

Shared risk assessment: Assurance and improvement plan 2010–13

North Lanarkshire Council



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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 North Lanarkshire Council:
 - Audit Scotland
 - Care Commission
 - HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE)
 - Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)
 - Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA)
 - PwC, local appointed auditors.
2. The AIP sets out the planned scrutiny activity for North Lanarkshire 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 North Lanarkshire Council published in 2008
 - 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?

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 it 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. In addition, other work may be undertaken as a result of a specific Ministerial request.

2. Summary

Our overall assessment is that North Lanarkshire Council is a low risk council. The council has a track record of delivering against its vision and striving for continuous improvement. It has been able to achieve this against a context of challenges related to deprivation, employment and the economy. The council has demonstrated it has good corporate arrangements in place and is making significant efforts to continually improve how it operates and delivers services. The council has made a good start on reporting against outcomes for its strategic priorities and although there are gaps in performance information, it is evident the council is working towards its targets.

As the overall assessment is of a low risk council the majority of work proposed will be taken forward through ongoing scheduled audit/inspection work and/or through supporting improvement activity. The process of compiling this AIP identified a potential grouping of scrutiny work in autumn 2011 and we have revised timings for some work to reduce the impact on North Lanarkshire Council. The LAN has identified some areas of uncertainty in relation to housing that have triggered a focused scrutiny response in year 1 of the joint scrutiny plan.

12. North Lanarkshire has challenges within its area, particularly in relation to deprivation, employment and the economy. North Lanarkshire Council has demonstrated it has a good awareness of these challenges and has responded with a clear vision for the area. The council has made progress in improving how it operates and delivers services and it has also made progress on its strategic initiatives. This has included improving the schools estate, supporting regeneration and delivering against its strategic vision for child protection services.
13. North Lanarkshire Council has a strong focus on self evaluation and uses that to drive continuous improvement activity. The council has rationalised its management structure, reducing the number of departments and focusing the work of the Corporate Management Team (CMT) on the strategic corporate agenda. A greater focus is being given to coordinating its improvement activity and the council is making efforts to draw this into a more coherent programme that can be monitored by the CMT. This improvement activity includes a focus on efficiency gains and progress has been made on reaching efficiency targets. The council has shown a willingness to work with other local authorities to make further efficiencies, for example through the Clyde Valley partnership.
14. Although it is early days for measuring against outcomes, the council has a solid foundation in place. There are gaps in performance information for some priority areas; however, on the whole the council and its partners are working towards the targets set against outcome measures. In general the level of risk is low, although further work is required to clarify the areas of uncertainty in relation to Community Safety and Regeneration. Services are generally performing well, although we have identified some areas of uncertainty in the housing service.
15. The council has demonstrated it has good corporate arrangements in place. North Lanarkshire's strong focus on self-evaluation means it has a good understanding on where corporate arrangements need to be improved in order to meet best value. Overall the council is well placed to deliver further improvement. There are some areas of uncertainty, but where these have been identified they can be assessed as part of the ongoing/scheduled audit and inspection work.

16. Overall our scrutiny activity in response to this risk assessment is relatively low, with the majority of work being taken forward through ongoing/ scheduled audit and inspection work.

3. The council's context

17. North Lanarkshire has a population of 325,520, which accounts for 6.2 per cent of the population of Scotland. The population is projected to increase by 3.2 per cent by 2033. Although a lower proportion of people over 45 years (40.8 per cent) live in North Lanarkshire compared to Scotland as a whole (43.3 per cent), this is projected to increase by 58 per cent, which is slightly more than the Scottish average of 57 per cent. Nearly all (93.3 per cent) of data zones in North Lanarkshire are in urban locations, more than the Scottish average
18. North Lanarkshire has challenges within its area, particularly in relation to deprivation, employment and the economy. Approximately 20 per cent of the population live in the most deprived 15 per cent datazones of Scotland. Unemployment is 7.3 per cent, higher than the Scottish figure of 5.9 per cent. There are fewer jobs in the area compared to the Scottish average and median gross weekly earnings are 8.9 per cent lower. A higher proportion of the working age population claim benefits. There was an increase in the number of businesses registered for VAT however this increase was at a rate lower than the Scottish average.
19. In terms of housing, North Lanarkshire has higher levels of renting from the social rented sector - almost ten per cent higher than the Scottish average. The area has the fourth lowest average house prices in Scotland. The number of dwellings has risen by 5.1 per cent since 2003, higher than the Scottish average of 4.4 per cent.
20. Crimes and disorder offences are above the Scottish average, however clear up rates are slightly better.
21. Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy are lower and younger people are more likely to die in North Lanarkshire than in Scotland as a whole. The area has the seventh highest figure for births to teenage mothers and has higher levels of Disability Living Allowance claimants. However, North Lanarkshire has lower than average admissions to hospital for alcohol and substance misuse.
22. Educational attainment for the key indicators at S4 and S5 is lower than the Scottish average and the working age population has fewer qualifications.

Self-evaluation

23. The council has a good range of self-evaluation processes in place, including sound performance management arrangements and many sound systems and processes to support its drive for improvement. This includes a programme to roll out self assessment using the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF). The council has good self-awareness of its performance and the issues and challenges it faces.

24. The council was an early subscriber to the PSIF self assessment model and are currently undertaking a programme of self-evaluation across all twenty-two services. There are action plans in place for the services that have already undergone self evaluation. Prior to the implementation of PSIF, a Continuous Improvement Review Programme was in place, to identify areas for improvement.
25. There is a clear link between performance management and the council's improvement agenda. A comprehensive Performance Management Framework is in place to ensure performance management arrangements fit with the national and local context. In April 2009, the council implemented Perform NL to facilitate the use of performance management information.
26. There is a corporate improvement programme in place which is central to the councils approach to self assessment and continuous improvement. The Service and People First Transformation Programme pulled together recommendations from a number of different work streams, including recommendations from the Best Value audit and a Shared Services exercise. These have identified opportunities to make further service improvements and efficiencies through increased streamlining, reduced bureaucracy, improved use of technology and reconfiguring functions. If successful, the Service and People First programme will achieve savings of £60m between 2011/12 and 2013/14.
27. The council has been addressing areas recommended for improvement, highlighted in the 2008 Audit of Best Value and Community Planning. The council's Audit and Governance Panel has lead responsibility for monitoring the improvement agenda resulting from the first Best Value audit and recently decided which improvement actions were to be mainstreamed and which required further work through the BV Year 2 Improvement Agenda. In addition to the Service and People First Transformation Programme the CMT has also identified twelve priorities for 2010/11. One of these priorities is the need to provide an operating framework and programme governance structure to align and manage all improvement activity.

4. Delivering outcomes for communities

The council and its partners are making progress in delivering their priority outcomes. Services in North Lanarkshire generally perform well though there are some areas where performance needs to improve. No significant risks have been identified within the shared risk assessment although there are a small number of areas of uncertainty. Where this is the case, focused scrutiny work has been identified to ensure that the LAN has the most up to date and accurate performance information. Otherwise, limited specific work is planned in this area beyond the LAN monitoring through ongoing/scheduled audit and inspection work.

Strategic priorities

28. North Lanarkshire's Corporate Plan covers the period 2008 – 12. It has five key themes:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Environment
- Lifelong Learning
- Regeneration
- Developing the Organisation

29. There is a close link between the Corporate Plan and the area's Single Outcome Agreement (SOA). The local outcomes detailed in the corporate plan are the same as those put against the 15 national outcomes in the SOA. The Corporate Plan has a focus on regeneration, in response to the area's challenges and the council gives a commitment to improving the quality of infrastructure to drive regeneration, specifically within Ravenscraig and existing town centres. There is also a focus on health improvement and housing issues are prominent, in terms of improving the range of housing and tackling homelessness.

30. In assessing whether North Lanarkshire Council is delivering outcomes for its communities, we considered relevant performance measures from a number of key sources including: the SOA progress report, corporate plan performance report, statutory performance indicators (SPIs) and other inspection/ audit reports. The detail of our evaluation is contained in Appendix 1.

31. North Lanarkshire Council and the Community Planning Partnership have made a good start in reporting against its outcome measures, although some gaps in reporting were identified for 2008/09, the Partnership is addressing these. The better areas of performance, from the measures available, are in relation to Health and Wellbeing, Sustainable Environment and Lifelong Learning. We have summarised the implications for scrutiny at the end of this section.

Health and wellbeing

32. The council and its partners can demonstrate that progress is being made in improving the health and wellbeing of residents in North Lanarkshire and overall, no significant risks have been identified. Good progress is being made on children's health with improvements in dental health, healthy weight and increasing breast-feeding rates. A partnership project between North and South Lanarkshire Councils, NHS Lanarkshire, Job Centre Plus and Skills Development Scotland is working with growing numbers of people claiming incapacity benefit (now called Employment and Support Allowance), to support them to enter the labour market. There is however room for improvement in the development of indicators to support progress against this strategic objective. For 2008/09 the Care Commission found that the average grade for the quality of the service provided was 'good'. Ten per cent of all services achieved grades of 'very good' or above in all of the areas inspected. Within support services, the need for improvement in relation to care planning was identified. There is limited information available on some indicators on chronic diseases such as cancer, coronary heart disease, healthy life expectancy and the health outcomes in the most deprived areas because North Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnership made the decision to focus on indicators that could be measured within the lifespan of the SOA.
33. Overall, good progress is reported by the council and its partners towards meeting their community safety objectives. Whilst the SWIA report on the Lanarkshire's Grouping – Criminal Justice Social Work Services (2006) noted 'that overall standards in important areas of work needed to be raised,' a follow up inspection in November 2007 noted extensive evidence of work to take the main recommendations of the 2006 had been provided and no follow up inspection was proposed. Performance information provided to the Scottish Government demonstrates year on year progress in key areas. There is also evidence of significant developments locally since the SWIA report was produced in 2006. Overall progress in the council's Justice Services will be addressed as part of the Initial Scrutiny Level Assessment (ISLA) SWIA will conduct in 2011/12. SWIA will also undertake an inspection of social work service provision within Shotts prison as part of a national inspection of prison based social work services.

Environment

34. The council and its partners report good progress in delivering on sustainable environment priorities. Recycling levels are increasing and there have been reductions in CO2 emissions and the council's ecological footprint. No significant risks have been identified. The local audit team will monitor the council's arrangements for measuring carbon emissions.

Lifelong learning

35. The council and its partners are making satisfactory progress in delivering their lifelong learning priorities. The council has made a positive impact on primary aged attainment and young people's attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at S1 and S2. Secondary attainment at S4 to S6 in

SQA examinations remains a challenge but the council has taken active steps to tackle this area. HMIE have highlighted good practice examples in the secondary curriculum, for example, its approach to vocational education and also identified some Early Years Provision in North Lanarkshire as sector leading. Although there are areas for improvement, there is an overall improving trend, with an awareness of where improvement is required and plans in place to take this forward. No significant risks have been identified. The LAN will monitor progress against outcomes, supported by ongoing inspection work by HMIE and Care Commission within specific service areas, further details are in Appendix 1.

Regeneration

36. The council and its partners are making satisfactory progress in delivering outcomes on regeneration priorities. The first Best Value audit report in 2008 found that North Lanarkshire Council and its partners contributed effectively to the regeneration and economic development of the area through a range of projects. Since then HMIE and SWIA highlighted good practice in relation to delivering skills for work and developing a wide range of employment opportunities for people with disabilities. However, there is an acknowledgement that the economic downturn will present challenges in sustaining progress in this area and the situation is being closely monitored. North Lanarkshire is one of three Scottish local authorities currently considering Tax Increment Financing (TIF), which enables local authorities to borrow money for specific infrastructure developments with the loan funded by ring-fenced non-domestic rates revenue arising from the development. North Lanarkshire is considering submitting a business case to the Scottish Government for the adoption of a TIF scheme to support the regeneration of Ravenscraig.
37. The LAN will continue to monitor the risks to the council in delivering against this strategic objective. However, no additional audit/inspection work is planned; the local audit team will monitor progress against this theme as part of ongoing scheduled audit/inspection work.

Developing the organisation

38. The council has an ambitious improvement agenda. It is making good progress in delivering public services that are generally of high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local needs. The council has met its targets against the majority of indicators for this objective. It has met annual efficiency targets of over £10 million each year and has brought together the streams of improvement work into a corporate transformation programme. No significant risks have been identified, however further detail is given on specific audit/inspection work in the following corporate arrangements section.

Implications for scrutiny activity

39. No significant risks have been identified for the outcome areas of Health and Wellbeing, Sustainable Environment, Lifelong Learning and Regeneration. For Health and Wellbeing, the LAN will monitor

how the council is addressing gaps in performance reporting and the Care Commission will monitor progress of improvement actions resulting from previous and ongoing regulatory activity. In relation to Lifelong Learning the LAN will monitor progress against outcomes, supported by ongoing inspection work by HMIE & Care Commission within specific service areas. In relation to Sustainable Environment, Regeneration and council owned improvement areas the LAN will monitor progress against outcomes, drawing on council performance reports and work conducted as part of the annual audit process.

40. In respect of Community Safety, there is evidence of improvements in Criminal Justice Social Work Services. SWIA will conduct an ISLA in 2011/12 and will also undertake an inspection of social work service provision within Shotts prison.

Service performance

41. There is a range of performance between services within the council and the detail of our evaluation is contained in Appendix 1. Some services such as Education Services, Corporate Services, Environmental Services, Regulatory Services, Cultural Services and Roads and Street Lighting, are considered to have few significant risks.
42. Education Services are performing well and are improving. Inspection activity has identified sound overall primary education performance, with some progress in narrowing the gap between the weakest and strongest schools. Secondary education is also improving overall particularly at S1 and S2. North Lanarkshire has a good quality of pre-school provision. As such, HMIE and the Care Commission will monitor performance through ongoing work at establishment level
43. Although the services mentioned above are considered to have few significant risks, there are some areas of mixed performance and some areas of uncertainty. For these services the LAN will monitor progress, drawing on council performance reports and work conducted as part of the annual audit process.
44. There are a number of areas of uncertainty where we will be carrying out some activity to enhance our knowledge of the risks faced. For example, the council has reported significant improvements to the performance of housing services since the Communities Scotland inspection in 2006. Further work is required to assess the impact of the reported improvement.
45. Overall, Social Work Services are performing well. A second Child Protection inspection is planned for November 2010. In December 2010 the Care Commission will undertake an inspection on fostering and adoption services as part of a national programme. SWIA will conduct an ISLA in 2011/12 to assess what future level of scrutiny will be required for social work services.

Implications for scrutiny activity

46. Whilst no significant risks have been identified within council services, there may be some areas of mixed performance or areas of uncertainty in relation to risk. For these services, the LAN will monitor progress as part of annual audit and inspection activity.
47. SWIA will carry out a focused performance inspection follow up in October 2010. SWIA will also carry out an Initial Scrutiny Level Assessment (ISLA) in 2011/12. This is a risk based approach to determining the future level of scrutiny required for social work services.
48. SHR will review progress on identified areas of uncertainty in February 2011.
49. A second Child Protection inspection will be undertaken in November/December 2010 which will include follow-up on areas identified as requiring action in the first report. In December 2010 the Care Commission will undertake an inspection on fostering and adoption services as part of a national programme.

5. Corporate assessment

The council has good corporate arrangements in place and is making significant efforts to continually improve how it operates and delivers services. No significant risks have been identified within the corporate assessment and therefore there is no specific work planned in this area beyond the LAN monitoring through ongoing/scheduled audit and inspection work.

50. In determining the corporate assessment for North Lanarkshire Council, we considered the effectiveness of corporate arrangements in place. The detail of our evaluation is contained in Appendix 2.
51. The council and its partners have a clear vision for the area which is articulated in strategic plans. Elected members and officers provide clear and consistent leadership. The council has been able to respond to challenges and make progress on its strategic initiatives, including improving the management of the Statutory Trading Operations (STOs), improvements in the schools estate, supporting regeneration, securing agreements on equal pay and single status and the clear vision and strategic direction for child protection services. The council has an effective approach to business planning. The community and corporate plans are consistent and supported by a three year financial strategy and five year capital plan.
52. The council has an ambitious change management improvement programme called Service and People First. The five-year programme was agreed in November 2006 and has three main elements: efficiency, workforce development and organisational culture. As part of this programme, the council rationalised its management structures, reducing the number of departments from seven to five. Early indications are that this has led to the CMT having an increasingly strategic and corporate agenda. Beyond the Service and People First programme there are many other elements of an effective approach to continuous improvement. The 2008 Audit of Best Value and Community Planning report identified scope for the council to prioritise, coordinate and articulate its improvement agenda more effectively and this is being taken forward through the Transformation Programme.
53. The council demonstrates good partnership arrangements and works effectively with its strategic partners on a shared set of priorities. Inspectorates found a strong culture of partnership working that was well established and effective. There is also a willingness to develop shared service arrangements within the Clyde Valley partnership.
54. Services engage well with local communities and in particular the council has worked well to promote public awareness of child protection. However it is less clear that there is a coordinated and strategic approach for wider community engagement. The council approved a revised Community Engagement Strategy in November 2009 following consultation with partner agencies, community forums and residents.
55. The council has clear political and committee structures and has rationalised its management arrangements recognising the Service and People First improvement programme. The council is open and accountable in the way that it carries out business and how it reports performance.

Members scrutinise performance in service committees and in the Audit and Governance and Scrutiny Panels. The Audit and Governance Panel's work is focused and provides effective challenge to officers. The Scrutiny Panel provides effective scrutiny of service performance, although the Audit of Best Value and Community Planning Report published in May 2008 identified that the process by which the panel identified and prioritised its work was unclear. Since then, the Scrutiny Panel has carried out a review of how it manages its activity and implemented changes.

56. Customer satisfaction with council services is high and its approach to customer care has improved significantly.
57. The council has a good track record of generating efficiencies and has effective arrangements in place to monitor competitiveness and manage risk. The council's financial planning arrangements work effectively and annual and longer term financial plans are in place. Budget monitoring arrangements are sound and financial information is monitored regularly by the CMT and committees. There has been some slippage in its capital programme. The council has updated its Long-Term Financial Strategy, which includes an assessment of the future economic outlook and government funding constraints.
58. The Best Value audit in 2008 identified strengths and weaknesses relating to the management of staff. The council has a sound approach to training and development and staff communications. A clear focus has been given to workforce development and organisational culture through a work stream of Service and People First. However, the audit also identified issues with staff absence and staff morale, which may in part have been linked to the implementation of single status. The council is aware of these issues and working to address these. In the statutory performance indicator for Sickness Absence for 2008/09 (now based on FTE days lost), the council has improved its position in the rankings. A staff survey conducted last year will allow us to evaluate whether there have been improvements in staff morale. The council approved a Workforce Planning and Development Action Plan as well as a Human Resources Strategy for the period 2010 to 2014 at the Policy and Resources (Human Resources) Sub Committee on 2 March 2010 which will help to co-ordinate the support and development of staff. These issues will be considered as part of the annual audit.
59. The council is making progress in sustainable development, however further action is needed to successfully mainstream sustainable development into the work of the council. The council has a draft Sustainable Development Delivery Framework which outlines plans to avoid duplication and to better co-ordinate the various sustainable development activities being taken forward within the council.
60. The council is responding to recommendations in the first best value report that it should increase the pace of change in mainstreaming equalities. The council approved its single Equality Strategy for 2009 - 2012 encompassing all equality strands in September 2009. The emphasis on equality impact assessments and staff training has increased, however the impact of these initiatives is still to be seen.

Implications for scrutiny activity

61. The corporate assessment for North Lanarkshire Council has identified no significant risks, therefore no additional audit or inspection work is proposed for 2010/11. The LAN will monitor performance through scheduled audit and inspection work to inform the next shared risk assessment, this will include:

- Monitoring the impact of the single Human Resources Strategy, Workforce Planning and Development Strategy and updating our intelligence with the results of the 2009 staff survey.
- Evaluating whether there has been improvement on how the council prioritises, coordinates and articulates its improvement agenda.
- Monitoring the capital programme and the council's response to the future economic outlook.
- Monitoring the impact of the revised Community Engagement Strategy.

6. Conclusion

National risk priorities

62. 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 captured in the council's outcomes. Health and Wellbeing is a strategic objective of the council and the council is making progress against this outcome although there are some key gaps in performance measures. The joint inspection of services to protect children and young people is scheduled for 2010/11.
- Assuring public money is being used properly. The council has an effective approach to business planning, with the community and corporate plans supported by a three year financial strategy and five year capital plan. Budget monitoring arrangements are sound and financial information is monitored regularly by the CMT and committees. PwC will assess this as part of the annual audit activity.
- The impact of the greater financial pressure faced by councils associated the current economic climate. The council has updated its Long-Term Financial Strategy, which includes an assessment of the future economic outlook and government funding constraints.

None of the national risk priorities present a significant scrutiny risk in North Lanarkshire Council.

Summary of planned scrutiny activity

63. The appendices to this plan show a summary of the evidence we considered and the overall risk assessments made by the local area networks (LAN) on the outcome, service and corporate risk assessments. They show what scrutiny response the LAN has decided is appropriate in each area. The shared risk assessment process is designed to ensure the level of scrutiny activity is proportionate based on the assessed risks.

64. These results are then reflected in the Assurance and Improvement Plan at Appendix 3 which sets out the basis of our scrutiny risk assessment and the planned scrutiny activity for North Lanarkshire Council for the period from April 2010 to March 2013. The plan covers a three year rolling period and includes all scrutiny activity at corporate and service level. It excludes scrutiny activity at individual unit level, such as a school, residential home or day care centre. Although some areas have been classified as "green" (no significant scrutiny risks), there may be some specific identified risks within each area that require some limited scrutiny activity as part of an agency's core work.

65. On-going monitoring of the risks identified within this report by the appropriate scrutiny body will inform future risk assessments and the levels of scrutiny activity. These include:

Specific work:

- SWIA will carry out a focused performance inspection follow up in October 2010.
- HMIE -A second Child Protection inspection (CP2) will be undertaken in November/December 2010 which will include follow-up on areas identified as requiring action in the first report.
- Care Commission will undertake a Fostering and Adoption Inspection in December 2010.
- SHR – focussed scrutiny work to review progress on identified areas of uncertainty, proposed February 2011.
- At the request of North Lanarkshire Council, HMIE are working in partnership with the council to undertake a Validated Self Evaluation during 2010/11. This is a voluntary partnership and is not inspection although it will provide up to date information for future updated SRAs.

On-going work:

- The Care Commission and HMIE will continue to undertake ongoing inspection work at establishment level. The Care Commission will also continue to undertake other regulatory functions at establishment level which will include registration and complaints activity.
- HMIE, SWIA and SHR will continue to monitor risk through the link inspector role.
- PWC will continue to monitor the annual audit programme. This will include the following targeted work (within the standard audit footprint):
 - progress on the coordination of the improvement agenda and the implementation of the council's transformation programme.
 - progress against the improvement plan resulting from the first Best Value audit.
 - monitoring the capital programme and the council's response to the future economic outlook
 - council's arrangements for measuring carbon emissions.
 - work being progressed by the council and its partners to ensure funding is made available to facilitate the continued development of the Ravenscraig site
 - monitoring the impact of the single Human Resources Strategy, Workforce Planning and Development Strategy and updating our intelligence with the results of the 2009 staff survey.
 - monitoring the impact of the revised Community Engagement Strategy.

National work:

- SHR – a survey of progress on Scottish Housing Quality Standards will take place in the third quarter of 2010/11
- SWIA - following consultations with the Scottish Prison Service and Scottish Government, SWIA will undertake a national inspection of prison based social work services between March and May 2010. This scrutiny activity will impact on all of the local authorities that currently provide prison based social work services to the fourteen prison establishments in Scotland. SWIA will undertake an inspection of social work provision within Shotts prison, as part of this national inspection.

- SWIA - The Association of Directors of Social Work (ADSW), in partnership with Scottish Government and SWIA, is leading follow-up activity in relation to the multi-agency inspection that led to the publication of the report 'Assessing and managing offenders who present a high risk of serious harm' in June 2009. We have agreed that rather than engaging in further scrutiny work, SWIA will plan and resource a programme of supported self-evaluation in order to build capacity in local authorities to enable criminal justice social work services to address the performance issues raised in the report. This will be provided to all 32 Scottish local authorities and will involve a series of six (one day) contacts for each council, between June 2010 and April 2011.
- Audit Scotland and HMICS will be undertaking a joint BV audit and inspection of Strathclyde Police starting in the third quarter of 2010/11. North Lanarkshire Council may have some limited involvement by virtue of their position on the joint police board.

66. The schedule of discrete audit and inspection work is illustrated at Appendix 3.

Appendix 1 – Outcome and services risk assessment

Strategic priorities	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
<p>Health and wellbeing</p> <p>KO6.1 Increased number of people able to make healthier choices for their diet and nutrition</p> <p>KO6.2 Reduced impact of smoking</p> <p>KO6.3 Increased number of people enjoying the benefits of having a physically active life</p> <p>KO6.4 Reduced impact of alcohol and substance use</p> <p>KO6.5 Improved emotional wellbeing of North Lanarkshire residents</p> <p>KO6.6 Increased proportion of people needing care or support who are able to sustain an independent quality of life as part of the community, through effective joint working</p> <p>KO6.7 Improved care and support through</p>	<p>No significant risks</p>	<p>The council and its partners can demonstrate that progress is being made in improving the health and wellbeing of residents in North Lanarkshire. There is however room for improvement in the development of indicators to support their work and the need for improvement in care planning across a small number of services has been identified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SOA performance analysis shows that of the 32 indicators less than half (47%) have met their target and are showing a positive direction of travel. Although 25% of indicators are not meeting target of these half are showing a positive direction of travel. Data is not available for the remaining indicators. • Good progress is being made on children's health and supporting older people to live independently. • The council has invested effectively in health education and promotion across its learning and leisure services. • A positive impact was noted in a wide range of school inspections, increasingly in line with the requirements of the Health and Nutrition act: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pre school provision promotes healthy lifestyles ○ Active school coordinators in all school clusters ○ CLD programmes provide extensive opportunities/encouragement to healthy lifestyles • A child protection inspection was largely positive about the care and welfare of vulnerable children and found staff showed good knowledge and understanding re children and families they were working with. • For 2008/09 the Care Commission found that the average grade for the 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN to monitor progress on outcomes to inform future shared risk assessments.</p>

Strategic priorities	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
<p>better quality services</p> <p>KO6.8 Improved care and support through faster access to services</p>		<p>quality of the service provided was 'good'. 10% of all services achieved grades of 'very good' or above in all of the areas inspected. Within support services, the need for improvement in relation to care planning was identified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been strong progress with aspects of its equalities agenda. • Has invested significantly in its schools and community facilities and there has been strong progress with improving leavers' progress into positive sustained destinations • There is higher than average figures on the proportion of looked after children in a community setting (93%) as opposed to those in residential care and there is positive data on improving qualifications of looked after and accommodated young people • 87% of residents believe their neighbourhood is either good or very good place to live. • CLD indicating positive achievements in building community capacity. 	<p>Care Commission will continue to monitor progress on previously identified areas for improvement and aspects of Personal Care Planning.</p>
<p>Community safety</p> <p>KO 9.1 Impact upon disorder, antisocial behaviour, violence and abuse within our communities</p>	<p>No significant risks</p>	<p>Good progress is reported by the council and its partners towards meeting their community safety objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOA performance analysis found that of the 8 indicators, 62.5% had been met with most showing a positive direction of travel. • Primary special and secondary schools feature personal safety prominently in their programmes of personal social and health education • Performing well in relation to youth justice services • Has good interagency procedures in place for the protection of children 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN to monitor progress on outcomes to inform future shared risk assessments.</p> <p>SWIA will assess overall progress in the council's criminal justice services as part of the 2011/12 ISLA</p> <p>SWIA will undertake an inspection of social work</p>

Strategic priorities	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<p>and adults</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst the SWIA report on the Lanarkshire's Grouping – Criminal Justice Social Work Services (2006) noted 'that overall standards in important areas of work needed to be raised,' a follow up inspection in November 2007 noted extensive evidence of work to take the main recommendations of the 2006 had been provided and no follow up inspection was proposed. Performance information provided to the Scottish Government demonstrates year on year progress in key areas. There is also evidence of significant developments locally since the SWIA report was produced in 2006. 	<p>provision within Shotts prison, as part of a national inspection of prison based social work services</p>
<p>Sustainable environment</p>	<p>No significant risks</p>	<p>The council and its partners report good progress in delivering on sustainable environment priorities.</p> <p>An analysis of the SOA performance report found that the partnership is making most progress against the environment theme reporting 78% of the 18 indicators meeting targets and showing a positive direction of travel across the majority of indicators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority of schools and early years establishments are actively involved in Eco schools initiatives • Recycling levels are increasing, reduction in CO2 emissions and the council's ecological footprint • Residents survey findings indicate perception of cleanliness is increasing • PPP programme has provided 24 new schools and some with integrated community facilities 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN to monitor progress on outcomes to inform future shared risk assessments.</p> <p>The local audit team will monitor the council's arrangements for measuring carbon emissions</p>
<p>Lifelong learning</p>	<p>No significant risks</p>	<p>The council and its partners are making satisfactory progress in</p>	<p>No specific/ additional</p>

Strategic priorities	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<p>delivering their lifelong learning priorities. Although performance is mixed there is a general improving trend and an awareness of where improvement is required and plans in place to address these.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOA performance report that of the 27 indicators, 48% have been met and are showing a positive direction of travel. Of the 41% not met the majority are showing improvement. • Positive impact on primary aged attainment and young people's attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at S1 and S2. • Secondary attainment at S4 to S6 in SQA examinations remains a challenge but the council has taken active steps to tackle this area. Good practice examples identified in the secondary curriculum, for example, its approaches to vocational education • Social work staff training and development opportunities were high quality and focused on improving outcomes for people using services. • Reporting positive outcomes for young people and with HMIE reporting good practice examples on its curriculum and sector leading in some of its early years provision • Improvements for children in residential units in accessing education. • Awareness in Child Protection of where it needs to improve and plans in place to address these 	<p>audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN to monitor progress on outcomes to inform future shared risk assessments supported by ongoing inspection work.</p> <p>Care Commission will continue to undertake regulatory functions at establishment level which will include registration and complaints activity.</p>

Strategic priorities	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
Regeneration	Areas of uncertainty	<p>The council and its partners are making satisfactory progress in delivering outcomes on regeneration priorities however there is an acknowledgement that the economic downturn will present challenges in sustaining progress in this area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first Best Value audit report in 2008 found that North Lanarkshire Council has contributed effectively to the regeneration and economic development of the area through a range of projects in partnership with other public sector agencies and the private sector. • Mixed performance reported in the SOA performance report with 42% of the 12 indicators meeting their targets and the majority of the indicators showing a positive direction of travel. The impact of the economic recession can be seen in these performance results.. • Some good practice highlighted by HMIE and SWIA in particular maximising school's role in delivering skills for work and the Supported Employment Services had successfully developed a wide range of employment opportunities for people with disabilities. • Since the re-organisation of Scottish Enterprise, there has been some delay in bringing forward proposals for further phases of development at Ravenscraig. Scottish Enterprise's stated position with regards to Ravenscraig is that with a changed remit, future development will lie outside their role. It has been reported that a potential £70 million funding gap exists - required to fund road and related infrastructure costs - which may impact on the timeliness and development of the site at Ravenscraig. In order to progress the Phase 2 development, the council has been working with Ravenscraig Ltd and the Scottish Government. This initially involved a funding review of the Phase 2 development options, produced by Ravenscraig Ltd, with a view to identifying a preferred solution for public sector infrastructure investment which would allow development to proceed. Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) was identified as a potential means for addressing the funding gap. The rationale behind Tax Incremental Financing is that the council borrows money on the strength that it will be allowed to retain future tax revenue to pay for the infrastructure that is essential to a new development. The scheme includes provision for 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN to monitor progress on outcomes to inform future shared risk assessments.</p>

Strategic priorities	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<p>community facilities. Plans are in place to produce a Business Case to the Scottish Government. This will include further clarification on the funding, costs and procurement methodology associated with the Phase 2 strategic infrastructure works.</p>	
<p>Council owned improvement areas</p>	<p>No significant risks</p>	<p>The council is making good progress in delivering public services that are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local needs.</p> <p>The majority of the indicators have met their target and are showing a positive direction of travel.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieved efficiency savings (>£10m each year) • The council is bringing together the streams of improvement work into a corporate transformation programme and raising the annual efficiency targets • 75% residents rate services good or very good 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN will monitor performance through scheduled audit/ inspection work to ensure continued and effective service improvement progress and to inform the next risk assessment</p>

Council services	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
(1) Education	No significant risks	<p>Education services perform well and are improving.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High resident satisfaction with primary and secondary education • Pre-school strong level of overall provision, high reputation for pre-school quality of provision, particularly partnership arrangements with voluntary sector • Sound overall primary education performance, and narrowing the quality gap between the weakest and strongest schools. Showing improvements for reading, writing and mathematics in percentage of children reaching appropriate levels • Improving overall secondary education performance 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>HMIE and Care Commission will monitor performance through ongoing work.</p>
(2) Social work	No significant risks	<p>Overall social work services are performing well</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social work services are performing well, service performance is improving overall during a period of significant change • Generally high resident satisfaction for social work services • Vision and strategic direction in SW services was very good • Justice Services have made good improvement since the SWIA report on the Lanarkshire Grouping performance report of 2006. 	<p>Care Commission will monitor performance through ongoing regulation activity at establishment level.</p> <p>SWIA - self evaluation approach to support the management of high risk offenders during 2010/11.</p> <p>SWIA will carry out a focused performance inspection follow up in October 2010.</p> <p>HMIE – second child protection inspection will take place November/</p>

Council services	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
			<p>December 2010.</p> <p>Care Commission will undertake a Fostering and Adoption Inspection in December 2010</p> <p>SWIA – 2011/12 ISLA will assess the future level of scrutiny required for social work services, including criminal justice</p>
(3) Housing	Areas of uncertainty	<p>The council's reported performance for housing indicates that this has improved since the Communities Scotland inspection in 2006 although further work is required to update and quantify where the progress has been made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council's reported performance for housing in relation to target timescales for empty houses and routine repairs indicates an improving picture and SHR will carry out work to identify where progress has been made. • The council fell short of its 2009 interim targets for homelessness priority need. The Housing Service has been re-structured, with a new Allocation Policy implemented and the council reports that these improvements are impacting positively on homelessness performance. • The council's reported SHQS performance for 2009/10 was 49.3% against a target of 50%. • There are a number of areas where SHR will carry out some activity to enhance knowledge and review progress on the identified areas of uncertainty, in particular an assessment of the impact on outcomes of the reported improvements in performance. 	SHR focused scrutiny work February 2011

Council services	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
(4) Corporate services	No significant risks	<p>Corporate Services show mixed performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall risk assessment of Corporate Services is informed by aggregated corporate performance. • SPIs 08/09 2 of the 8 SPIs are in Q4 these are the number of public service buildings that are suitable and accessible for disabled people and the proportion of operational buildings that are in a satisfactory condition. The figures show improving performance however from a low base. • Increase in the number of council employees in top 2% and 5% of earners that are women 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>Annual audit will monitor performance and inform the next risk assessment.</p>
(5) Environmental services	No significant risks	<p>There is improving resident satisfaction with the delivery of key aspects of environmental services and performance is generally improving.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009 resident survey found that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 87% of residents rated refuse collection/street cleaning/litter control as very good/good - 84% rate parks and open spaces as very good/good • Cost of refuse collection although increasing is still lower than average and the council is in the top quartile, however the cost of refuse disposal has increased significantly in the past two years and the council is in the lower quartile. • The council is improving its recycling rate. 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN will monitor performance to inform the next risk assessment</p>

Council services	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
(6) Regulatory services	No significant risks	<p>Performance in planning, trading standards and environmental health services is generally good and there is general residents satisfaction with the service provided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009 residents survey found that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 61% rate local planning and development control as very good/good ○ 84% rate environment health services as very good/good • Protective services: Performance is generally good with response on site to domestic noise complaints performing above average. The council also performs well in dealing with business requests and the percentage of target visits to food and trading premises in the high and medium risk inspection categories. Although the timescale for dealing with consumer complaints is poor the performance has improved year on year. • Planning: Performance is better than average. Processing times for planning applications is above average and level of appeals low. 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN will monitor performance to inform the next risk assessment</p>
(7) Cultural services	No significant risks	<p>There is high resident's satisfaction with libraries, sports and leisure services and community centres. Performance is mixed, although improving most indicators remain in the lower quartiles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009 resident's survey found: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 93% rate libraries as very good/good ○ 82% rate sports and leisure services as very good/good ○ 81% rate community centres as very good/good • The number of attendances to pools and sports and leisure facilities is increasing. 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN will monitor performance to inform the next risk assessment</p>

Council services	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of visitors to museums has increased over the last year however is still below average • Increase in the number of users for learning access centres and learning access points • The addition to lending stock in libraries is reducing. 	
(8) Roads and street lighting	No significant risks	<p>There is room for improvement in the council's performance on roads and street lighting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009 resident's survey saw 58% of resident's rate roads, footpaths and street lighting as good/very good • SPI performance is mixed, street light repairs are quicker than average while traffic light repairs are significantly below average. • 2009/10 winter maintenance requirements have been met through utilising the council's contingency reserves. In 2001 the council established a contingency budget where funds are put to one side on an annual basis to a maximum of £600,000. Although the budget is now exhausted, the policy of building and maintaining this reserve remains a priority. 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN will monitor performance to inform the next risk assessment</p>

Appendix 2 – Corporate risk assessment

Corporate assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
Vision and strategic direction	No significant risks	<p>The council and its partners have a clear vision for the area which is articulated in strategic plans. Elected members and officers provide clear and consistent leadership. The council has an effective approach to business planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The community and corporate plans are consistent with each other covering the four year period from 2008, the plans are supported by a 3 year financial strategy and 5 year capital plan. The council has been able to respond to challenges and make progress on its strategic initiatives, including improving the management of the STOs, improvements in the schools estate, supporting regeneration, securing agreements on equal pay and single status. Vision and strategic direction in SW services was very good, HMIE identified that for child protection, the vision of elected members, the Chief Executive and senior managers to protect children is a key strength. 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN will monitor performance through scheduled audit/ inspection work to inform the next risk assessment</p>
Partnership working and community leadership	No significant risks	<p>The council works effectively with its strategic partners on a shared set of priorities which are consistent with the needs of the area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspectorates found a strong culture of partnership working that was well established and effective. There is also a willingness to develop shared service arrangements within the Clyde Valley partnership. 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN will monitor performance through scheduled audit/ inspection work to inform the next risk assessment</p>
Community	No significant risks	Services engage well with local communities however it is less clear	No specific/ additional

Corporate assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
engagement		<p>that there is a coordinated and strategic approach for wider community engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are good examples within services of community engagement with the promotion of public awareness of child protection identified as a strength and SWIA found that the council engaged well with communities and their representatives, while partners and stakeholders felt involved and understood the vision for social work services, e.g., engagement activities within Adult Services. • The council approved a revised Community Engagement Strategy in November 2009 following consultation with partner agencies, community forums and residents. • The residents survey will now be carried out annually rather than 3 yearly 	<p>audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN will monitor performance through scheduled audit/ inspection work to inform the next risk assessment</p>

Corporate assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
Governance and accountability	No significant risks	<p>The council has clear political and committee structures and has rationalised its management arrangements recognising the Service and People First improvement programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council is open and accountable in the way that it carries out business and how it reports performance. The Audit and Governance panel's work is focused and provides effective challenge to officers. The Scrutiny Panel provides effective scrutiny of service performance and the council has introduced mechanisms to improve how the panel identifies and prioritises its work in response to recommendations contained in the 2008 Best Value audit report. Performance is reported to the public via its annual Corporate Plan performance report, a leaflet summarising its financial performance, performance information in the monthly council publication of the North Lanarkshire News. 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN will monitor performance through scheduled statutory audit/ inspection work to inform the next risk assessment</p>
Performance management and improvement	No significant risks	<p>Customer satisfaction with council services is high and its approach to customer care has improved significantly. The council has sound performance management arrangements in place and these are improving. The council demonstrates commitment to Best Value and continuous improvement. The council has a good track record of generating efficiencies and has effective arrangements in place to monitor competitiveness and manage risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council has an ambitious change management improvement programme called Service and People First. Early indications are this has led to the Corporate Management Team having an increasingly strategic and corporate agenda. There is scope for the council to prioritise, coordinate and articulate its improvement agenda more effectively and the council is taking this forward through its Transformation Programme. 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN will monitor performance through scheduled local audit and inspection work to inform the next risk assessment</p> <p>Monitoring by local audit team on the effectiveness of the council's arrangements for collecting and recording</p>

Corporate assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HMIE found that the council's scheme for professional review and development for teachers is effective and well embedded and there is an effective quality assurance approach for managing school and centre performance. Child Protection inspection found that managers received robust intelligence reports and effectively monitored child protection activity. • A new performance management system was introduced early 2009/10 across all front line council services. • BV1 report found the council had sound performance management arrangements and these are improving with the introduction of performance portfolios. It also found that the council demonstrates a commitment to Best Value and continuous improvement and has an ambitious and wide ranging change agenda. • The council has a good track record of generating efficiency savings and incorporated efficiency as a key element of how it manages its business. The council reported £10.034m of efficiency savings for 09/10. • BV1 report found that the council has effective arrangements in place to monitor the competitiveness of its commercial operations and reviews them on a regular basis. • The council has sound risk management arrangements. 	<p>of performance management information as part of the annual audit.</p>

Corporate assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
Use of resources - finance	No significant risks	<p>The council's financial planning arrangements work effectively and annual and longer term financial plans are in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget monitoring arrangements are sound and financial information is monitored regularly by the CMT and committees. • There has been some slippage in its capital programme. The council has updated its Long-Term Financial Strategy, which includes an assessment of the future economic outlook and government funding constraints 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN will monitor performance through scheduled local audit/ inspection work to inform the next risk assessment</p>
Use of resources – people	No significant risks	<p>The council has a sound approach to training and development and staff communications. Staff morale has not been good and staff absence record is poor, but has recently been improving.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council is developing & implementing next phases of Service and People First, focusing on workforce development and organisational culture. This is a key workstream of the corporate efficiencies programme. • A Workforce Planning and Development Working Group produced a Strategic Workforce Planning Overview in Jan 09 which identified a six stage workforce planning process with a view to the implementation of a workforce strategy. The Workforce Planning and Development Action Plan was approved by the Policy and Resources (Human Resources) Sub Committee on 2 March 2010. • The council approved a Human Resources Strategy at the Policy and Resources (Human Resources) Sub Committee on 2 March 2010 • An Organisational Culture Working Group has finalised its action plan setting out in detail how information about the organisational values will be cascaded to all employees, consistently applied and referred to in all training and appropriate personnel procedures (for example, 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN will monitor performance through scheduled local audit/ inspection work to inform the next risk assessment</p>

Corporate assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<p>corporate induction, individual PRDs and recruitment). The Organisational Values Action Plan was approved by the Policy and Resources Committee on 9 June 2009.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 07/08, NLC had sickness absence rate of 6.05% (ranked bottom quartile) In 08/09 absence rate = 5.67% which, although falling short of the 5.5% target, demonstrates a marked improvement. (Best figures since 1999/00). The council has significantly improved its position in the Audit Scotland Rankings for sickness absence and there continues to be a significant focus on sickness absence, particularly given the budgeted £1.629m savings which have been allocated to be achieved through absence management in 2010/11. The council carried out its latest Staff survey in October 2009, results are being analysed at present, but initial indications are that they are positive overall. 	
Use of resources – assets	No significant risks	<p>The council actively manages its assets and has in place a detailed Asset Management Plan linked to the council priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous audit review work has highlighted a number of areas of good practice including the council's detailed Asset Management Plan (AMP) which linked into council priorities. As part of the 2009/10 audit process the local audit team will review what action the council has taken, to address the recommendations raised in the Accounts Commission's report "Asset Management in Local Government". 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN will monitor performance through scheduled audit/ inspection work to inform the next risk assessment</p>

Corporate assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
Use of resources – procurement	No significant risks	<p>The council's procurement arrangements are effective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NLC introduced the PECOS electronic ordering system across a number of services. However, this process was not supported by an up-to-date Procurement Strategy. The council currently spends around £365M per annum on procurement of goods, services and works, with around £120 M per annum spent via electronic procurement. • P&R (Finance & Customer Services) Sub Committee of March 2009 approved a draft Procurement Strategy for 2009-13. An annual Procurement Action Plan was presented to the P&R (Finance and Customer Services) Sub Committee May09 when the final Procurement Strategy was approved. NLC has an action plan that addresses the output from McLelland Review. 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN will monitor performance through scheduled audit/ inspection work to inform the next risk assessment</p>
Use of resources – ICT	No significant risks	<p>The council uses ICT as a strategic asset which is increasingly at the centre of the council's improvement agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ICT service has undergone considerable change through reconfiguration and parts of the service are delivered through a service delivery partnership agreement put in place in Jan 2006. • The council's ICT strategy is being updated to demonstrate how ICT will support the continuous improvement of core services. • The council needs to address some issues relating to Business Continuity Planning & Disaster Recovery Plans and access rights 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN will monitor performance through scheduled audit/ inspection work to inform the next risk assessment</p>

Corporate assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
Sustainability	No significant risks	<p>The council is making progress in sustainable development however further action is needed to successfully mainstream sustainable development into the work of the council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council and its partners report good progress in delivering on sustainable environment priorities. • An analysis of the SOA performance report found that the partnership is making most progress against the environment theme reporting 78% of the 18 indicators meeting targets and showing a positive direction of travel across the majority of indicators. • Majority of schools are actively involved in Eco schools initiatives • Recycling levels are increasing, reduction in CO2 emissions and the council's ecological footprint • Residents perception of cleanliness is increasing • PPP programme has provided 24 new schools and some with integrated community facilities 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN will monitor performance through scheduled audit/ inspection work to inform the next risk assessment</p> <p>The local audit team will monitor the council's arrangements for measuring carbon emissions</p>
Equality	No significant risks	<p>The council is making progress but could increase the pace of change in mainstreaming equalities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five equalities outcome indicators in SOA1. Four are showing a positive direction of travel (People with mental health problems receiving individual support, Percentage of Looked After and Accommodated Children attaining 1 or more Standard Grade at Level 3, Supply number of new build housing suitable for people with 'varying and particular needs' and %age disabled accessibility to council premises and facilities.) • The council is responding to recommendations in the first best value report that it should increase the pace of change in mainstreaming equalities. The council approved its single Equality Strategy for 2009 - 2012 encompassing all equality strands in September 2009. The emphasis on equality impact assessments and staff training has increased, however the impact of these initiatives is still to be seen. 	<p>No specific/ additional audit/ inspection work.</p> <p>LAN will monitor performance through scheduled audit/ inspection work to inform the next risk assessment</p>

Appendix 3 – Assurance and Improvement Plan

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
HMIE – Joint inspection of services to protect children and young people												
Care Commission - Fostering and Adoption Inspection												
SHR - review of progress in identified areas of uncertainty												
SWIA – Inspection of prison-based social work services												
SWIA - focused performance inspection follow up												
HMICS & Audit Scotland - Joint Best Value Audit and Inspection of Strathclyde Police Force and Board												

2011-12 (Year 2)	
Issues for scrutiny /improvement	Scrutiny bodies /council potential involvement
Annual audit in accordance with Audit Scotland's Code of Audit Practice	External Audit
ISLA	Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS)
Ongoing schedule of inspections	HMIE and SCSWIS
Shared Risk Assessment	All LAN members

2012-13 (Year 3)	
Issues for scrutiny /improvement	Scrutiny bodies /council potential involvement
Annual audit in accordance with Audit Scotland's Code of Audit Practice	External Audit
Ongoing schedule of inspections	HMIE and SCSWIS
Shared Risk Assessment	All LAN members