

Fife 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 Fife 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 Fife Council 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.
 - 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.
 - 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. The Council Plan, approved in May 2013, sets out five key priorities for the period to 2017:
 - **Growing a vibrant economy** - to contribute to increasing employment by growing a vibrant Fife economy by delivering training opportunities, investment and reducing the local regulatory burden on businesses.
 - **Increasing opportunities and reducing poverty and inequality** - to contribute to the community plan aim of reducing inequalities by increasing opportunities through education for all to learn and develop and reducing poverty and inequality by assisting, and targeting our resources to, the most vulnerable people and communities.
 - **Improving quality of life in local communities** - to contribute to the community plan aim of reducing inequalities by improving quality of life in local communities by providing quality local services, facilities and housing and helping communities use their skills and assets to address local needs.
 - **Promoting a sustainable society** - to contribute to the community plan aim of tackling climate change by promoting a sustainable society, making it easier for households and businesses to reduce waste, recycle and adopt other carbon reducing approaches, demonstrating new carbon efficient technologies in service provision, and preparing Fife for some of the impacts of climate change.
 - **Reforming Fife's public services to achieve the aims above.** This will involve improving service performance; shifting services to prevention and early intervention; decentralisation and enabling employees; customer involvement and empowered communities; and working together and integration.
7. The Council Plan also identifies the outcomes which it aims to achieve to meet the key council objectives and sets out the performance targets. The Council Plan 2017 draws on the framework and the outcomes in Fife's Community Plan 2011-20 and the single outcome agreement (SOA) which was approved in August 2013 and sets out similar joint objectives for the Community Planning Partnership (CPP):
 - Increasing employment.
 - Reducing inequalities.
 - Tackling climate change.
8. The overarching aim of the CPP represented in the SOA is "to strengthen Fife's future to make Fife a great place to live, work, visit and invest".
9. The 2012/13 council plan annual performance report was published in November 2013 and indicated good progress against a number of plan priorities (the plan was in draft in 2012/13). The CPP performance report entitled 'the State of Fife' was published in October 2013 and also showed good progress overall. Both publications, however, contained a significant number of performance indicators where information was not available at the time of publication and therefore did not present a full picture of overall performance.

Key scrutiny work findings in 2013/14

10. In the 2013-16 Assurance and Improvement Plan we advised that four pieces of strategic scrutiny work were planned for the year 2013/14. The key findings of those reviews are reflected briefly below:
 - The findings from Audit Scotland's follow-up on the national report *Scotland's Public Finances - addressing the challenges* were reported in the annual audit report in October 2013. The overall conclusion was positive with no actions for improvement highlighted.
 - Audit Scotland's national report on *Scotland's Public Sector Workforce* was issued in November 2013 and concluded, at a national level, that current approaches to managing staff numbers and costs in the public sector are unlikely to achieve the savings needed in the future. Fife Council was one of nine fieldwork sites visited as part of this audit. A number of recommendations from the report are of relevance to the council.
 - A supported self-evaluation of the impact on quality of the newly introduced national assessment and care planning instrument (LS/CMI) on local criminal justice social work was planned. 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 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.
 - A report on Audit Scotland's follow-up risk assessment of housing benefits was submitted to the council in November 2013. Audit Scotland has reviewed the action plan prepared by the council in response to the report and is satisfied with the proposed action.

Planned scrutiny activity

New scrutiny activity now appearing in the 2014-17 scrutiny plan

11. Following on from the previous year's shared risk assessment process and based on discussions held by the LAN in 2013/14, scrutiny work on adult services is planned for the year 2014/15. This forms part of the scrutiny of adult services across Scotland, which will involve the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland carrying out a joint inspection of adult services in Fife in 2014. This activity is included in the scrutiny plan at appendix 1 of this report.
12. Following pilot work in 2013, the Care Inspectorate is also leading a new programme of joint inspections of children's services over the next three years. The selection of local authority areas for inspection is based on intelligence and risk and takes account of the SRA process. An inspection is not scheduled for Fife Council in 2014/15.
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, 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.
15. Audit Scotland will follow-up two national performance audits during 2014, both of which are included in the scrutiny plan at appendix 1. 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 Fife Council between April 2014 and March 2017 is recorded in [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.
 - 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. In August 2013, the Fife CPP, through its Fife Partnership Board, agreed a revised community plan for the period 2011 to 2020. The plan included a new SOA for the partnership. The community plan identifies three high-level objectives: reducing inequalities, increasing employment and tackling climate change, which are underpinned by 16 long-term outcomes. The community plan maps these long-term outcomes to the national outcomes set by the Scottish Government.
20. The community plan and SOA were prepared in line with national guidance published in December 2012 and introduced some improvements to the previous version. The improvements include:
- an additional long term outcome focusing on improving the health and wellbeing of older people
 - an additional section on planning and delivering the outcomes which describes the outcome mapping process
 - the inclusion of a specific prevention plan which satisfies the national guidance that the SOA should promote early intervention and preventative approaches.
21. Work is ongoing to further improve the community plan and SOA, with outcome maps being prepared for each of the 16 long term outcomes which will demonstrate how the partnership's resources are being deployed in support of the agreed outcomes. The partnership also acknowledges that the prevention plan is work in progress and further work will be required to improve and embed the plan within the community plan process.

22. The SOA was also subject to a quality assurance review by an independent panel in June 2013. The panel suggested five areas of improvement for the partnership to consider and these were reported to the Fife Partnership Board in August 2013, along with proposed actions for improvement. The proposed actions were agreed by the Board for inclusion in the next iteration of the community plan and SOA.
23. As noted at paragraph 9, progress towards achieving the long-term outcomes is reported to the Fife Partnership Board annually in the 'State of Fife' report. The report sets out the partnership's performance against its SOA indicators and the 2012/13 report was submitted to the Board in November 2013. The 2012/13 indicators show a generally improving performance where reported, however much of the 2012/13 performance information for the report was unavailable at the time of the report.

Police and fire

24. Since November 2013, Fife Council's Safer Communities Committee has provided the focal point for scrutinising and reviewing the work of Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Services in the Fife area. The committee replaced the separate police and fire transitional committees that existed until October 2013. The committee's remit includes monitoring the delivery of the local police and fire plans and reviewing performance against the plans. The committee is comprised of ten members of the council and four non-voting members appointed from the Fife Community Safety Partnership.
25. A Fife Community Safety Partnership is in place (comprising of Fife Council, Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)) which reports to the Safer Communities Committee. The partnership has a community safety strategy document: Making Fife Safer which has seven outcomes linked to the long-term 'Making Fife's Communities Safer' outcome within the community plan. An annual report was presented to the Safer Communities Committee in January 2014 setting out progress made towards the Community Safety outcomes and providing an update on the current work and information on future work to help make Fife safer.
26. Local plans for the Fife area have been produced by both Police Scotland and the SFRS for 2014-17 and were approved by the Safer Communities Committee in March 2014.
27. Operational delivery of the Community Safety Strategy is currently reported to the council's seven area committees. Under the new arrangements, area committees will have an increased monitoring and scrutiny role in respect of the delivery of Police Services, Fire and Rescue Services and other community safety services within localities. This should allow the setting of priorities at a local level.
28. 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 require more time to bed in and that it is therefore too early to assess the effectiveness of these arrangements.
29. 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. HMICS is considering community safety as a possible area of focus within its 2014-17 work plan.

30. 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* in 2013. In its report, HMFSI highlighted that local senior officers, 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.
31. 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

32. Health and social care integration is progressing reasonably well in Fife and good relationships are apparent between Fife Council and NHS Fife.
33. Fife Council and NHS Fife formed an integrated shadow board in April 2013 which subsequently appointed Fife Council's executive director, social work as the Interim director of health and social care. The aim of the shadow board, which has delegated authority from both Fife Council and NHS Fife for the strategic development of integration in Fife, is to lead the change process through to the establishment of a statutory partnership. In accordance with good practice, the shadow board has also developed integrated performance arrangements. Not all partnerships across Scotland have yet reached this position.
34. At its meeting in January 2014, the shadow board approved:
 - The set up of a transition planning team to manage the programme of work needed in advance of the establishment of the formal health and social care partnership.
 - Confirmation of the services to be covered by the new partnership, the resultant resource transfers and the indicative Fife Council and NHS Fife contributions to the new integrated budget.
35. The latest 2013/14 budget projections for services to be covered by the new partnership (as at February 2014) show overspends for both health and social care of £1.3 million and £5.4 million respectively. There is an understanding within the shadow board that the current issues with budget overspends require resolution before the integrated partnership is formally launched.
36. The relationship between the new health and social care partnership and the CPP still requires to be articulated, in terms of the reporting lines and how the performance of the new partnership will be reported to the CPP.

Welfare reform

37. Fife Council has responded well to welfare reform, providing information to members, officers and its citizens. Members receive regular reports on the potential impact of welfare reform on its communities and services. The council has established a welfare reform chief officers group (which meets approximately every six weeks) which is tasked with providing direction on the changes and impacts of welfare reform to both the council and its citizens. The council employed an independent consultant to help prepare for the council's participation in local service support framework pilots (alongside the Department of Works and Pensions) to explore the framework for managing claims following the introduction of Universal Credit.
38. The council introduced communication mechanisms for welfare reform that includes programmes of 'webchats', promotion posters leaflets with key messages and 'signposts' and a welfare reform information helpline. The council has also set up a dedicated website portal which provides information on welfare reform to customers.
39. In the longer-term the council is planning on setting up welfare hubs in seven of the most deprived areas of Fife to help support the local communities which it has assessed as likely to be affected the most by welfare reform. The council has identified the direct financial consequences to itself and its claimants and has put in place a welfare budget to try to manage these financial pressures. Financial pressures are stemming from reductions in housing benefits administration subsidy, the council contributing to the discretionary housing payments fund and to the council tax reduction scheme to support claimants in the short term who would otherwise have seen reductions in benefits under the new arrangements.
40. The most up to date information available to the council indicates that the roll-out of the universal credit project has been realigned and new dates for migration for Fife Council will not occur before 2016.

Corporate assessment

41. 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>	No scrutiny required	<p>The council approved its new council plan for the period to 2017 in May 2013. This sits beside the community plan which was updated in July 2013 and covers the period up to 2020. The new council plan contains five high level objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing a vibrant economy. • Increasing opportunities and reducing poverty and inequality. • Improving quality of life in local communities. • Promoting a sustainable society. • Reforming Fife's public services to achieve the aims above. <p>The achievement of these objectives is monitored through the <i>Council Plan - Annual Performance Report</i>.</p> <p>The council has undertaken a corporate self-evaluation during 2013/14 which identified 'leadership' as the highest priority for improvement. The self-evaluation reflected inconsistency in leadership behaviours and approach, especially around the performance culture and how performance is managed. The</p>	No specific scrutiny activity

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

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>results of the corporate evaluation will provide a key input into the council's Corporate Improvement Programme for 2014 – 2017</p> <p>Service planning was also identified as a key area for improvement. The council is refining its service planning and performance processes to provide improved alignment with corporate priorities.</p>	
<p>Governance and accountability</p> <p>Whether governance arrangements are working effectively and whether good governance underpins council decisions and supports performance improvement.</p>	<p>No scrutiny required</p>	<p>In May 2012, Fife Council introduced a revised corporate governance framework based on a full council supported by an executive committee, two scrutiny committees (the education, social and communities committee and the environment, finance and corporate services committee) and six policy advisory groups. In 2013, a formal review of the structure took place, based on engagement, devolution, scrutiny and best value criteria. The outcome of the review, reported to council in September 2013, identified a number of suggested improvements to governance arrangements. Actions taken forward include: the creation of a short-life working group to review how the full council operates; extending the membership of the executive committee; clearer separation of the executive and scrutiny functions; and a review of policy advisory groups to provide a better focus on their policy development role.</p> <p>The Standards and Audit Committee is also a key part of the council's governance framework. The composition of the committee is in line with best practice and members provide good levels of challenge on subject matters.</p>	<p>No specific scrutiny activity</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		Overall the council's governance arrangements in 2012/13 were soundly based. No material weaknesses were identified in the accounting and internal control systems during our audit, although we agreed some areas for improvement with management.	
<p>Community engagement and empowerment</p> <p>Whether the council is giving local people a greater say in local budget decisions and giving communities a right to challenge local public service delivery.</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>The council engages with its communities through a number of mechanisms including a Fife People's Panel, annual surveys, complaints procedures and consultations. The council also has an online consultation site in place.</p> <p>There was a public consultation on the initial savings proposals put forward by the administration in relation to the council's 2014/15 budget resulting in some 7,000 responses.</p> <p>The draft budget was put on the Fife Council website, with information provided on savings proposals and the public consultation. The website is interactive and allows residents to provide comments and vote on the proposals.</p> <p>The council also ran a series of 12 local events in 2013 (two aimed specifically at young people) to allow the public to raise concerns directly. The outcomes from the events were used to inform the 2014/15 budget.</p>	No specific scrutiny activity
<p>Financial management</p> <p>How effectively the council is planning and managing its budgets.</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>Financial position</p> <p>The council's reserves at 31 March 2013 totalled £85 million (an increase of £18.1 million on the previous year). However, our 2012/13 audit highlighted that the council has a lower ratio of usable reserves in relation to net revenue spend than the majority</p>	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>of Scottish councils.</p> <p>Within the reserves balance, £79.5 million related to the General Fund, of which £32.7 million was earmarked (an increase of £17.8 million on the earmarked balances held as at 31 March 2012), leaving an unallocated general fund balance of £46.8 million. The increased earmarked balances predominantly relate to new balances of £15 million for Reforming Fife's Public Services (to fund exceptional redundancy costs and one-off costs arising from major change initiatives) and £5 million for Fife Youth Job Contract. Amounts held under the budget carry forward scheme have reduced significantly from £6.1 million to £1.4 million.</p> <p>The council is continuing to follow a strategy of building up balances to provide a sustainable level in anticipation of reduced funding levels and increased financial risk and as at January 2014 was anticipating a projected net surplus of £10.4 million for 2013/14 to further bolster the general fund balance.</p> <p>Financial planning to support priority setting and cost reductions</p> <p>In the current economic environment, the council continues to face significant financial pressures. The council has reviewed its funding levels and has identified a funding gap of up to £92.6 million for the period to March 2018. This position continues to create uncertainty over the council's ability to maintain service levels and deliver outcome targets, however the council shows an understanding of the financial challenges it faces and is planning</p>	

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>to minimise the risks.</p> <p>Services have now been asked to present savings proposals to reduce the anticipated funding gap but in addition, targeted strategic reviews have been put in place to identify further savings through increased efficiencies within the council. Six strategic reviews have been identified covering a review of the school estate, transportation, shared support services, procurement, waste management (creation of Arm's Length External Organisations) and office rationalisation.</p> <p>The savings from services and the strategic reviews are not anticipated to be sufficient to fully bridge the funding gap and further savings will be required. The member/officer Budget Strategy Group is considering proposals for further savings.</p>	
<p>People management</p> <p>The effectiveness of the council's workforce planning and management arrangements.</p>	<p>No scrutiny required</p>	<p>The council remains committed to a programme of planned workforce reduction as part of a council-wide programme of improvements and efficiencies to mitigate the impact of projected budget reductions. The council is building up its reserves to help meet future workforce change costs.</p> <p>Going forward, the decision to approve applications is likely to become tougher as the workforce shrinks and the potential impact on service delivery is amplified. The council needs to ensure that these decisions demonstrate value for money and must carefully consider the impact on service delivery.</p> <p>Work began in 2012/13 to understand the corporate implications for workforce planning as part of the council's new approach,</p>	<p>No specific scrutiny activity</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>supplementing the existing Service/directorate focused activities and aimed at providing a robust evidence base for developing future strategies to ensure the workforce is appropriately skilled and deployed to meet current and future priorities.</p> <p>The council has a staff performance development process in place ('contribution management'). However, the council's corporate self-evaluation highlighted this as an area for improvement due to the perceived emphasis on underperformance. The council also has a leadership development programme in place to support the development of its management resource.</p>	
<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>Further information required</p>	<p>The council has an asset management strategy in place which identifies a strategic framework to define the direction and shape of asset management activities over the medium to long term and aims to ensure that asset management activity is aligned with the council's vision and strategic objectives and provides added value to the council.</p> <p>Underpinning the strategy is a corporate asset management plan incorporating all of the council's estate assets, including schools, leisure properties and council office buildings. In 2013, the plan was updated (for the period to 2017) and submitted to the Executive Committee in March 2013 for approval. The committee deferred approval and since then the plan has been amended to include some locality information (local community assets), so bringing in a geographical dimension. The revised plan was presented to the Executive Committee in March 2014 but has</p>	<p>Targeted follow-up review of Audit Scotland's national report on <i>Major Capital Investments in councils</i>.</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>been referred to the Environment, Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee for further scrutiny, following which a report will be brought back to the Executive Committee for consideration.</p> <p>Audit Scotland's national report on <i>Major capital investments in Councils</i> was published in March 2013 and identified the following issues which were specific to Fife Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay in the completion of Carnegie Sports Centre which took 11 months longer to complete than estimated in the contract award. • Dunfermline flood prevention scheme where the project had the largest percentage variance in cost of all the case studies compared to the initial estimate. Estimated costs had risen to £24.7 million against initial estimated cost of £9.8million. <p>Audit Scotland will be carrying out some follow-up work in this area and have identified Fife Council as one of the selected sites.</p>	
<p>Procurement How effectively corporate procurement contributes to the council maximising value for money in the goods and services it uses to deliver its</p>	<p>No scrutiny required</p>	<p>The council has been showing improvements in its Procurement Capability Assessment (an assessment by Scotland Excel) in recent years, although its 52 per cent score in 2013 is below the national average of 55 per cent. However, to achieve a significant improvement in its procurement function the council has recognised that a more strategic change is required. In 2013, the council introduced a Shared Support Services (3S) change programme, comprising of six sub-programmes, one of which is entitled 'Transforming Procurement' which aims to provide a</p>	<p>No specific scrutiny activity</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
services.		strategic approach to council procurement. A project working group is being set up to take this programme forward.	
<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	The council's internal audit section (audit and risk management services) has undertaken a number of reviews of risk management within council services in recent years. These concluded that services were classified as risk defined (the second lowest level of a four point scale) and that risk management requires to be embedded within services. Work is ongoing on embedding risk management but due to organisational changes progress has been slower than anticipated. Services have action plans in place to address this. The council also has a risk management strategy group which is responsible for reviewing and ensuring the implementation of the risk management strategy, raising awareness, sharing information spreading good practice and developing the risk management culture of the council.	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	Over the last two years both audit and risk management services and external audit have reviewed the progress made by the council in addressing 40 recommendations made in a 2011 external audit report on the council's Information Technology (IT) services and support management. The most recent review of progress up to August 2013 found that all agreed actions were substantially complete, however it will take some time for actions to become embedded in the normal procedures of IT services. IT services plan to undertake a further self-assessment and gap	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>analysis during 2014, using the Control Objectives for Information and Related Technology (COBIT) IT governance standard.</p> <p>The council has recognised that it faces a number of challenges in its information and communications technology (ICT) service provision, mainly in regard to developing new skills and delivering suitable solutions in a changing technology environment quickly and efficiently. To help meet these challenges, in December 2012 the council entered into a 4-year ICT and change partnership agreement with Capgemini. The aim of the partnership is to ensure that the council has the right capability and capacity to meet the challenges it faces. For 2013/14, the projected costs of the partnership are £4.6 million. The cost/benefit of the partnership arrangements, including the success of the skills transfer, will need to be closely monitored.</p>	
<p>Joint working</p> <p>Progress with any significant shared services initiatives, in particular in relation to governance or pace of implementation.</p>	<p>No scrutiny required</p>	<p>There are no significant 'shared services initiatives' involving Fife Council and other local authorities, however there are good examples of joint working between the council and its partners. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Scotland inspection evidence reports strong performance in this area. Joint-working initiatives involving health, social work and the police impact well on children and young people's lives. Findings also show that nursery and school partnerships with the community enhance children's learning. • The Active Fife Partnership, in association with voluntary and 	<p>No specific scrutiny activity</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>national partners, increased awareness of health promotion across the council. Early Years developments also attract national interest and Play@home continues to be adopted by several other councils. Effective partnerships also exist with other councils to take forward common educational priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The partnership for adult health and social care has made good progress. • The ICT partnership, referred to under information management above, is another example of partnership working to deliver council objectives. 	
<p>Efficiency How effectively the council is improving its efficiency in response to the budget challenges being faced.</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>The council produces an annual efficiency statement which is submitted to the Scottish Government. The 2012/13 statement showed savings of just over two per cent of net revenue expenditure (£18 million) against a government target of three per cent (£25 million).</p> <p>The 2013/14 Efficiency Tracker shows a target of £28.9 million with £21.5 million (75 per cent) of savings identified.</p> <p>The council monitors the achievement of efficiency gains through an efficiencies tracker software tool and the outcome of the monitoring continues to be reported to the Officers' Efficiency Board and to elected members.</p>	No specific scrutiny activity
<p>Equalities Whether the council is providing effective</p>	No scrutiny required	The council and its partners published an updated equality and diversity scheme 2013-2015 on 4 September 2013. The scheme sets out the outcomes and actions that the council aims to deliver	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
<p>leadership of equalities and is meeting its statutory obligations.</p>		<p>over the next two years, covering reducing inequality; effective involvement and engagement; responsive services and customer care; attracting and retaining a diverse workforce. The scheme contains an action plan setting out improvements to be delivered for each of the four outcomes.</p> <p>An equalities participation network was set up in 2010 which provides a mechanism for engaging with those interested in the equalities agenda.</p> <p>The council has also developed a new equality impact assessment form and supporting guidance to help officers identify the relevance of their proposals to equality and diversity when assessing the impact of policies and developments.</p> <p>An annual report on equality and diversity is published. The 2012/13 report is scheduled to be considered by the council's executive committee in April 2014.</p> <p>An equality and diversity in employment annual report is also produced. This document gives information about the actions to mainstream equalities in employment.</p> <p>The council maintains an equality, diversity and human rights webpage which is easy to access. The webpage gives access to a range of information including the equality and diversity scheme, advice and guidance on how the council and its partners provide equality and diversity to both employees and service users, annual reports on equality and diversity and equality publicity materials.</p>	

Service performance

42. 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
Education The quality of local education services and the resulting outcomes (including early years).	No scrutiny required	<p>Inspection information over the past three years shows that overall, across all education sectors (pre-school, primary etc.), almost all inspections have been positive, with increasing evaluations of very good and excellent, particularly within the primary sector.</p> <p>Inspection findings also demonstrate that provision for pupils with additional support needs is effective and that families are well supported by effective multi-agency working. Appropriate arrangements are in place to help keep children safe.</p> <p>Over the past three years, inspections have highlighted improving S1 to S3 attainment in secondary schools and over the past year improvement in S4 to S6 attainment. However there continues to be a need to improve performance in a few schools and improve attainment for those who are the lowest performing. The council recognises that there is a continuing challenge to close the gap in comparison to the national position.</p> <p>Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) is given a high priority in Fife and is well established. There is evidence of CfE improving young people's experiences.</p>	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>Overall, inspection reports comment favourably on transition programmes from pre-school to primary and from primary to secondary. However, inspections also identify a need for closer working at key points of transition e.g. at the early level.</p> <p>Across all sectors, children and young people benefit from Fife's commitment to sporting and cultural activities. Fife schools record high levels of success in local and national competitions. Schools gain Eco (Schools) Scotland awards and a significant number have 'green' flag status and 'Rights Respecting School' status.</p> <p>A number of significant changes have recently taken place which could potentially impact on the delivery of education within Fife. The executive director of education and learning, who has provided clear strategic leadership of his directorate, retired in December 2013. This coincided with a council restructuring which saw the creation of a new children's services directorate. However with continuing strong leadership there is a clear capacity to continue to improve.</p>	
<p>Social care services The quality of local social work and care services and the resulting outcomes (including adult care, older people's services, learning disability services, criminal justice services,</p>	Further information required	<p>Fife has recently restructured its social care services with children's services moving to a new education and children's services directorate and adults and older people services remaining in adult health and social care.</p> <p>Fife is modernising its social work services for adults and older people. This has included major reviews into charging policy for non-residential care services, residential, respite and day care services and the occupational therapy service. It is still too early to evaluate the impact of these reviews.</p>	Joint inspection by the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland of adult services

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
<p>mental health services, children and families).</p>		<p>The council is planning to develop care villages for older people, and has recently piloted 'intermediate/reablement' care beds in a local authority care home to support older people at risk of going into hospital or long term care. A community assessment and support service (ICASS) model for hospital at home, intermediate care and homecare reablement has been rolled out Fife-wide.</p> <p>It has been a number of years since Fife has been subject to an inspection of its adult services and as part of its inspection activity the Care Inspectorate, jointly with Healthcare Improvement Scotland, has scheduled an inspection of adult services for 2014. This inspection will examine the older people's health and social work services provided by Fife Council and its partners.</p> <p>Performance information on older people care is mixed, although Care Inspectorate reports are generally positive. Improvements in performance are required in particular in regard to total hours of home care for people aged over 65 (in 2012, Fife was ranked 24 out of 32 local authorities) and the number of people who were classified as delayed discharge (2.5 per 10,000 compared to a Scottish average of 1.2 as at July 2013).</p> <p>Care Inspectorate reports for services for children in Fife are also generally positive, but recent inspections have indicated the need for improvement in relation to services for fostering and adoption in Fife. Performance information on children's care services is also mixed. The Care Inspectorate will follow-up the findings from the fostering and adoption inspections.</p>	

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>Social work services, with support from the council's Child Protection and Adult Protection Committees, have been working to improve the quality and consistency of social work and multi-agency risk assessments by developing procedures and training staff. Work is continuing to improve assessments and the service is carefully monitoring progress through reviews, self assessment and the results of social work and multi-agency audits.</p> <p>An overspend of £3.3 million was reported in 2012/13 for social work services. Due to further financial pressures as a result of increased activity in purchased placements for children, homecare, externally commissioned packages for adults and older people and reshaping the social work programme, the projected overspend for 2013/14 has increased significantly to £13.8 million (as at January 2014). Social Work Service Exception Reports are submitted to the Executive Committee to monitor the position. Due to the severe pressure the social work service budget carried out a Priority Based Budgeting (PBB) exercise as part of the budget process for 2014/15. A report on the outcome of this exercise was considered by the Executive Committee in February 2014.</p>	
<p>Housing and homelessness</p> <p>The quality of housing and homeless services and the resulting outcomes.</p>	<p>Further information required</p>	<p>There is a mixed picture of performance in the council's housing and homelessness services. The council is above the national average in a number of areas including new tenancies being sustained and increased lets to homeless households and there have been improvements in the completion of repairs (although it is still below the national average). However in other areas, including both rent loss due to voids and rent arrears, the council is performing less</p>	<p>Further information to be requested in relation to income maximisation and SHQS</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>favourably.</p> <p>The proportion of stock meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard is increasing but remains lower than the national average. Improvement over the last two years has been slow.</p> <p>The SHR recently carried out a thematic inquiry into the outcomes that local authorities 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 for some councils.</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>2012/13 Statutory performance indicators covering non-regulated services show an overall improving performance in Fife Council. Non-regulated services have been categorised into corporate management, cultural and community services, development services, protective services, roads and lighting and waste management. Waste management is the exception to the improving trend with indicators for cost of refuse collection, cost of refuse disposal, refuse recycling and, to a small degree, the cleanliness index all showing a deterioration. The cost of collection is expected to improve in 2013/14 once savings from the redesign of services are realised.</p> <p>The council also participates in the SOLACE benchmarking project, which compares the council's performance against prior years and other local authorities. The 2012/13 benchmarking information for non-regulated services, which covers corporate management, cultural and community services and environmental services, also shows an overall improving performance but reflects as many poorer performing</p>	<p>No specific scrutiny activity</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		indicators as better performing indicators in comparison to other local authorities.	

Improving and transforming public services/public performance reporting

43. 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>	No scrutiny required	<p>Since 2010, the council has had a Corporate Improvement Plan (CIP) in place, underpinned by a workforce reduction programme, which aims to modernise services while delivering savings to contribute to the gap caused by funding reductions. This programme is in its final year and the council has begun work on a new CIP 2014-17, which will have a large focus on the prevention agenda as a means of reforming its services.</p> <p>A revised method of self-evaluation has been developed by the council and a rolling programme of self-evaluations was launched in May 2013. This has identified a number of areas for service improvements. A corporate self-evaluation was also initiated in November 2013 to provide a key input into the CIP for 2014–2017. This corporate self-evaluation takes place at a strategic level and allows the council to focus on key priorities and challenges. The corporate self-evaluation has identified a number of areas for improvement with the highest priorities being leadership, management of people's performance and service planning.</p> <p>Maturity models are also being employed for key corporate functions including leadership, health and safety, carbon reduction, information</p>	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		governance and service planning. These models help assess the maturity of processes and functions and provide a roadmap for continuous improvement.	
<p>Public performance reporting (PPR)</p> <p>The progress that is being made by councils in meeting their PPR obligations.</p>	<p>No scrutiny required</p>	<p>The CMT has considered a report summarising the findings from Audit Scotland's review of how councils are fulfilling their public performance reporting duties. The CMT has recognised that the council's arrangements could be strengthened and have directed that an action plan be produced to address the areas for improvement highlighted in the Audit Scotland report.</p> <p>The council's performance management system is currently being updated to reflect the new Council Plan Outcomes and to incorporate changes to the performance indicators including the SOLACE benchmarking indicators which will form part of the Statutory Performance Indicators.</p> <p>The council are in the process of developing an area of the external website which is dedicated to providing information on planning and performance management. When the site is fully developed. It will contain information on the council plan 2017, Fife Community Plan 2011-2020, statutory performance information, benchmarking and audits and inspections by scrutiny bodies.</p>	<p>No specific scrutiny activity</p>

Appendix 1: Scrutiny plan

FIFE COUNCIL		2014/15											
Scrutiny activity year 1	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Joint inspection by the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland of Adult Services		X	X										
National or supported self-evaluation work year 1													
Audit Scotland: local follow-up review of Audit Scotland's national report on <i>Arm's-length external organisations (ALEOs): are you getting it right?</i> (June 2011)	X												
Audit Scotland: targeted local follow-up review of Audit Scotland's national report on <i>Major capital investment in councils</i> (March 2013)			X					X					

FIFE COUNCIL		2015/16											
Scrutiny activity year 2	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
No scrutiny identified as a result of the LAN risk assessments.													
National or supported self-evaluation work year 2													
None identified													

FIFE COUNCIL	
2016/17	
Indicative scrutiny activity for third year	Potential scrutiny bodies involved
None identified	N/A

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.