

East Dunbartonshire Council

Assurance and Improvement Plan

2014–17

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Introduction

1. This Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP) sets out the planned scrutiny activity in East Dunbartonshire Council between April 2014 and March 2017. The AIP is based on a shared risk assessment undertaken by a local area network (LAN). There is a LAN for each council, comprising representatives of all the scrutiny bodies who engage with the council. 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 a three year period.
2. This is the fifth AIP for East Dunbartonshire since the introduction of the shared risk assessment process.¹ It is the result of the shared risk assessment which began in October 2013. The process drew on evidence from a number of sources, including:
 - the annual report to the Controller of Audit and elected members for 2012/13 from the council's appointed external auditors, which included the findings from targeted Best Value work
 - evidence gathered from Audit Scotland, Education Scotland, the Care Inspectorate, the Scottish Housing Regulator and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICS), including published inspection reports and other supporting evidence.
 - the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) and associated development plan for the council area
 - the council's own performance data and self-evaluation evidence
 - analysis of data from the SOLACE/COSLA/Improvement Service Local Government Benchmarking Framework.²
3. The shared risk assessment process was reviewed in 2013, in the context of a significantly changed scrutiny landscape and the evolving public service reform agenda.³ Based on the findings of the review, this year's shared risk assessment focused on identifying the council's current position in implementing the Scottish Government's reform agenda. It also placed more emphasis on scrutiny risk in relation to the council's improvement and transformation agenda. This change in approach is reflected in the structure of the AIP for 2014-17, which covers four areas:
 - local priorities and public service reform
 - corporate assessment
 - service performance
 - improving and transforming public services/public performance reporting.

¹ Assurance and Improvement Plans for each council since 2010 are available on the Audit Scotland website: <http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/work/scrutiny/aip.php>

² The indicators used in the framework can be found on the Improvement Service website: <http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/>

³ The review of the shared risk assessment process was one of four work streams taken forward by the Strategic Group for Local Government Scrutiny Co-ordination during 2013.

4. Scrutiny risk is assessed against the following criteria:
 - No scrutiny required - there are no significant concerns, so no scrutiny work is necessary.
 - Scrutiny required - there are concerns about performance, services or outcomes, resulting in the need for scrutiny work. This is a standard category used in AIPs. It includes situations where work is planned as a result of previous scrutiny activity eg where the Accounts Commission has requested a progress report on Best Value, as is the case at East Dunbartonshire Council.
 - Further information required - there is insufficient information to reach a judgement about performance.
5. The National Scrutiny Plan for 2014/15 is available on the Audit Scotland website. It provides a summary of planned scrutiny activity across all councils in Scotland, based on the AIPs for each council.

Summary

6. Over the past year the council has continued to focus on delivering its transformation programme which sets out how organisational change, efficiencies and improvements will be achieved. This is an ambitious programme which will require strong leadership and oversight if it is to deliver its intended benefits. The Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) for 2014 -17 sets out the strategic direction, priorities and outcomes which the council and its community planning partners have agreed for the East Dunbartonshire area.
7. A joint inspection of services for children and young people in East Dunbartonshire took place during 2013/14 and the report was published in January 2014. The inspection highlighted that sound leadership and a clear, shared vision with a focus on early intervention and prevention is ensuring that vulnerable children and young people get help and support at the earliest opportunity. It also concluded that partners work well together in the area to provide services that make a difference to the lives of children, young people and families.
8. In addition to the inspection of children's services, the previous AIP identified four areas that would be subject to targeted Best Value audit work: performance information and management; asset management; workforce management; and procurement. The audit was carried out during 2013/14 and the findings were included in the annual audit report in November 2013. In respect of the four areas identified for audit work, the council had plans in place to address areas that need to improve but that it was too early to assess the full impact of these plans and their effectiveness.
9. The Care Inspectorate, in partnership with the Association of Directors of Social Work and the Risk Management Authority, has been undertaking supported self-evaluation activity to assess the initial impact of the introduction of the assessment and case planning instrument Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI) across Scotland's criminal justice social work services. This activity started in June 2013 and will conclude with the publication of a national report by May 2014. Action plans arising from this activity will be implemented in 2014.
10. The LAN's overall view is that the council is making progress in developing plans and taking action to manage the challenges and risks it faces. A key challenge for the council in the medium term is an identified funding gap of around £20 million. Success depends on the delivery of the transformation programme and its components, including shifts in the way in which services are delivered and making related changes in the council's workforce and assets and in procurement practices. However, the transformation programme alone will not bridge this funding gap and services reductions may have to be considered.

Planned scrutiny activity

11. The 2012/13 annual audit report was presented to the Accounts Commission in December 2013, under cover of a report from the Controller of Audit. The Controller summarised the findings of the Best Value audit work and noted that the areas under consideration are central to the achievement of Best Value and present significant challenges requiring strong

leadership and management. The Commission decided to request further Best Value audit work during 2014/15. This will focus on the four areas previously considered, including the actions of council officers in delivering planned improvements and the approach taken by councillors in overseeing and scrutinising progress.

12. Planned scrutiny as part of the follow-up Best Value audit work is reflected as 'scrutiny required' in the LAN's risk assessment. The LAN also assessed governance and accountability as 'scrutiny required' because the LAN identified the need to monitor the effectiveness of the council's scrutiny arrangements. The LAN assessed leadership and direction as 'further information required', reflecting the need for further information about the steps officers and councillors are taking to lead and oversee the transformation programme. The LAN also assessed the financial management and efficiency areas as 'further information required', reflecting the need to review the council's overall financial position and the action it is taking to address the funding gap. Financial management and efficiency will be covered as part of the annual audit of the council's finances.
13. Education Scotland will be reviewing the quality of Careers Information Advice and Guidance services delivered by Skills Development Scotland across all council areas over the next three years.
14. There is some non-risk based scrutiny activity planned across councils in 2014/15, but where scrutiny bodies are yet to determine which specific council areas will be included. This includes the following:
 - The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) recently carried out a thematic inquiry into the outcomes that councils are achieving by delivering housing options and prevention of homelessness services. A sample of councils was selected to take part in this as case studies. The findings from this work could potentially lead to further engagement with some councils. The SHR will carry out further thematic inquiries between 2014/15 and 2015/16. If a council is to be involved in a thematic inquiry the SHR will confirm this with the council and the appropriate LAN lead.
 - HMICS will be inspecting local policing across Scotland over the next three years. This will examine, amongst other things, local scrutiny and engagement between Police Scotland and councils. The geographic areas to be inspected during 2014-15 have yet to be determined.
 - Education Scotland will continue to engage with councils for the purpose of validated self-evaluation (VSE). The scheduling of VSEs will be arranged by negotiation between Education Scotland and individual councils.
 - Education Scotland will be working in partnership with councils to carry out self-evaluation of education psychology services over a two year period beginning in 2014/15.
 - Audit Scotland will carry out a housing benefit risk assessment during the fourth quarter of 2014/15.

15. Audit Scotland will follow-up two national performance audits during 2014. This will involve targeted follow-up of *Arm's-length external organisations (ALEOs): are you getting it right?* (June 2011) and *Major capital investment in councils* (March 2013). Audit Scotland will also carry out a programme of performance audits during the period of this AIP that will involve work with councils. The performance audit programme for 2014/15 is available at <http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/work/forwardwork.php?year=2014>.
16. Scheduled audit and inspection work will take place through the annual audit process and the ongoing inspection of school and care establishments by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate respectively will continue as planned. The individual audit and inspection agencies will also continue to monitor developments in key areas of council activity and will provide support and challenge as appropriate. This will also help to inform future assessment of scrutiny risk.
17. A timetable for the planned audit and inspection activity in East Dunbartonshire Council between April 2014 and March 2017 is at [Appendix 1](#).

Local priorities and public service reform

18. Local councils are operating within a context of significant change as a result of the challenging financial environment and the public service reform agenda. The Scottish Government's reform agenda emphasises the importance of place, people, partnership, prevention and performance in public services. This year's shared risk assessment identified the council's current position in implementing the Scottish Government's reform agenda, specifically in relation to:
- community planning and new Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs)
 - police and fire oversight arrangements (following the introduction of new national police and fire services)
 - health and social care integration
 - welfare reform.

Community planning and Single Outcome Agreements

19. The East Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP) recently updated its SOA in line with its agreed strategic direction, priorities and outcomes. The SOA update is focused on the delivery of the vision for the area ie "Working together to achieve the best with the people of East Dunbartonshire" and particularly focuses on reducing inequality between their most and least deprived communities and aims to deliver two longer term outcomes (over five to ten years):
- We have reduced inequality and disadvantage across East Dunbartonshire.
 - Our communities are more engaged in the design and delivery of services.
20. The SOA focuses on achieving the above long term outcomes by seeking to implement the following three year outcomes:
- East Dunbartonshire has an expanding economy with a competitive and diverse business and retail base.
 - Our people are equipped with the knowledge, skills and training to enable them to progress to employment.
 - Our children and young people are safe, healthy and ready to learn.
 - East Dunbartonshire is a safe and sustainable environment in which to live work and visit.
 - Our people and communities enjoy increased physical and mental wellbeing and health inequalities are reduced.
 - Our older people are supported to enjoy a high quality of life and our more vulnerable citizens, their families and carers benefit from effective care and support services.

21. In September 2013, CPP approved a Partnership Development Programme. To ensure the programme can effectively support local outcome delivery within SOA it focuses on six areas of improvement activity:
- Prevention focus.
 - Capacity building and engagement.
 - Joint resourcing.
 - Integrated workforce development/collaborative leadership.
 - Performance management.
 - Partnership governance.

Police and fire

22. The Police and Fire and Rescue Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 created a national police force and a national fire and rescue service. It replaced councils' role as police authorities and fire and rescue authorities and created the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS). Councils now have the role of commenting on SPA and SFRS strategic plans, contributing to the preparation and subsequent approval of the local plans for police and fire and rescue, monitoring the delivery of police and fire and rescue functions in their areas, making recommendations for improvement and, finally, providing feedback to the local police commander and the Fire and Rescue Service local senior officer.
23. Monitoring and scrutiny of performance of the plans for police and fire and rescue in East Dunbartonshire will be subject to regular reporting to the Policy and Resources Committee, and an annual review of implementation of the plans will be submitted to the council and CPP board. The Community Safety Partnership within the CPP framework will also have a practical role in the monitoring of local arrangements including performance management.
24. HMICS conducted a thematic inspection of the new arrangements for local scrutiny in 2013 and believe that the new arrangements for local scrutiny and engagement (LSE) require more time to bed in and that it is therefore too early to assess the effectiveness of these arrangements.
25. In relation to the wider issue of the delivery of community safety, HMICS has seen no significant changes to partnership arrangements since the creation of a single police service model for Scotland, despite changes to the type and level of local police resources in some council areas having been reported negatively in the media. HMICS is considering community safety as a possible area of focus within its 2014-17 work plan.
26. Fire reform is also still at an early stage and HM Fire Service Inspectorate (HMFSI) has not as yet undertaken any detailed examination of the way in which community safety and engagement activities are delivered across local authority areas in Scotland. HMFSI published *An Overview of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)* in 2013. In its report, HMFSI highlighted that local senior officers (LSOs), who have responsibility for overseeing partnership working with local authorities in the delivery of community safety and engagement,

are clearly sighted on their responsibilities and are keen to make local partnerships work in an effort to optimise community outcomes.

27. The SFRS is consulting on a suite of local fire and rescue plans. HMFSI is not currently proposing any specific scrutiny on local planning and consultation processes, but may consider this in its future inspection plans.

Health and social care integration

28. A joint approach to health and social care integration has been established between the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHSGGC) chief executive and the chief executive of East Dunbartonshire Council with the aim of establishing a shadow Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) by April 2014.
29. The Integrated Adult Health and Social Care Partnership in East Dunbartonshire is scheduled to commence on 1 April 2015. Agreement has now been reached between the council and NHSGGC to:
 - Jointly proceed within the integration of adult health and social care services through the establishment of a “body corporate” governance model.
 - Jointly establish a post of chief officer, to manage the in-scope integrated functions during the shadow year (2014-15) to lead the Integration Plan for East Dunbartonshire.
 - Approve the development of a Scheme of Establishment that will set out governance and accountability arrangements for an interim adult health and social care partnership during the shadow year 2014-15.
30. At a council meeting in November 2013, the council agreed a number of recommendations to create transitional organisational arrangements which will re-distribute the core accountabilities and functional activities currently within social work, including:
 - A Policy and Resources Subcommittee will be convened to consider a recommendation to release the social work head of service through voluntary early retirement/redundancy to facilitate the development of the integration agenda and to generate future efficiency and revenue savings.
 - The current role of director of education & social work will be removed from the council’s Corporate Management Team structure.
 - A new role of director of education & children’s services will be established with strategic and operational service delivery accountabilities on behalf of the council for education and retained children & families social work services (including criminal justice).
 - A temporary role of director of integrated health & social care transition will be established from 6 January 2014 until September 2015 and would be accountable for the council’s interest for the development of the Integrated Partnership and the operational service delivery of adult and community care social work services.

Welfare reform

31. Audit Scotland's Welfare Reform Update report (published May 2013) considered the impact that the government's reforms will have on councils and the public. The report looked to identify how the council is assessing the risk from welfare reforms; how it is planning for welfare reform; and how they included welfare reform in discussions with community planning partners.
32. The council recognises "pressure on key services to mitigate impact of welfare reform changes" as a key risk in their corporate risk register, with an amber risk rating. It has established a Welfare Reform Group, chaired by the director of community services, which contains representatives from various teams within the council, the Citizen's Advice Bureau, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Association and the Department for Work and Pensions. The group seeks to plan and implement measures which will address the issues arising from welfare reform, and regularly report back to the council. The council also has a dedicated welfare reform officer within the revenues and benefits section to coordinate communication of the changes to benefit recipients.
33. The council's housing service has employed additional officers to provide support to tenants during the implementation of the welfare reform changes. The council has also sponsored the Citizen's Advice Bureau to apply for additional funding from the Scottish Legal Aid Board for outreach workers, to ensure a comprehensive approach is implemented to welfare rights counselling across East Dunbartonshire.
34. The SHR will seek information from all social landlords to monitor the impact of welfare reform. In 2013-14, the SHR surveyed social landlords and published findings on the early impact of welfare reform on rent arrears. It will continue to gather information on rent and arrears through the annual return on the Scottish Social Housing Charter in order to monitor the impact of welfare reform on social landlords and their tenants.

Corporate assessment

The following table provides an assessment of scrutiny risk relating to the council's management arrangements (including how it is meeting its Best Value obligations).⁴

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
<p>Leadership and direction</p> <p>How the council's vision is designed around its knowledge of its local communities and how this is translated throughout all the council's plans and strategies.</p>	<p>Further information required</p>	<p>The council recently approved three key parts of its strategic planning and performance framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) update 2014-17, which reiterates the strategic direction, priorities and outcomes agreed with community planning partners. • Business and improvement plans 2014-17 for all six directorates which set out how the directorates will support the achievement of local outcomes relevant to delivery of the SOA. • Strategic framework for managing service demand - sets out the approach to dealing with increasing demand for more critical services and increase the pace towards resource targeting in 2014/15, in order to achieve quantifiable savings from 2015/16. The framework comprises six core elements due to be implemented in 2014/15, and an implementation plan was approved by council in February 2014. <p>The delivery of the transformation programme is crucial if the council is to address the funding gap, achieve the shifts in the way in which services are delivered and</p>	<p>In respect of leadership of the transformation programme, Audit Scotland will review further information as part of the follow-up Best Value audit work.</p>

⁴ The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. Best Value Guidance, Scottish Executive, 2004.

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		make related changes in the council's workforce, assets and in procurement. It is an ambitious programme which will require strong leadership and oversight if it is to deliver its intended benefits.	
<p>Governance and accountability</p> <p>Whether governance arrangements are working effectively and whether good governance underpins council decisions and supports performance improvement.</p>	Scrutiny required	<p>The council monitors and manages its activities through a system of strategic service committees. Scrutiny functions are discharged by the audit and risk management subcommittee, and by three scrutiny panels that monitor the performance of council services. These arrangements are intended to integrate political and service structures to allow a better focus on priorities, improve councillor involvement in scrutiny and drive improvement.</p> <p>In June 2013, the council agreed revised arrangements for scrutiny panels to align with changes to its organisational structure. It is too early to form a judgement as to the effectiveness of these new arrangements.</p> <p>In June 2013, the leader of the opposition was appointed as convener of the audit and risk management subcommittee. This followed a 13 month period where there were no nominations from opposition members to chair the subcommittee.</p> <p>A governance statement was included in the 2011/12 financial statements. Following a review in 2012/13 this was withdrawn. The council is working towards preparing and including an annual governance statement in 2014/15 financial statements.</p>	Follow-up on effectiveness of the relatively new scrutiny arrangements ie service scrutiny and audit and risk management subcommittee, as part of the annual financial audit.
<p>Community engagement and empowerment</p> <p>Whether the council is giving local people a greater say in local</p>	No scrutiny required	A stakeholder engagement programme was undertaken during 2010 to 2012, where the council conducted widespread consultation with local people and communities over budgetary priorities and options for future public service delivery. The council engaged with a wide range of community and voluntary sector organisations to identify ways in which it and community planning partners could work better together to deliver outcomes for communities and achieve savings through more effective	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
budget decisions and giving communities a right to challenge local public service delivery.		<p>sharing of services.</p> <p>The council also recently undertook a consultation on improving the primary school estate and how it can work better to regenerate the area. Area based consultations have taken place during 2013 to inform the development of the Community Hubs in Lennoxton and Bearsden.</p> <p>The council is currently working with community planning partners to develop a Partnership Engagement Strategy which will set out core criteria for engaging with local people and communities over the design of local public services.</p>	
<p>Financial management</p> <p>How effectively the council is planning and managing its budgets.</p>	Further information required	<p>The updated medium-term finance and resources strategy presented to council in June 2013 reported a cumulative budget gap for the period 2014/15-2017/18 of £20 million. In December 2013 the council was provided with a revenue budget forecast for 2014/15 showing savings of approximately £4 million were estimated for that year. It is further anticipated that savings in the region of £4 million to £5 million will be required in each of the years in the period 2015/16 to 2017/18.</p> <p>In 2012/13 there were significant variances between year end outturns and budgets in both revenue and capital budgets. The council reported net service expenditure of £235 million in 2012/13, an underspend of £7.6 million (3.1%) against service budgets. Capital expenditure of £31 million was £6 million (15.9%) below the council's original capital budget.</p> <p>The council has a low level of revenue reserves relative to other councils. This may mean there are risks to financial sustainability, particularly given the council's requirement to make savings in 2013/14 and beyond and its ambitious transformation programme. In addition, there is the risk of reserves being required to cover unforeseen costs, such as those associated with the council tax re-banding in</p>	Review of financial position, as part of the annual financial audit.

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>Bishopbriggs which has a projected cost of approximately £3 million.</p> <p>Capacity within the finance function has further reduced following the early release of staff. The council needs to ensure it has the necessary skills and capacity to manage the financial challenges ahead.</p>	
<p>People management</p> <p>The effectiveness of the council's workforce planning and management arrangements.</p>	<p>Scrutiny required</p>	<p>The council has been going through significant organisational change and restructuring in recent years. Since 2009 it has been developing its organisational delivery model, its blueprint for how the council will work in future. Proportionally, it experienced one of the largest staffing reductions of any Scottish council during this period. In March 2013, it employed 4,466 full-time equivalent staff (FTE), a reduction of 600 FTEs or 11.8% since 2009.</p> <p>With a reducing workforce it is important that the council maximises the value and contribution made by its remaining staff. At present, the council loses on average 13.8 days per member of staff to sickness absence, the second highest level of any Scottish council and well above the national average of 10.9 days.</p> <p>The council agreed a new workforce strategy in April 2013. This builds on previous strategies and plans, to produce an overarching framework aligned to its wider transformation programme.</p> <p>Despite its relatively large staffing reductions to date, the council aims to reduce its workforce by a further 250 posts by 2017. It plans to achieve this by rationalising and streamlining support functions, such as service-based administration and HR functions, and through better use of technology.</p> <p>The council implemented a new senior management structure in February 2013. Overall there was a significant reduction in the number of senior manager posts. It is too early to assess the effect on organisational capacity and resilience.</p>	<p>Best Value audit follow-up, focusing on implementation of workforce strategies and plans and the impact of the new senior management arrangements on organisational capacity and resilience.</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
<p>Asset management</p> <p>The council's arrangements for managing assets and how this key resource is used to support effective service delivery.</p>	<p>Scrutiny required</p>	<p>The council has experienced recent and significant changes in projects forming part of its overall asset plans. Significant delays have occurred in the development of integrated office accommodation and an operational depot at the Westerhill site due to a significant increase in costs involved.</p> <p>The council considered an update on the corporate asset management planning framework in December 2013. It aims to support future planning and deployment of assets. The report included an update on the status of major projects and set out the council's updated ten year capital programme. This includes a new approach to office and depot accommodation requirements. Another key element of the council's overall asset plan is the development of five community hubs across its area to deliver integrated local customer services.</p> <p>The council is also consulting on other proposals that will affect its asset base, most notably around the future provision of primary schools. The outcome of this consultation and subsequent council decisions could potentially have a significant effect on its capital programme and finances.</p>	<p>Best Value audit follow-up, focussing on implementation of asset planning framework.</p>
<p>Procurement</p> <p>How effectively corporate procurement contributes to the council maximising value for money in the goods and services it uses to deliver its</p>	<p>Scrutiny required</p>	<p>The council's procurement capability (PCA) score has risen from 25% in 2012 to 44% in 2013. Despite the significant increase, its PCA score remains below the national average and significantly still below the government's target of 50%. It plans to manage further improvements to procurement over the medium to longer term as part of its corporate transformation agenda. The council faces significant challenges to deliver the necessary improvements within this timescale.</p>	<p>Best Value audit follow-up, focusing on the council's progress in sustaining improvements in procurement activities.</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
services.			
<p>Risk management</p> <p>The effectiveness of the council's arrangements for identifying, managing and mitigating risks and how its management of risk contributes to the successful delivery of public services.</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>The council has made good progress in this area over the past two years. The Corporate Risk Management Strategy, last updated in March 2012, focuses on risk and the achievement of the local outcomes set out in the SOA.</p> <p>Following changes in the council structure, the corporate risk adviser has undertaken to review and map all risks to reflect the new directorates. There are three finalised directorate risk registers: Development and Regeneration; Education and Social Work; and Neighbourhood Services.</p>	No specific scrutiny activity
<p>Information management</p> <p>The effectiveness of the council's arrangements for managing information as a key resource in delivering services.</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>Council information is well protected by the ICT department. Independent confirmation comes from the Public Services Network Authority (PSNA), which issued the Public Services Network (PSN) compliance certificate in December 2013. Following the changes to ICT infrastructure needed to comply with PSN, the council acknowledges that it needs to revise its business continuity plan. There is also scope to improve Freedom of Information processes; in January 2014 the Scottish Information Commissioner (SIC) upheld the appeal of the applicant in a case where the council had not responded within the stipulated timescales to an information request about care services.</p>	No specific scrutiny activity
<p>Joint working</p> <p>Progress with any significant shared</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>In common with most councils, shared service initiatives have not been progressed. Attempts at partnership working across the Clyde Valley have stalled in recent years and is unlikely any benefits will be realised in the short-term. The council has taken</p>	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
services initiatives, in particular in relation to governance or pace of implementation.		the view that it needs to optimise shared services within the council before looking outside the organisation to share services.	
Efficiency How effectively the council is improving its efficiency in response to the budget challenges being faced.	Further information required	<p>The council aims to achieve the majority of required savings through the implementation of the new organisational planning arrangements and the transformation programme, along with efficiencies in procurement and charging.</p> <p>The council forecasts a cumulative funding gap of £20 million over the four year period from 2014/15 to 2017/18. The council needs to develop more detailed plans which show the timing of the proposed savings and the specific areas in which they will be achieved. Should the funding gap widen, or if the savings plans are not fully achieved, the council faces difficult choices on how services are delivered and paid for in future.</p> <p>As approved at the Special Meeting of Council in February 2014, the council is undertaking a major Engagement Programme with local stakeholders and the wider East Dunbartonshire public to explore potential areas where budget reductions can be implemented together with alternative delivery arrangements.</p>	Review of financial position, as part of the annual financial audit.
Equalities Whether the council is providing effective leadership of equalities and is meeting its statutory obligations.	No scrutiny required	<p>The council's equality and human rights policy was launched in July 2011. This is an overarching document, setting out the council's commitment to equality and human rights issues and provides information on work being undertaken across the council. The policy is linked closely to council plans including the SOA and business improvement plans.</p> <p>The Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2013-2017 sets out the council's approach to mainstreaming equality as set out by the Equality Act 2010 (Specific</p>	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. The report also sets out background information on equality legislation and steps being taken by the council to reduce unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different groups. An action plan was developed to ensure that the council can meet the requirements of the Act and this was approved by the policy and resources committee in September 2012.</p> <p>The East Dunbartonshire equality engagement group acts as a first point of contact between the council, planning partners and local equality groups and helps influence the development of policies in relation to equality. Meetings take place on a quarterly basis. The council is proactive in promoting the equality agenda and is well placed to mainstream equality within everyday work.</p>	

Service performance

35. The following table provides an assessment of scrutiny risk relating to the performance of the council's main inspected public services (education, social care services and housing) and non-inspected services (eg corporate services, culture and leisure services, environmental services).

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
<p>Education The quality of local education services and the resulting outcomes (including early years).</p>	<p>No scrutiny required</p>	<p>Education services continue to be well managed with almost all services inspected receiving positive evaluations. Reports to parents describe schools that are effective and improving children's learning.</p> <p>As part of its ongoing review of property and assets the council commenced a programme of stakeholder consultation about the future of its primary school estate. This aims to address the challenges brought about by projected under capacity and to ensure that the school estate provides the best possible learning environment and educational benefits. To date four school consultation exercises have been carried out with Education Scotland involvement as is required under the Act. The council has yet to publish its reports. Education Scotland will publish its reports on the same day once these have been agreed by the council.</p> <p>The proportion of pupils staying on from S3 into S5 increased from 90.7 to 92% in September 2013, above the national figure which increased from 83.4 to 84.9%.</p> <p>The proportion of leavers who were in a positive destination in September 2012 was 94.7% and by the follow up survey in March 2013 this had fallen by 0.8% to 93.9%.</p> <p>SQA attainment results continue to show a trend of improvement.</p>	<p>No specific scrutiny activity</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>Seven inspections have been carried out by Education Scotland in the last 12 months. All but one early years centre have produced positive outcomes for children and young people. Sector leading practice was highlighted in one secondary inspection.</p> <p>Wider achievements: all secondary and almost all primary schools successfully develop skills for life through wide ranging activities and award bearing opportunities. In session 2012-13 there has continued to be an increase in the number of presentations for SQA wider achievement awards.</p>	
<p>Social care services The quality of local social work and care services and the resulting outcomes (including adult care, older peoples services, learning disability services, criminal justice services, mental health services, children and families).</p>	<p>No scrutiny required</p>	<p>The joint inspection of services for children and young people in East Dunbartonshire took place in 2013 and the report was published in January 2014. The inspection covered the range of services that had a role in providing services to benefit children, young people and families.</p> <p>The inspection highlighted that services work very well together in partnership to make a difference to the lives of children, young people and families. The Partnership achieved ratings of good and very good in eight of the nine quality indicators graded. Grades of very good were achieved in the area of impact of services on children and their families. A grade of adequate was applied in the area of planning and improving services.</p> <p>The Care Inspectorate will ask the East Dunbartonshire CPP to publish a joint action plan detailing how it intends to make any improvements identified as a result of the inspection. The Care Inspectorate and other bodies taking part in this inspection will continue to offer support for improvement through their linking arrangements.</p> <p>Latest statistics for adult care show that East Dunbartonshire is above the national average in percentage of adults with a learning disability with a personal life plan,</p>	<p>No specific scrutiny activity</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>and those in known employment but below the average in those known with access to alternative day opportunities. In home care they were below the national average in number of homecare hours provided as a rate per 1,000 of the population aged 65+.</p> <p>The education and social work directorate business and improvement plan 2013-2016 includes indicators for a reduction in the number of acute bed days lost to delayed discharges, the need for emergency in-patient admissions for people aged 75+, an increase in the percentage of community care assessments being completed within six weeks, and an increase in the percentage of carers who feel supported and capable of continuing in a caring role.</p> <p>Social work services have an extensive range of self-evaluation activities including case file audits, benchmarking, consultation with users of services and carers.</p>	
<p>Housing and homelessness</p> <p>The quality of housing and homeless services and the resulting outcomes.</p>	<p>No scrutiny required</p>	<p>Indicators show that the council is performing well, and rent arrears are below the Scottish average. The LAN agreed to keep a watching brief on developments.</p> <p>Overall, available indicators show that the council is performing well across its housing services. Rent loss due to voids and current tenant arrears as a percentage of net rent due are lower than national averages. There are no issues regarding access to its housing stock and it allocates 53% of its houses to homeless people which is higher than the national average of 41%. The percentage of new tenancies sustained for more than a year is high at 93% compared to the national average of 85.2%. The council reports that it will meet the SHQS requirements by 2015.</p> <p>Homeless applications have fallen from 698 in 2010/11 to 485 in 2012/13. The 'not homeless' assessments remain very high at 22.4% compared a national average of 5.5%. The council have a higher percentage of people found to be unintentionally</p>	<p>No specific scrutiny activity</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>homeless 6.3% compared to national average of 4.2%.</p> <p>The council has a very high usage of bed and breakfast accommodation at 69.8%. However, it also has a higher than average percentage of applicants housed under a Scottish Secure Tenancy, 64.1% compared to the national average of 60.3%.</p> <p>Overall, the council is a low risk council in relation to homelessness. Contextually it is a high demand area with low levels of public sector housing.</p>	
<p>Non-regulated services</p> <p>Particular strengths and challenges in the range of non-regulated services provided by the council, and any significant changes to performance.</p>	<p>No scrutiny required</p>	<p>Performance in non-regulated service areas, as with all local authorities, varies across service areas. There are some areas of high performance and some where performance could be improved. A summary of these, evidenced by performance indicator data, is provided below. Overall, there are no areas where performance levels are of sufficient concern to require scrutiny activity.</p> <p>Cultural and (Community) Leisure Services</p> <p>Attendance at swimming pools has increased significantly and is now above the national average. Attendance at other indoor sports and leisure facilities although showing a slight increase in 2012/13 remains below the national average. Visits to libraries have increased significantly and is now above the national average. However, museum visits are declining and remain well below the national average.</p> <p>Development, Environment and Protective Services</p> <p>The council is performing well in terms of time taken to deal with major planning applications, domestic complaints and the costs associated with trading standards and environmental health. However, there is room for improvement when dealing with business advice requests and consumer complaints (where the council is ranked 30 out of 32 Scottish local authorities).</p>	<p>No specific scrutiny activity</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>Roads & Lighting</p> <p>The percentage of road network that should be considered for maintenance treatment has remained stable and remains above the national average with the council ranked 27 out of 32 councils.</p> <p>Waste Management</p> <p>The net cost of refuse collection per premise has improved but remains well above the National Average with the council ranked 31 of 32 Scottish councils in 2012/13. However, the net cost of refuse disposal per premise has remained stable and below the national average. The council's overall cleanliness compares favourably with the performance of other councils, being located in the top performance quartile.</p>	

Improving and transforming public services/public performance reporting

36. The following table provides an assessment of scrutiny risk relating to how the council is improving and/or transforming public services, and the extent to which it is meeting its public performance reporting obligations under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
<p>Improving and transforming public services</p> <p>The council's arrangements for continuing to deliver services with reducing resources and growing demand, and what impact this is having on service outcomes.</p>	Scrutiny required	<p>The delivery of the transformation programme is crucial if the council is to address the funding gap, achieve the shifts in the way in which services are delivered and make related changes in the council's workforce, assets and in procurement. It is an ambitious programme which will require strong leadership and oversight if it is to deliver its intended benefits.</p> <p>A key element of the council's overall improvement plan is the development of five community hubs across its area to deliver integrated local customer services. Changes to working practices and opportunities to reduce staffing through the hubs arrangements are critical to the success of the council's wider transformation agenda. The council started the hub initiative in 2009 and aims to have a full network of five hubs in operation by 2017/18.</p>	Best Value audit follow-up, focusing on progress in implementing the transformation programme
<p>Public performance reporting (PPR)</p> <p>The progress that is</p>	No scrutiny required	The council issues an annual Public Performance Report and makes it available on its website. The 2012/13 PPR entitled <i>edreport</i> provides a summary of the council's performance during 2012/13 and shows its performance measured against the contribution to the delivery of each of the outcomes set out in the SOA covering the	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
being made by councils in meeting their PPR obligations.		period 2012 - 2013. The report could however provide a more balanced view of performance. It tends to focus on the council's key achievements under each SOA outcome area and does not report on any areas where progress is slower than anticipates or where areas for improvement exist.	

Appendix 1: Scrutiny plan

EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

2014/15

Scrutiny activity year 1	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Best Value Follow-up work - Audit Scotland (TBC)								X	X			
Housing benefit risk assessment - Audit Scotland (dates TBC)												
Education Scotland review of Careers Information Advice and Guidance (TBC)												
National or supported self-evaluation work year 1												
Audit Scotland - follow-up of Audit Scotland national report, <i>Arm's-length external organisations (ALEOs): are you getting it right?</i>		X										
Audit Scotland - follow-up of Audit Scotland national report, <i>Major capital investment in councils</i>			X									
Education Scotland VSE (TBC)												
Education Scotland education psychology VSE (TBC)												

EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**2015/16**

Scrutiny activity year 2	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
National or supported self-evaluation work year 2												

EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**2016/17**

Indicative scrutiny activity for third year	Potential scrutiny bodies involved

Note: The focus of the AIP is strategic scrutiny activity - that is, scrutiny activity which is focused at a corporate or whole-service level. However, there will also be baseline scrutiny activity ongoing at a unit level throughout the period of the AIP, 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. Education Scotland, through the Area Lead Officer, will continue to support and challenge education services regularly and as appropriate. The Care Inspectorate will continue to regulate care services and inspect social work services in accordance their responsibilities under the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010.