

# **The Moray 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 Moray 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 Moray Council since the introduction of the shared risk assessment process. 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.<sup>1</sup>
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.<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> The indicators used in the framework can be found on the Improvement Service website:  
<http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/>

<sup>2</sup> 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. There have been no significant changes to the political make-up or governance arrangements of the council since the last AIP. It remains an Independent-Conservative administration.
7. Since the last AIP, the council along with its partners has completed its revised SOA for 2010-15. More recently, and in recognition of the need for longer term planning and of the need to clarify and rationalise its strategic planning processes, the council has developed a ten year plan, 'Moray 2023'.
8. There have been three main areas of scrutiny and/or scrutiny findings during 2013/14:
  - In May 2013, the Accounts Commission published the findings of the Targeted Best Value audit which took place towards the end of 2012/13. Its findings were referenced in the last AIP. These were largely positive and included evidence of improved political and officer leadership. Some areas for improvement were also identified which will be addressed as part of Best Value follow-up activity during 2014-15 (see page 6).
  - The Moray Community Planning Partnership (CPP) was selected for audit during 2013-14. The audit is looking at vision and strategic direction, governance and accountability, use of resources/collaboration, managing performance and impact and outcomes. The audit team fed back initial findings to the Community Planning Board in January 2014. The report will be considered by the Accounts Commission in June 2014 and published shortly afterwards.
  - The Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland undertook a joint inspection of adult services. The focus of the inspection was on how social care and health services worked together to support older people. The main scrutiny phase of the inspection was December 2013.
9. In addition 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.
10. There are no significant scrutiny risk assessment changes from the last AIP. For most of the shared risk assessment areas for 2013-16, the assessment was that no scrutiny was required. This remains the case for 2014-17. Where scrutiny is proposed in this AIP, this is part of follow-up activity to ensure that required improvements have been made and that improvements already made have been sustained and continued.
11. During the last five years, a significant focus of scrutiny risk and activity has been on the vision, direction and leadership of the council. For the most part these have shown steady improvement. Whilst some of its improvement and reporting processes still require attention, the council now demonstrates a good level of self-awareness. It is more outward looking than

it was previously or was perceived as being. The work it has undertaken as part of its Designing Better Services programme, the area based review and the development of the ten year plan reflect its recognition of the need to adapt and reshape services so that they are fit for purpose in the future. The council recognises (and findings from scrutiny during 2013-14 confirm this) that it still has much to do in working effectively with key partners in a joint approach to transforming services for the benefit of the people of Moray. However, its willingness to do so is encouraging. In reporting on the scrutiny of regulated services, both this and previous AIPs have been able to point to good or solid performance on a generally consistent basis. This suggests there is a good base for the council moving forward.

## Planned scrutiny activity

12. There are two areas of planned scrutiny activity identified at this stage for the forthcoming AIP period. The first is Best Value follow-up activity scheduled for the last quarter of 2014-15. This will focus on the council's (and partners where appropriate) progress in implementing the improvement agenda arising from the Targeted Best Value audit of 2012-2013. This included the need to:
  - build on the improvements on leadership and culture
  - clarify its strategic planning arrangements
  - develop a customer focus strategy
  - maintain the momentum on improved leadership of equalities
  - improve on how it measures and reports on performance.
13. Also during 2014, Audit Scotland will carry out a targeted follow-up of two national performance audits - *Arm's-length external organisations (ALEOs): are you getting it right?* (June 2011) and *Major capital investment in councils* (March 2013).
14. There is some 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 were 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 be working in partnership with councils to carry out self-evaluation of education psychology services over a two year period beginning in 2014/15.

- 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.
  - 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.
15. Audit Scotland will 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. The ongoing inspection of school and care establishments by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate respectively will continue as planned. Individual audit and inspection agencies will continue to monitor developments in key areas of council activity and will provide support and challenge as appropriate. This will help to inform future assessment of scrutiny risk.
  17. A timetable for the planned audit and inspection activity in the Moray Council between April 2014 and March 2017 is included 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
  - 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. Along with partners, the council has completed its revised SOA for 2010-15. This contains the five following outcomes:
- Healthier citizens.
  - More ambitious and confident children and young people able to fulfil their potential.
  - Adults living healthier, sustainable, independent lives safeguarded from harm.
  - A growing and diverse economy.
  - Employability and employment skills.
20. The SOA was subject to a national quality assurance process jointly agreed by the Scottish Government and COSLA. In July 2013, the CPP received feedback from the Minister for Local Government and Planning confirming that the draft SOA had been signed off. The feedback identified a number of areas for development from the SOA, but also a number of strengths.
21. More recently and, in recognition of the need for longer term planning and of the need to clarify and rationalise its strategic planning processes, the council has developed a ten year plan, 'Moray 2023'. This was based on the work of the area based review which was a cross-party group set up in March 2013 with the support of the Scottish Futures Trust, to identify the need for and shape of services. Whilst this work was initiated by the council, the plan has been taken forward in collaboration with partners and is currently going through the approval process with the Community Planning Board. The partnership hope the Scottish Government will accept the ten year plan in place of the SOA.
22. Whilst a council document, the ten year plan has been developed in collaboration with the CPP and recognises the need for services to be developed, and where appropriate, provided



in partnership. It incorporates the SOA and is regarded as the council's primary strategic plan. It identifies economic development as the most important priority and driver in achieving the SOA outcomes. The draft plan was approved by the council in November 2014.

23. The original intention had been that 'Moray 2023' would be supported by a more detailed and costed four year plan. This was originally scheduled for preparation by February 2014, but the council has now decided that this is not realistic and instead is working on the basis of a one year budget and capital plan for 2014/15. The reasons for this were a combination of limited information available and the assumptions used in the provisional financial allocations to Local Government for the four year period to 2016/17 and findings of major service reviews only becoming available in 2014/15.
24. Audit Scotland undertook an audit of Moray's CPP during the third quarter of 2013/14 (see paragraph 8, page 5).

## Police and fire

25. Moray established a joint Police and Fire Working Party to undertake the role of scrutiny for both Police and Fire plans. On the 24th January 2013 the working party recommended to the Community Planning Board that: "A new committee to have Police and Fire Service related issues as its sole remit at present, although this might be expanded in the future. The view was that this Committee/Board would only require to meet quarterly". This recommendation was accepted. The committee formally met on the 25th April 2013 and has nine elected members. Police and fire representatives sit as members of the Community Planning Board.
26. The council does not consider that the reform in this area had had a significant impact on itself. There has been consistency in their senior police contacts which has been helpful. In terms of governance, there continues to be a Police Committee and a Public Protection Committee. The council is satisfied that having the two committees remains appropriate at the present time given their separate, albeit overlapping agendas. Moray now shares a command annex with Aberdeenshire, but this has not presented any difficulties for the council.
27. HMICS conducted a thematic inspection of the new arrangements for local scrutiny in 2013 and believes 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.
28. 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.
29. 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.

30. 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

31. A joint pilot inspection of services to older people in Moray by the Care Inspectorate with Healthcare Improvement Scotland was completed at the end of 2013. The inspection included a focus on preparedness for health and social integration. It found that the council and NHS Grampian had established a Transitional Leadership Group which had met twice. In addition to deciding on a body corporate model, a scoping exercise had been completed on what services would be included in the new partnership. The decision was that initially at least, the partnership would only include adult services. A job description for the chief officer post had been agreed with the expectation that this would be advertised internally and externally in early 2014. A Project Initiation Document had been produced and a number of workstreams and subgroups established to prepare a detailed integration plan by the end of 2014. The report of the joint inspection is due for publication in the first quarter of 2014/15.
32. The council confirmed that the key challenge is how to develop integrated services within two different governance arrangements. The chief officer post is was advertised in February 2014. The Care Inspectorate (in collaboration with Healthcare Improvement Scotland) will continue to monitor progress in the council's preparedness and preparation for health and social care integration.

## Welfare reform

33. The council has established a corporate Welfare Reforms Group specifically to consider the effects on services and to set out the actions required to mitigate the impact on the council and communities. The group gives consideration to the impact of welfare reform on the council as a landlord and homelessness authority. This group is led by the corporate director (corporate services) and has members representing housing, planning and economic development, finance and benefits. The Welfare Reforms Group also included the establishment of a subcommittee to make recommendations on further policy initiatives required. The subcommittee is to focus on the particular issues related to housing and housing benefits. Services will report action plans to their respective committees to assess the potential impact of welfare reform on their customers and propose appropriate responses to meet their needs.
34. The corporate director (corporate services) also chairs a Local Delivery Group with representatives from the council, Department of Works and Pensions (Elgin Job Centre Plus), Citizens Advice Bureau and the Third Sector Interface which oversee the implementation of welfare reforms across Moray. The Welfare Reforms Group is now meeting bi-monthly rather

than monthly. Moray received additional rural monies from the Scottish Government for the welfare fund and also from the Department of Works and Pensions.

35. 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

36. 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).<sup>3</sup>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
<p><b>Leadership and direction</b></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>	Scrutiny required	<p>Best Value targeted work took place in November 2012 and was reported in May 2013. It identified improvement in officer and member leadership. Elected members were more engaged in setting the vision and direction of the council and demonstrated increased ownership of their responsibilities. Further to management changes in October 2010, officer leadership had continued to develop well. However, the need for continued improvement in some areas was identified. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embedding the collaborative and positive culture demonstrated by the CMT more widely across the council.</li> <li>• Maintaining progress of leadership development and member development programmes.</li> <li>• Clarifying its strategic planning arrangements.</li> </ul> <p>The Accounts Commission requested a report on progress within 18 months. Best Value follow-up work is required to produce this.</p> <p>The council had developed and approved a ten year plan. The</p>	Best Value follow-up activity during the last quarter of 2014/15

<sup>3</sup> The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. Best Value Guidance, Scottish Executive, 2004.

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>plan was developed with community planning partners and the Board is working on some presentational changes to finalise the plan for final approval by the partnership. This plan is now the council's primary strategic plan. Progress on implementing the plan and its ongoing review will be examined as part of the Best Value follow-up activity.</p> <p>The council has reduced its management costs by £1 million during the last five years. The corporate director for Environmental Services retired in 2013 and the duties of this post are currently being undertaken by the head of housing and property. The chief executive is submitting a report to council recommending no further changes to the current management structure given the changes and savings already made and achieved.</p>	
<p><b>Governance and accountability</b></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>The Moray Council has a well-established committee structure that is kept under review by the full council in order to ensure that it reflects the activities of the council. In addition there are Standing Orders and a Scheme of Delegation, which sets out the governance and accountability arrangements. These documents are available to staff within the organisation and are kept under review. There have been no significant changes to the overall governance arrangements operating at the council during 2012/13 and overall governance structures and activities are as expected. Following the local elections in May 2012 and the appointment of a new chief executive in October 2012, new committee members</p>	<p>No specific scrutiny activity</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>have been appointed to reflect the current political landscape within the council. The council does not have plans to change these governance structures in the run up to the Independence Referendum in 2014.</p> <p>The council will be tested in terms of decision making in light of the future financial savings required. As part of its on-going engagement with the council, the LAN will continue to monitor how the council meets this challenge.</p>	
<p><b>Community engagement and empowerment</b></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>	<p>No scrutiny required</p>	<p>There is a CPP community engagement group chaired by the council leader. The council is currently preparing its response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the community engagement and empowerment bill.</p> <p>The joint inspection of adult services included a focus on "impact on the community". This looked at how the council sought to engage with the community and to increase community capacity to support its older people. The inspection findings in this area were mainly positive. Amongst other things the council had taken action to strengthen its interface with the third sector through the establishment of a new organisation in 2012, tsiMoray.</p> <p>In the chief executive's office, the community support unit continues to deliver support for community asset transfers and delivery of consultations. Capacity building training is delivered by the Youth Team. The CLD Youth Team continues to support two members of the Scottish Youth Parliament. There is an active Youth Council a number of whom went on a study exchange visit</p>	<p>No specific scrutiny activity</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		to Sweden via LEADER funding this year.	
<p><b>Financial management</b></p> <p>How effectively the council is planning and managing its budgets.</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>The council achieved a positive General Fund outturn of £1.868 million against a breakeven budget. The council has a general fund balance of £22.98 million as at 31 March 2013, an increase of £1.868 million from the prior year. The increase in the general fund was largely driven by a £1.546 million transfer of the Police and Fire Board reserves at 31st March following Police and Fire Reform (Scotland Act 2012) accounting. Guidance issued by the Scottish Government required the inclusion of the balance in local council reserves as at 31 March 2013 with the Scottish Government deducting it from future Revenue Support Grant payments in 2013/14. This therefore increased the council's General Fund Reserves as at 31 March 2013.</p> <p>The council approved its 2013/14 revenue budget of £188.2 million (2012/13 budget £198.9 million) on 13 February 2013, which provided for a break-even position. Key income assumptions include no council tax increase and £147.69 million of government grant funding. This government grant figure is based on the provisional allocation for Moray, which has been adjusted to reflect the deduction of grant support for police and fire, and has been increased by an estimate for additional allocations.</p> <p>Previous AIPs have not identified any significant concerns with the council's financial performance and management. This remains</p>	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		the case for this AIP. However, the LAN is mindful of the continuing financial challenges facing the council. This will continued to be monitored by the local external auditors.	
<p><b>People management</b></p> <p>The effectiveness of the council's workforce planning and management arrangements.</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>The council provided the LAN with information about its Workforce Transformation Strategy (Transform) which was approved in February 2013. This is designed to provide an enhanced approach to manage the projected reduction and change in the council's workforce. It is based on developing an internal jobs market and on the award winning approach used by Sunderland City Council.</p> <p>The council undertook a full staff survey in June 2013 and provided the results of this. All 4,957 staff were given the opportunity to respond and there was a response rate of 25 per cent. Morale had improved slightly since the last survey in 2011 and there was a small improvement in satisfaction with corporate communication. An action plan had been produced and also a specific action plan on employee engagement.</p> <p>The council was not one of the sites included in the Audit Scotland study of the Public Sector Workforce in 2013.</p>	No specific scrutiny activity
<p><b>Asset management</b></p> <p>The council's arrangements for managing assets and how this key resource is used to support effective service</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>The council commenced a review of the school estate in September 2013. It has engaged the services of Caledonian Economics to conduct the review. The review findings and possible options are due to be put to council in early 2014. The council has indicated that the review is on track to report on schedule.</p> <p>A review of transport/vehicles/plant was a theme within the</p>	No specific scrutiny activity



Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
delivery.		<p>Designing Better Services Programme. This work is complete and has resulted in a general reduction of the fleet and the introduction of pool cars for business use.</p> <p>Moray has a policy for the disposal of any unused buildings and these continued to generate capital receipts. A number of properties in Elgin have also been vacated due in part by the new Moray Council building opened in 2011/12. A review of out of Elgin offices is ongoing.</p>	
<p><b>Procurement</b></p> <p>How effectively corporate procurement contributes to the council maximising value for money in the goods and services it uses to deliver its services.</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>Procurement was a theme within the Designing Better Services Programme. The procurement programme is complete and 2012/13 saw the introduction of new policies such as formal corporate procurement procedures, and introductions of national and local contracts. Efficiencies were also seen by the full year effect of the 2011/12 efficiencies.</p> <p>Public Sector Equalities duties have been incorporated in the procurement guidance and training.</p> <p>There has been a continued improvement in the results of the Procurement Capability Assessments completed by the council. Scores have increased from 24 per cent in 2010 to over 50 per cent in 2013.</p> <p>Audit Scotland is currently undertaking an audit of procurement by councils. Moray was not one of the fieldwork sites but there may be lessons from the audit. It is due to publish in late April 2014.</p>	No specific scrutiny activity
<b>Risk management</b>	No scrutiny	The corporate risk register is reviewed twice a year (March and	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
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.	required	September). The latest version was approved by the Policy and Resources Committee in October 2013. Operational risk registers are reviewed annually with a completion date of December ahead of the service planning process. This process is currently on-going, with some operational risk registers expected to be updated in early 2014. The council has taken action to mainline responsibility for risk management to service managers, as opposed to it being an entirely specialist function.	
<b>Information management</b> The effectiveness of the council's arrangements for managing information as a key resource in delivering services.	No scrutiny required	The last AIP noted that the council had updated its service standards and introduced a gateway model to manage ICT projects.  The council is working with Highland and other councils on a replacement for Pathfinder North Broadband.  No concerns have been identified as part of local external audit activity.	No specific scrutiny
<b>Joint working</b> Progress with any significant shared services initiatives, in particular in relation to governance or pace of implementation.	No scrutiny required	The council is looking at a number of potential opportunities and is generally doing so as a member of COHI (Convention of the Highlands and Islands). These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• economic development along A9 and A96 corridors</li> <li>• member of oil and gas forum</li> <li>• joint consideration of new Broadband option.</li> </ul> The council is working closely with the NHS in preparing a formal	No specific scrutiny

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>plan for health and social care integration. The Care Inspectorate will monitor progress via its link inspector arrangements.</p> <p>In education, Moray continues to be an active contributor to the North Alliance partnership of seven councils.</p> <p>As indicated at paragraph 8 (page 5), the findings of the audit of the CPP are due to be reported to the Accounts Commission in June 2014. The audit has included a focus on the use of resources and collaboration. The findings of the audit may identify the need for improvement activity by the council/CPP and these may impact on the need for future scrutiny activity.</p>	
<p><b>Efficiency</b></p> <p>How effectively the council is improving its efficiency in response to the budget challenges being faced.</p>	<p>No scrutiny required</p>	<p>In 2012/13 The Moray Council achieved £6.085 million of efficiency savings. Key areas where savings were achieved centred on the Designing Better Services themes of community care, core programme, procurement, transport/vehicles/plant and property.</p> <p>Core Programme – Review of the direct services department saw new arrangements put in place for customer contact.</p> <p>Procurement – The procurement programme is complete and 2012/13 saw the introduction of new policies such as formal corporate procurement procedures, and introductions of national and local contracts. Efficiencies were also seen by the full year effect of the 2011/12 efficiencies.</p> <p>Transport/vehicles/plant – This programme is also complete and has resulted in a general reduction of the fleet and the introduction</p>	<p>No specific scrutiny</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>of pool cars for business use.</p> <p>Property – Moray has a policy for the disposal of any unused buildings and these continued to generate capital receipts. A number of properties in Elgin have also been vacated due in part by the new Moray Council building opened in 2011/12.</p> <p>The council estimated it is required to generate £9 million of savings to balance the 2013/14 budget. Savings totalling £7 million were approved for 2013/14, with the remaining £2 million is to be funded from reserves.</p>	
<p><b>Equalities</b></p> <p>Whether the council is providing effective leadership of equalities and is meeting its statutory obligations.</p>	<p>Scrutiny required</p>	<p>Equalities was covered as part of the Best Value activity in November 2012. This found that council had made some progress in this area, including elements of elected member engagement and leadership. However, the need for continued improvement was identified. This included the need for the council to maintain the momentum on the improved leadership of equalities, improved member take-up of equalities training and improved reporting against equality outcomes.</p> <p>In April 2011, the Equality Act introduced a new public sector "General Duty" which encourages equality to be mainstreamed into public bodies' work so that is a core part of how public bodies operate. One of the key requirements of the legislation was for public bodies to publish a set of equality outcomes (and reporting requirements) no later than April 2013.</p> <p>The council's equality outcomes report and a mainstreaming report were published in April 2013. Three joint themes and</p>	<p>Will be considered as part of Best Value follow-up during the last quarter of 2014/15</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>outcomes have been agreed for the three "listed authorities"; the council, its education and social care department and the Licensing Board. Consultation on equality outcomes included a study undertaken by the Grampian Racial Equality Council and a survey undertaken with the Citizen's Panel. The joint themes agreed are Bullying, Domestic Violence and Access to Streets.</p> <p>The council has established arrangements to take forward equality and diversity; These include the appointment of an equalities champion and the creation of an Equality and Diversity Corporate Advisory Forum. Amongst other groups, progress towards equality outcomes is reported to the Corporate Management Team, the Communities Committee, the Full Council and the Community Planning Board.</p> <p>Service managers are responsible for ensuring that Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are carried out and an overview on the use of EIAs is reported annually. The 2013 report indicated increased effectiveness of EIAs.</p> <p>Information provided to the LAN by the council suggests that it has been proactive in progressing the equality agenda. The planned Best Value activity will provide an opportunity for further consideration of progress in this area.</p>	

# Service performance

37. 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
<b>Education</b> The quality of local education services and the resulting outcomes (including early years).	No scrutiny required	<p>The education service has improved its performance across almost all measures over the period 2008 to 2013. By the time young people leave school, their levels of attainment at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels three and four are above both the national and comparator average. The council continues to take positive steps to accredit young people's achievements beyond national examinations. The council recognises the need to develop the economic and employment structures to retain graduates in the Moray area and to ensure that young people have the necessary qualifications to achieve high quality degree qualifications after they leave school.</p> <p>The Continuous Improvement Team (CIT) is building cross service capacity for improving outcomes through effective self-evaluation. There is recognition of the need for the work of the CIT in schools to be more proportionate differentiated and risk based. These approaches are required as officer's work to continue to provide effective strategic support and challenge to schools at a time of reduced capacity in centrally deployed staff.</p>	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>The council continues to make positive progress in implementing Curriculum for Excellence. It has established a schools and curriculum development strategy group.</p> <p>The education service remains a low performance and scrutiny risk. Regular inspection of schools, nursery schools and pre-school centres and the ongoing scrutiny through the area lead officer link is deemed to be sufficient to mitigate any risks.</p>	
<p><b>Social care services</b> 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, mental health services, children and families).</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>A joint inspection of adult services took place towards the end of 2013.</p> <p>A joint inspection of multi-agency arrangements to protect vulnerable children took place in 2012. It was a positive inspection which found that very good progress had been made in all the main points for action identified in the first inspection of services to protect children.</p> <p>A joint inspection of services for children in Moray Council is not planned during 2014-15.</p> <p>The council has established a Children and Young People's Partnership chaired by a councillor. The focus of this partnership is targeted largely on child protection and GIRFEC rather than on universal entitlements.</p>	No specific scrutiny
<p><b>Housing and homelessness</b> The quality of housing and homeless services and the resulting</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>The SHR is broadly content with the housing services in Moray. Almost nine out of ten local authority tenants are satisfied or very satisfied with the housing services they receive. This is up almost ten per cent from the previous tenant survey. A limited benchmarking exercise comparing Moray to six other local authorities indicates that</p>	No specific scrutiny

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
outcomes.		<p>Moray compares favourably to them.</p> <p>There is some deterioration in the local authority's response time for repairs. However, this is against a background of increasing numbers of repairs (through severe weather for example) and the introduction of more accurate 'real time' reporting. The SHR will keep an eye on this to see if the trend reverses.</p>	
<p><b>Non-regulated services</b></p> <p>Particular strengths and challenges in the range of non-regulated services provided by the council, and any significant changes to performance.</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>The Moray Council operates four main non-regulated services (building services, road maintenance, vehicle maintenance and ground maintenance). Each operation has achieved its statutory performance target of 'break-even', over a three year period. The total net surplus on trading services in 2012-13 was £1.375 million (2011-12: £0.217 million).</p> <p>As part of its savings requirements, the council developed plans to close a significant proportion of its public libraries which ran into very considerable public opposition. The council advised that an Equalities Impact Assessment was completed as part of the proposals and that the libraries had not been identified as one of the key service area priorities as part of the public consultation exercise on the budget. An amended and reduced closure exercise is proceeding.</p> <p>An analysis of available performance data about regulated services shows a range of performance, but no service area suggesting significant concerns</p>	No specific scrutiny



# Improving and transforming public services/public performance reporting

38. 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><b>Improving and transforming public services</b></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>Designing Better Services, the council's programme to deliver £4.4 million of recurring efficiency savings by 2015 (per P&amp;R report 9/4/13) is now into its third implementation phase. Considerable progress has been made to date with procurement, transport and plant projects now closed. Three significant work streams remain: the Core Project; the Property Project; and the Community Care Redesign project. Some of the key projects completed in the last year have been the implementation of car-pooling, next stage procurement project and Elgin estate rationalisation including relocation to the new annexe building.</p> <p>The council's approach to improving and transforming its services was a focus of the Best Value audit. Progress in this area will be considered as part of the Best Value follow-up activity required to inform the further report to the Accounts Commission in the first quarter of 2015/16</p>	Best Value follow-up during the last quarter of 2014/15
<p><b>Public performance reporting (PPR)</b></p> <p>The progress that is</p>	Scrutiny required	<p>The 2013 Best Value report identified shortcomings in the council's and the CPP's performance management arrangements. This was partly caused by the review of community planning during which themed groups (eg safer and greener) ceased to meet and performance reports were no</p>	Best Value follow-up during the last quarter of 2014/15

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
<p>being made by councils in meeting their PPR obligations.</p>		<p>longer submitted for the CPP quarterly reports. The Best Value report identified the need for the council and the CPP “to ensure their performance management arrangements allow them to know how they are doing against all of the partnership’s local outcomes.”</p> <p>A paper presented to the policy and resources committee on 5 November 2013 approved revisions to the chief executive office performance indicators for 2013-14.</p>	

# Appendix 1: Scrutiny plan

MORAY COUNCIL		2014/15											
Scrutiny activity year 1	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Audit Scotland: Best Value follow-up activity										X	X	X	
National or supported self-evaluation work year 1													
Audit Scotland : Targeted follow-up of <i>Arms length external organisations (ALEOs)</i>													
Audit Scotland : Targeted follow-up of <i>Major capital investment in councils</i>													

MORAY 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													

MORAY 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, and the inspection of schools, nursery schools and pre-school centres 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.