for children and it is too early to assess whether the steps taken have resulted in improved outcomes. For those reasons, risk assessment arrangements will therefore be considered as part of the SWIA ISLA work planned during year 1 of the plan. Related work by SWIA and the Care Commission in social work/health has already been set out in the vulnerable people and families are supported outcomes section of the AIP.

Housing

55. Following tenant consultation, the council opted to retain its housing stock in 2005, but also to improve the quality of the housing stock beyond the requirements of the SHQS. Evidence from the service suggests that tenant satisfaction is high. Home ownership in the area is below the national average and the proportion of social rented housing is eight per cent higher than the national average.

56. In 2006 Clackmannanshire Council's Housing Service was inspected by the Scottish Housing Regulator's predecessor organisation, Communities Scotland. Its housing management, asset management and response repairs and homelessness services were all awarded 'C' or Fair grades. Following the publication of the inspection report, the council agreed an Improvement Plan with Communities Scotland, but also implemented a restructure of the service. Since then, SPIs suggest significant improvements in performance. The Care Commission's inspection of Housing Support Services has also found high levels of performance. Early in Year 1 SHR will request a self-assessment from the council to provide an independent assessment of the extent to which improvements have been achieved. This will reflect the Improvement Plan previously agreed with the council, detail the changes introduced and identify evidence for improved outcomes and impacts for service users. Following appraisal of this information, SHR will liaise with the LAN Lead regarding the need for any on-site validation or further enquiry.

Corporate services

57. Performance across Corporate Services is mixed. A number of areas of Corporate Services perform well, such as the benefits administration service and business improvement team, but the council has been slow to implement a number of corporate developments such as the single status agreement and workforce planning. The council's own self-assessment recognises the need for improvement in these areas and there are clear plans to address identified areas for development, including reshaping the management structure and improving leadership skills across the council. It will take time to embed these new arrangements, but we are satisfied with the direction of travel so we are not proposing to undertake any scrutiny work in this area until year 3 of the plan.

Cultural and leisure facilities

58. The council has recently approved a new leisure strategy following a period of consultation and service review. Performance to date within Cultural Services has been mixed with library visits substantially above average and highly regarded by the community, and the proportion of residents visiting historical and cultural sites in the area increasing in 2009, to 43 per cent. However, costs of cultural facilities have increased and are significantly higher than average.

59. As noted above, the council now has a clear strategy to take forward Leisure and Cultural Services in its area. There is no indication of higher risk across services and we will not be undertaking any scrutiny work in this area.

5. Corporate assessment

The council's corporate assessment is largely positive with a number of areas of strong performance and good practice. The council faces a particularly acute financial challenge, but is responding well to this with shared officer and member commitment to a programme of change based on prioritised outcomes for service users. As a result we do not plan to undertake any scrutiny work in addition to the routine annual external audit, which will monitor the council's financial position and progress in delivering the council's 'Growing in Excellence' agenda in year three of the plan.

60. A short summary of the corporate assessment is included below. Further detail is contained within Appendix 3.

61. Clackmannanshire Council continues to operate in a period of change. There have been a number of significant changes to the senior management team. A new chief executive and director of services to people joined the council in Spring 2009. Since then, the director of corporate development and the head of finance have left the council and the council has recently recruited a new director of finance and corporate services to help strengthen the corporate capacity within the council. All senior managers have taken part in a Leadership Development programme and a management restructuring programme is underway which will see the number of heads of service reduce from 11 to six. The council has also recently imposed the Single Status Agreement on staff. We have identified managing people, and the consequences of single status implementation, and implementing strategic service change at a time of financial pressure on the council as an area of significant scrutiny risk. Audit Scotland in collaboration with Grant Thornton, the council's appointed auditors, are planning an independent assessment of the impact of the 'Growing Excellence' agenda in year 3 of the AIP which will cover these issues. Progress against this agenda will also be monitored in years 1 and 2 through the annual audit process.

62. All local authorities in Scotland are facing a period of unprecedented financial challenge as a consequence of the impact of the global recession on public finances. This is likely to lead to significant budget cuts in coming years. The significant financial pressures facing the council may impact on its ability to meet existing budget commitments and achieve its corporate objectives. Although we note that the council's management team hold weekly meetings to focus on budget issues, we consider that a significant scrutiny risk remains. Consequently, we propose that the local external auditors review the council's progress in identifying savings to deliver a stable financial position early in the Year 1 timetable. Audit Scotland and the council's appointed auditors, Grant Thornton will also work together on an ongoing basis to maintain a watching brief on this area.

63. The council was the subject of a Best Value and Community Planning audit, the findings of which were published in September 2008. Progress to develop the best value agenda and secure continuous improvement has been good. The chief executive has set a 'Growing in Excellence' agenda to transform how the council makes best use of resources, delivers outcomes, and focuses on areas of strategic priority. Four 'all-council' strategies (financial, customer services, ICT and people) have been developed by director-led delivery teams to promote integration across the council. An important

aspect of the strategic change agenda being developed by the council is a recognition that it needs to focus on those aspects of service delivery where it has the capacity and competence to deliver world class performance. A consequence of this is a commitment to look at opportunities for innovative working and shared services with neighbouring councils. The council's trading services consistently meet or exceed financial targets; they have not been subject to competition for some time. In addition, whilst the use of option appraisal is improving it is not used on a consistent basis by the council. In light of these scrutiny risks the council's appointed auditors will undertake a focused review of competiveness in Year 1 of the plan.

64. The council has also recognised deficiencies in performance and risk management, and has developed the Clackmannanshire Improvement Model to drive service improvement. Given the importance of these developments in relation to supporting improved outcomes and better use of resources we therefore propose that Audit Scotland will collaborate with the external auditors to assess the progress and impact of the 'Growing in Excellence' programme in year three of the plan.

Appendix 1: Outcomes assessment

Outcomes	Initial Risk Assessment	Evidence/Rationale	What we plan to do
National and local outcomes			
Clackmannanshire is currently working on an updated and refreshed community plan due to be published in 2010, to take the area through to 2020. The Clackmannanshire Alliance has signed up to the following nine priority outcomes and articulated these in the SOA 2009 – 2012.			
Outcomes	**Initial Risk Assessment**	**Evidence/Rationale**	**What we plan to do**
The area has a positive image and attracts people and business	**No significant concerns**	**Whilst performance evidence to date is limited, the council can demonstrate a strong commitment to regeneration, with some notable successes in relation to regeneration and business development.** ▪ There are fewer jobs in the area compared to the Scottish average (0.52 jobs per head of working age population compared to 0.84 for Scotland) and median gross weekly earnings are lower. ▪ A higher proportion of the working age population claim benefits and Clackmannanshire has the 12th highest figure for people in work claiming housing benefit, indicating a higher proportion of people living in low income households. ▪ There was an increase in the number of businesses registering for VAT, but the increase was below the national rate. ▪ However, the council can demonstrate a strong commitment to regeneration, with some notable successes. The Clackmannanshire Bridge, Stirling-Alloa-Kincardine rail links and improved roads network have improved transport links. Significant new build projects have brought more families to the area - reversing a trend of declining numbers of children living in the area. More developments are planned, including a significant leisure, housing and social care complex in Forestmill. ▪ The council has also successfully applied for BID funding for business parks and is making good progress in improving Alloa Town Centre.	No specific work.

Outcomes	Initial Risk Assessment	Evidence/Rationale	What we plan to do
Our communities are more cohesive and inclusive	**No significant concerns**	**The economic downturn has led to an increase in new benefit claims and the council is working to address this. However, key performance indicators (KPIs) in this area do not appear to address performance in areas of cohesion or wellbeing.** ▪ Local KPIs indicate mixed performance against this key strategic outcome. ▪ Two local employment targets were not met, and new benefit claims figures have increased by 50%. But, action taken by the council and partners is anticipated to lead to an improvement in the next update figures. ▪ More than 80% of the council's citizen's panel members agreed that they could rely on friends and relatives in their neighbourhood for advice and support. In addition, there has been a significant rise in the proportion of panel members who feel Clackmannanshire has a strong sense of community (from 25% to 47%). ▪ We noted that whilst this strategic outcome area is seeking to improve community cohesion and strengthen social inclusion, the current performance data lacks clear measures related to community cohesion	No specific scrutiny work, although we will be discussing with the council the potential to refine and improve KPIs in this area.
People are better skilled, trained and ready for learning and employment	**No significant concerns**	**Overall, the council performs well in relation to education and training and life-long learning. However, educational attainment in secondary schools remains below the national average and there is a higher proportion of residents with no qualifications.** ▪ The council recognises that secondary school attainment levels need to improve, however, primary school educational attainment compares favourably with comparator authorities and improvement in educational attainment is a priority for the council. ▪ The proportion of school leavers going into employment, education or training decreased slightly during 2008-09, although this may be as a result of the economic recession. However, the Clackmannanshire Alliance has successfully secured funding to create 77 employment opportunities for young people lasting for six months as part of the Future Jobs Fund programme. ▪ There is also a higher proportion of residents with no qualifications and a lower proportion who have attained NVQ Level 4 or above (i.e. HND or above).	No specific work in Year 1, but HMIE will undertake a targeted follow up education authority inspection in year 2 of the plan focusing on improving attainment.

Outcomes	Initial Risk Assessment	Evidence/Rationale	What we plan to do
Our communities are safer	**No significant concerns**	**Although Clackmannanshire is generally a safe place to live, crime, fear of crime and tackling crime have been identified as a priority for agencies locally.** ▪ Whilst recorded crimes and disorder offences are below the national average with higher than average clear up rates, use of anti-social behaviour orders is significantly above the Scottish average. ▪ Fear of crime remains an important local issue, as whilst crime and disorder rates are down and improving perceptions of crime are increasing (75 per cent of local respondents said that they were fearful about becoming a victim of crime in the last year, although only a third had actually experienced crime in the year). ▪ There was an increase in the rate of fire incidents both in Clackmannanshire, and in Central Scotland as a whole. The SOA 2008-09 progress report notes that the Alliance failed to meet two targets to reduce the number of accidental dwelling fires and the number of fire fatalities.	
	Area of uncertainty	▪ Criminal justice services were inspected as part of the Forth Valley Partnership in June 2006 but not included in the performance inspection or follow up inspection.	Criminal justice social work services will be considered as part of the SWIA initial scrutiny level assessment (ISLA) in quarter 3 of year 1 of the AIP to refresh our risk intelligence of that important service.

Outcomes	Initial Risk Assessment	Evidence/Rationale	What we plan to do
Vulnerable people and families are supported	**No significant concerns**	**The council can demonstrate good progress in response to recent inspections. However some important performance challenges remain against a difficult financial backdrop. Performance management and overall social work capacity remain a challenge.** ▪ The council's 2007 Child Protection Inspection was followed up in February 2009. There was a further HMIE inspection in January 2010. Overall significant progress had been made, but a revisit to follow-up on recommendations is planned within one year of the report. ▪ Out of authority placements will be a significant ongoing financial pressure for the council and at present they have no clear strategy for addressing these ongoing pressures. ▪ Recent inspection reports have been positive but the size of team means that small staffing changes in social work can have a significant impact. Lack of capacity may have contributed to lack of progress on addressing some of the recommendations made from inspections. Foster care in particular is fragile and lacking resilience. However, the council now has an adult protection committee in place, supported by new procedures and training.	We propose that SWIA will complete further scrutiny work in Year 1 Quarter 3 to assess progress in this area and seek assurance that these ongoing risks are being effectively managed.

Outcomes	Initial Risk Assessment	Evidence/Rationale	What we plan to do
Substance misuse and its effects are reduced	**No significant concerns**	**The Council and its partners highlight this a significant strategic area for the partnership. There are issues with the volatility of local performance data, given the small numbers involved, which partners are seeking to address.** ▪ The council's 2008/09 SOA report highlights this as a significant area for the partnership but recognises that the very small numbers involved make it difficult to establish meaningful performance targets. ▪ A number of teams provide services for people with substance misuse problems, including an addiction team led by the NHS, a wider network and recently piloted youth addiction service. All were seen as providing good quality of service. ▪ % of referrals received by the Children's Reporter on the grounds of misuse of alcohol or drugs to decrease reducing the gap with the Scottish average. (SCRA figures 2007/08 7% in Clacks compared to Scottish average of 1.8%). ▪ Progress in implementing a multi-agency procedure and assessment framework to ensure consistency among services supporting children in families affected by substance misuse is not yet in place. ▪ Drug and alcohol service performance data will be collected via the new ADP at Clackmannanshire and Forth Valley levels. Opportunity will be taken this year in a refresh of the SOA to review the priority outcome: *Substance misuse and its effects are reduced,* and clarify targets with the new Clackmannanshire ADP taking a lead in this.	No specific work.
Health is improving and health inequalities are reducing	**No significant concerns**	**Despite well integrated local joint working, available data suggests limited progress in this outcome area. The council recognises this and has developed a new initiative, Clackmannanshire Healthier Lives, which started in September 2008 to address this.** ▪ NHS HEAT targets are integrated with the SOA through joint health improvement target and the local Community Health Partnership reports to the Alliance because of its role as one of the partnership teams supporting the Alliance. The Joint Health Improvement Plan is currently being refreshed to better link with targets in the SOA. ▪ Despite this effective integration of local performance planning the SOA report 2008/09 demonstrates poor performance on this target. Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy are significantly below the Scottish average. Surveys suggest that adult physical activity remain low, and the council has failed to meet targets on physical education in schools. ▪ There is an expectation that a new initiative, Clackmannanshire Healthier Lives, started in September 2008 will have a positive impact in this area.	No specific audit work proposed at this time. The LAN will undertake a further review of performance in Year 2. If improvement in performance is not demonstrated, then additional scrutiny activity will be planned for Year 3.

Outcomes	Initial Risk Assessment	Evidence/Rationale	What we plan to do
The environment is protected and enhanced for all	**No significant concerns**	**The council's self assessment indicates largely positive outcomes in this area, but there is scope to improve performance information in this area.** ▪ The council has been successful in reducing its annual carbon emissions, and has plans in place to reduce emissions further. Outcomes for reducing the carbon emission of Clackmannanshire as a whole will be reported in 2011. ▪ The council has the best recycling rates in Scotland and reduced the amount of waste sent to landfill by over 1,000 tonnes in 2008/09. ▪ The Clackmannanshire Alliance has set targets to increase the number of journeys made by foot, cycle or public transport, and to reduce the number of journeys made by car. No data is yet available on progress.	No specific work, beyond routine monitoring of progress through the annual audit.
Public services are improving	**No significant concerns**	**The council has implemented the Clackmannanshire Improvement Model and is committed to reviewing all services by April 2010 to drive forward improvement. The impact of this work may take some time to filter through to improved outcomes. Overall SPI results are good and improving.** ▪ Overall, SPI reports are good, and generally improving. The number of SPIs in the top quartile has gone up from 24% to 42%. ▪ Performance is above or around average in most service areas with sport & recreation and planning significantly better. However homelessness and roads maintenance are both below average with some services, particularly cultural and social work services, showing mixed performance. ▪ Five service areas have significantly higher costs than average with two of them (libraries, museums & the arts and waste management) also increasing from last year. Costs in housing operations, homelessness and trading standards are significantly lower than average with the remaining two areas around average. ▪ The SOA Progress Report 2008/09 indicates that all targets in this area were met. However, the council acknowledges that the next round of the SOA will need to incorporate public service improvement targets that are broader than council services.	We plan to keep a watching brief in this area and conduct a comprehensive review in Year 3 of the Plan to assess the impact of the Clackmannanshire Improvement Model in securing improved outcomes for local people.

Appendix 2: Service assessment

Service Area	Initial Risk Assessment	Evidence/Rationale	What we plan to do
Education	**No significant concerns**	**A good team is in place which has a good understanding of the performance of its schools, and there is evidence that the primary sector is improving. There have been no pre-school inspections in two years but historically this is a strength. Secondary performance compares less favourably, but as 24% of children attend independent schools, notably Dollar Academy, true comparisons are difficult.** ▪ INEA (2006) reported pre-school provision and impact to be a strength of the education service. Strong and effective partnerships amongst council, voluntary and private sectors provide very effective services. ▪ At the primary stages, there is an improving trend of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. The most recent inspection highlights strong attainment with almost all children attaining national levels and making very good progress in learning. ▪ Council approaches to raise attainment, such as Synthetic Phonics, Thinking through Philosophy have gained international recognition. ▪ Attainment at S4 to S6 across the authority shows signs of improvement but remains below comparator authorities and national averages. The gap of attainment between the lowest and highest achievers is narrowing. Quality improvement officers are increasingly rigorous in challenging schools to bring about improvement. ▪ 24 per cent of secondary pupils attend independent schools. ▪ Scottish Government 'Learning Choices' piloted in 2008/09 to provide pathways and support for positive post-school transitions. ▪ Determined to Succeed initiative and 'collaborative learning' are being used to develop children's confidence and work-related skills. A Strategy Group has been set up to lead Curriculum for Excellence initiatives and development work. Professional development for all staff on developing children's enterprise skills, including collaborative learning, is in place.	Educational attainment in the secondary sector has been identified as an area for improvement and HMIE will undertake a follow up inspection in year 2 of the plan.

Service Area	Initial Risk Assessment	Evidence/Rationale	What we plan to do
Social work services Health - Adult Care - Older peoples services - Learning Disability services - Criminal Justice services - Mental health services	**No significant concerns** **Area of uncertainty**	**Performance is improving across all social work services, with good practice identified in many areas. Clackmannanshire has continued to perform well in terms of national performance data in relation to older people and people with learning disabilities. The latest data on direct payments showed a slight decline. Services for people with learning disabilities have recently been redesigned, but the impact of these changes in terms of improved outcomes has yet to be seen.** **Adult care services** ▪ Adult care services have continued to provide good quality services to the majority of adults needing intervention. Assessments continued to fulfil the main objectives of providing prompt and effective responses for those people whose needs were straightforward, but concerns remain about the quality of risk assessments being made for those people with more complex needs. Concerns also remain about the quality of risk assessments being made for some people with more complex needs. ▪ The council is about to adopt the Joint Improvement Team risk assessment tool which may help address this aspect of mixed performance. **Criminal justice social work** ▪ Criminal justice services were last inspected as part of the Forth Valley Partnership in June 2006. ▪ The quality of mental health services within Clackmannanshire were good, with the main integrated mental health team providing a wide range of services and support for people with mental health issues and their carers.	As a consequence of these risks we therefore propose that in year one of the plan SWIA will undertake some focused work in relation to risk assessment arrangements and Criminal Justice social work as part of its ISLA activity.
Children and Families	**Area of uncertainty**	**Children and Families** ▪ Good progress has been made by the council and its partners since the critical joint inspection of services to protect children and young people in February 2008. ▪ The follow up inspection found evidence of efforts having been made to improve fostering and adoption provision although there was a deterioration in services to children with disabilities (due to staff leaving). There is an intention to reconfigure child care services and this is in progress. ▪ Whilst there has been a restructuring of the child care social work service and new appointments made within children and families services at all levels, improvements in the	SWIA will assess progress in this area in Year 1 as part of its ISLA activity The Care Commission will also undertake a inspection of fostering and adoption services in Clackmannanshire as part of the national cycle of these inspections.

Service Area	Initial Risk Assessment	Evidence/Rationale	What we plan to do
		service have still to be evidenced in improved outcomes. ▪ Since then, two further follow up inspections noted that new appointments have been made and the services has been restructured (including youth justice services returned to being managed by children services), and that progress continued to be made in improving services. But, it is too early to assess whether the steps taken have resulted in improved outcomes	
Housing	**No significant concerns** **No significant concerns** **No significant concerns** **Area of uncertainty**	**There is evidence of significant and rapid service improvement since the last inspection report, although work remains to be done on improving the homelessness service and on council house sale times. The council's 'Clackmannanshire Standard' aims to provide housing stock that exceeds the requirements of the SHQS. Tenant satisfaction and participation rates are high.** ▪ Rent loss is very much lower than average and re-letting times are substantially quicker. However, council house sale times are significantly longer than average with rent arrears higher than average. Costs are significantly lower than average although they have increased from last year. ▪ In 2006 Clackmannanshire Council's housing service was inspected by the Scottish Housing Regulator's predecessor organisation, Communities Scotland. Its housing management, asset management & response repairs and homelessness services were all awarded 'C' or Fair grades. Following the publication of the inspection report, Clackmannanshire Council agreed an Improvement Plan with Communities Scotland. Since then, SPIs suggest that the service has made significant progress in areas such as the rent loss due to voids, housing repairs completed on time and the time taken to re-let low demand housing. ▪ Care Commission inspection of housing support service evidences very good performance as indicated by grades awarded. ▪ Homelessness presentations remain at a relatively high level. The homeless service has difficulties in accessing adequate supplies of both temporary and permanent accommodation, resulting in use of expensive Bed and Breakfast accommodation, occasionally in breach of legislation. Progress will be examined in detail, through the proposed self assessment by the council.	Over the first quarter of 2010/11 SHR will appraise the Council's self assessment of its progress against its Improvement Plan for the Housing Service. Following appraisal of the council's submission, the SHR will consider the need for validation or further inquiry

Service Area	Initial Risk Assessment	Evidence/Rationale	What we plan to do
Corporate services	**No significant concerns**	**The council is undertaking a challenging transformation programme following the recent appointment of a new chief executive. The council is small and able to react quickly and effectively to respond to new challenges, however, its scale may limit capacity and ability to deliver economies of scale. The council has good performance management systems in place with a number of areas of very strong performance and good practice.** ▪ The council is embarking on a management restructuring exercise which will see the number of heads of service reduce from 11 to six. The council will need time to embed the restructure before it is possible to establish if the level of planned efficiencies have been achieved. ▪ There is currently no director of corporate services in place, although plans are in place to recruit a director of finance and customer services to fulfil this role. ▪ The council has also implemented the Clackmannanshire Improvement Model in 2009-10 and is in the process of procuring a web-based performance management platform in collaboration with Fife and Stirling Councils. This will be implemented from 1 April 2010 onwards. ▪ Evidence on current performance is mixed. A number of areas of corporate services perform well, such as the benefits administration service and business improvement team, but the council has been slow to implement a number of corporate developments. The council is one of the last in Scotland to implement the single status agreement. Workforce planning is still in development, although this has benefited from the impetus of the Clackmannanshire Improvement Model. We are, however, satisfied that the council's transformation programme will effectively address identified areas for improvement	Audit Scotland will collaborate with the external auditors to assess the progress and impact of this programme in year three of the plan.
Environmental services (including Waste Management)	**No significant concerns**	**Clackmannanshire is a top performer in relation to recycling and composting.** ▪ The council met the MSW recycling target of 40 per cent by 2010 and is confident in meeting the next key MSW recycling target is 50 per cent by 2013. ▪ Achieved the no growth in BMW by 2010 target. ▪ Development and environmental services performed well in the APSE Performance Network Awards - they were nominated finalists in Best Performer and Most Improved in Building Maintenance, and in the Most Improved Street Care category. The council won the Best Performer Award for the third year running in Building Maintenance and is a nominated finalist for Most Improved Street Care	No specific work.

Service Area	Initial Risk Assessment	Evidence/Rationale	What we plan to do
Regulatory services	**No significant concerns**	**Regulatory services tend to be well managed with good performance as measured by SPIs.** ▪ Overall performance of regulatory services remains strong with above average performance for processing times for planning applications in particular. Service costs are substantially higher than average, although the trend is positive with a significant decline in costs in recent years.	No specific work, although the council will be asked by the LAN to set out what action it is taking to address issues of high cost.
Cultural services	**No significant concerns**	**Cultural service outcomes demonstrate mixed performance and progress in addressing improvement needs has been slow. The council has, however, recently agreed a new strategy to take forward cultural and leisure services and there has been renewed management focus since the appointment of the new chief executive.** ▪ The development of a leisure strategy was approved by Council in December 2009. ▪ Performance to date has been mixed with library visits substantially above average, but museum visits are well below average having also declined substantially from last year. Costs have increased and are significantly higher than average.	No specific work, although the council will be asked by the LAN to set out what action it is taking to address issues of high cost.
Roads and street lighting	**No significant concerns**	**The council's performance in roads and street lighting services is mixed performance, but there are clear plans for improvement** ▪ Street lighting performance is around average although the performance trend is strongly positive. Service costs, however, are substantially higher on average than most other councils and service efficiency continues to represent an area for improvement. ▪ Overall performance on roads is significantly below average with traffic congestion being substantially higher than average. Costs are also significantly higher than average although they also reduced significantly from last year. Recent improvements to road and rail networks are expected to lead to improvements in performance in future years.	No specific work, although the council will be asked by the LAN to set out what action it is taking to address issues of high cost.

Appendix 3: Corporate assessment

Criteria	Initial Risk Assessment	Evidence/Rationale	What we plan to do
Vision and strategic direction	**No significant concerns**	**Significant changes are being made by the chief executive and executive directors to establish a clear vision and direction for the council based on 'Growing in Excellence' agenda with an increasing focus on performance improvement. Council acknowledges the need to focus on smaller number of key priorities.** ▪ New chief executive has set 'growing in excellence' agenda for the council to ensure that resources are best being used to meet the council's priorities. Four 'all-council' strategies (finance, customer service, ICT and people) have been approved to complement each other and promote integration across the council. ▪ Priorities agreed with partners within the SOA have been adopted in the corporate plan. Priorities remain wide-ranging and there appears to be consensus that the council's priorities going forward will be more focused.	Audit Scotland will collaborate with the external auditors to assess the progress and impact of the 'growing excellence' agenda annually with a specific review in Year 3 of the plan.
Leadership and culture	**No significant concerns**	**The council is in a period of significant change, both in culture and in management structure. It is too early to assess the impact of changes. Some concerns remain over the effectiveness of political leadership** ▪ All senior managers have taken part in a Leadership Development Programme The council is also implementing a revised management structure, which will see the number of heads of service reduce from 11 to six. ▪ The culture within services generally remains traditional, although the chief executive has taken steps to increase the pace of change by adopting the Clackmannanshire Improvement Model and by creating a stronger corporate centre through new appointments and by bringing services together under a revised management structure. ▪ The quality of political leadership is improving, although officers continue to take the main lead in the development of the council.	Audit Scotland will collaborate with the external auditors to assess the progress and impact of the 'growing excellence' agenda annually with a specific review in Year 3 of the plan.

Criteria	Initial Risk Assessment	Evidence/Rationale	What we plan to do
Partnership working and community leadership	**No significant concerns**	**Mixed performance with positive examples of joint working. However council acknowledges that it needs to improve partnership working.** ▪ The Clackmannanshire Alliance appears to work well and there are strong working relationships between the three local councils at chief officer level. ▪ There has been a continued strong commitment to working with health and evidence of some very positive work being undertaken with other partners. ▪ The council has been able to take opportunities to create efficiencies through single systems of service delivery in partnership with health and police to achieve improved quality of services to protect children at reduced cost, although there remains significant scope for further development in this area.	Audit Scotland will collaborate with the external auditors to assess the progress and impact of the 'growing excellence' agenda annually with a specific review in Year 3 of the plan.
Community engagement	**No significant concerns**	**Community engagement is developing, although there continues to be a focus on consultation and strong reliance placed on the Clacks 1000 citizens' panel, rather than a broader approach to working with local communities. Improvements are expected as a result of the drive to achieve Customer Service Excellence accreditation, but it is too early to assess progress to date.** ▪ Achieving Customer Service Excellence accreditation is one strand of the Clackmannanshire Improvement Model. This should ensure that services engage with users more regularly and on a more meaningful basis. ▪ To date, reliance has been placed on the Clacks 1000 citizens' panel to provide information on user views. ▪ In the most recent survey 46 per cent of respondents felt they should be consulted more on how local services are delivered.	No specific work.
Governance and accountability	**No significant concerns**	**The council has generally good governance arrangements in place, although the role of members in scrutinising policy and procedures and improving service performance needs development.** ▪ The council needs to develop both the role of the scrutiny committee and the framework which supports it. In particular, the council should move towards arrangements which would support an annual Statement on Internal Control, including strengthening internal audit, improving risk management arrangements and developing more tailored training for scrutiny committee members.	No specific work, although this aspect of council performance will continue to be monitored through the annual audit process.

Criteria	Initial Risk Assessment	Evidence/Rationale	What we plan to do
		▪ There is scope to improvement arrangements for the scrutiny of services performance.	
Customer focus and responsiveness	**No significant concerns**	**The council recognises the need to further improve customer focus. This will be addressed through Clackmannanshire Improvement Model.** ▪ PSIF assessments have found that there is generally insufficient data relating to customer perceptions and perceptions of the wider community. ▪ The council's overall strategy for improvement is focused on improving outcomes for citizens and will therefore contain a clear focus on developing a better understanding of the views of local people and service users to help inform its improvement priorities. ▪ Plans for improvement include drive towards Customer Service Excellence accreditation.	No specific audit work proposed.
Performance management / Public Performance Reporting	**No significant concerns**	**The council has adopted the PSIF as part of the Clackmannanshire Improvement Model and is making good progress in developing its performance and risk management arrangements. The council recognises that further development of performance and risk management systems is required to support the efficiency and improvement agenda and to report on performance effectively.** ▪ The council has good performance outcomes as measured by a wide range of statutory performance indicators. ▪ The council has adopted good practice approaches to performance management and reporting and these are becoming embedded across service. ▪ There is a developing performance culture within the council with a renewed focus on further improvement in performance management. ▪ A new Public Performance Reporting strategy has been developed, to improve transparency of reporting and to focus performance reporting around customer needs. ▪ PSIF assessments to date have found that performance measures tend to focus on areas where the Council is required to report to external bodies, for example, Audit Scotland, rather than on customer need and expectations.	No specific work.

Criteria	Initial Risk Assessment	Evidence/Rationale	What we plan to do
Competitiveness	**No significant concerns**	**The council's trading services consistently meet or exceed financial targets, but have not been subject to competition for some time. The use of option appraisal to assess whether current service provision offers Best Value is improving, but has not been used on a consistent basis.** ▪ Former DLOs have consistently achieved surpluses but have not been subject to competition for a number of years. ▪ Option appraisal forms part of intervention package following PSIF assessment within the Clackmannanshire Improvement Model and is now integral to the council's approach to assessing best value in service procurement and delivery. ▪ Recent audit work at the council has identified weaknesses in procurement arrangements for capital projects.	The council's external auditors will undertake a focused review of competitiveness in Year 1 of the Plan.
Risk management	**No significant concerns**	**The council has good and improving risk management arrangements in place. In particular, the council has developed a corporate risk register and risk registers for each department and service. Further work is, however, required to embed risk management across all services.** ▪ The council's Scrutiny Committee does not have a clear role in relation to risk. ▪ Approaches to risk management vary across services but arrangements are being strengthened by PSIF process.	No specific work.
Financial management	**Significant concerns**	**The council continues to face significant financial pressures which may impact on its ability to meet existing budget commitments and achieve its corporate objectives. Whilst, the council has been able to agree a balanced budget for 2010-11 and has agreed a revised financial strategy, significant risks and challenges still remain.** ▪ A mistake uncovered in the 2010-11 budget led to a need to review all budgets to find £9 million savings. The balanced budget was approved in February 2010. ▪ The council has committed to recruit a director of finance and customer services following the departure of both the director of corporate services and head of finance. ▪ The council has approved a finance strategy which recognises the likelihood of reductions in real term funding from central government and sets out proposals to increase the level of uncommitted reserves held by the council to £3.1 million.	Report from local external auditors in Year 1, with ongoing engagement.

Criteria	Initial Risk Assessment	Evidence/Rationale	What we plan to do
Asset management	**No significant concerns**	**The council has recently carried out a review of its asset management arrangements and developed an asset management plan. There is an action plan in place to improve asset efficiency and performance.** ▪ The council has created a Capital Asset Management Planning team and taken positive steps to rationalise council estates and provide buildings that are fit for purpose. ▪ Performance information on asset management is under developed.	No specific work.
Managing people	**Significant concerns**	**The council's people management arrangements are under developed and significant improvement is required to achieve cultural change and embed performance and customer focus across council services. The council is the last in Scotland to address single status and the successful resolution of this issue continues to represent a significant risk to the council.** ▪ Single status was implemented in March 2010. ▪ Effective workforce planning and management arrangements are not yet fully implemented, but the council is developing its approach in light of the revised financial strategy and management restructuring exercise.	Audit Scotland will collaborate with the external auditors to assess the progress and impact of the 'growing excellence' agenda annually with a specific review in Year 3 of the plan.
ICT	**No significant concerns**	**The council has recently developed an ICT strategy in response to identified risks associated with the functionality and integration of existing ICT systems. In particular, a number of information systems are coming to the end of their useful life and interrelated services have information systems that cannot be integrated.** • The council has developed an ICT Strategy for 2010-13 to respond to identified ICT improvement needs on a priorities-led basis.	No specific work. However, a watching brief will be kept on this area given its significance in relation to supporting service improvement and change.
Equalities/ Sustainability	**No significant concerns**	**The council has arrangements in place for addressing equalities and sustainability issues, but evidence of impact in these areas is currently limited.** • The council has responded to the new Equality Bill by developing a single Equalities Scheme. • An impact assessment tool has been developed and refined following feedback from services. • All new policies are impact assessed, and work is underway to impact assess existing policies.	No specific work.

Criteria	Initial Risk Assessment	Evidence/Rationale	What we plan to do
		- The council's approach to environmental sustainability is articulated within strategic priorities. - Procurement practices and economic development work are mindful of wider sustainability considerations.	

Summary assurance and improvement programme

The AIP is a three year rolling programme

2010-11 (Year 1)												
Scrutiny activity	**Apr**	**May**	**June**	**July**	**Aug**	**Sept**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**
Vulnerable people and families are supported: ISLA Autumn 2010 qtr 3. SWIA focused activity around home care, and risk assessment and management in social work services, with SWIA carrying out an initial scrutiny level assessment						■						
Prison-based social work inspection Ministerially-driven national inspection of prison-based social work services, which includes Glenochil prison in Clackmannanshire (SWIA)		■										
Housing: SHR appraisal of the council's self assessment of its progress against its housing service improvement plan				■								
Fostering and adoption services: national inspection cycle (Care Commission)					■							
Competitiveness: Grant Thornton scope work will identify work required anticipated Year1 Qtr 2				■	■	■						
Financial management: Year 1 Qtr 1 Grant Thornton report with ongoing engagement	■	■	■									

2011-12 (Year 2)	
Scrutiny issue/activity	**Scrutiny body**
Child Protection 2: Follow through inspection (date to be confirmed).	HMIE
Evaluation of progress that is being made by the council in improving attainment levels through implementation of the improvement strategy for the secondary sector to be prepared by the council in year 1 of the plan.	HMIE
Monitoring and regulatory support in respect of care services[3]. There will also be a continued engagement and monitoring of progress in self evaluation through the SWIA link inspector role.	Care Commission and SWIA
The LAN will also be monitoring progress towards local health improvement outcomes (para 46) and if sufficient progress is not made will consider undertaking review work in Year 2 of the programme. The same approach will be taken to local public service improvement targets (para 51).	LAN

2012-13 (Year 3)	
Scrutiny activity	**Scrutiny body**
Public services are improving: Targeted work to assess the impact of the Transformation Programme in embedding performance management throughout the council and securing improved services and better outcomes for local people.	Audit Scotland and the external auditors

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[3] Subject to the safe passage of the Public Service Reform Bill, this work will be undertaken by the new body Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS)