

South Lanarkshire 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 South Lanarkshire 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 South Lanarkshire 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 for Scotland (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. Over the past year, South Lanarkshire Council has continued to take forward its improvement agenda and to provide high quality public services. The council shows good self-awareness of what it needs to do to deliver its aspirations for the area and a strong commitment to continuous improvement.
7. The shared risk assessment undertaken for this year's Assurance and Improvement Plan indicates that no risk-based scrutiny is required during 2014/15.
8. The council's corporate plan is called *Connect*. It covers the period 2012 to 2017. It states that the council's overall vision is to improve the quality of life of everyone in South Lanarkshire. *Connect* says that the council will continue to observe a number of core values which it believes are fundamental to the way it operates ie being accountable, effective and efficient; fair and open; people focused; self aware and improving; an excellent employer; and working with and respecting others.
9. *Connect* also sets out the council's priority objectives, which are to:
 - Improve services for older people.
 - Protect vulnerable children, young people and adults.
 - Improve the road network and influence improvements in public transport.
 - Support the local economy by providing the right conditions for growth, improving skills and employability.
 - Tackle disadvantage and deprivation.
 - Develop a sustainable council and communities.
 - Raise educational achievement and attainment.
 - Improve the quality, access and availability of housing.
 - Strengthen partnership working, community leadership and engagement.
10. The plan reflects the council's commitment to the South Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnership (SLCPP) and its contribution to the attainment of the outcomes in SLCPP's Single Outcome Agreement.

Planned scrutiny activity

11. Last year the LAN concluded that there was no requirement for specific scrutiny arising from the SRA process. Further information was required in relation to procurement, an area which the LAN has monitored closely in recent years. In October 2013, the council approved a revised procurement strategy, the culmination of almost two years of change and improvement in its procurement arrangements. As a result, this year the LAN decided that there is no requirement for scrutiny or for further information in this area.

12. Having completed its review of the position across all the corporate and service areas and the council's improvement activities, the LAN concluded that no additional risk based scrutiny is required for South Lanarkshire Council.
13. The Care Inspectorate has an ongoing programme of inspection of children's services. During 2014/15, the Care Inspectorate will carry out an inspection of children's services in South Lanarkshire which will involve on-site work in summer 2014.
14. In partnership with the Association of Directors of Social Work and the Risk Management Authority, the Care Inspectorate 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.
15. There is some non-risk based scrutiny activity planned across councils in 2014/15, but where scrutiny bodies are yet to determine which specific council areas will be involved. 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, among 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.
16. Education Scotland will also review the quality of Careers Information Advice and Guidance services delivered by Skills Development Scotland across all council areas over the next three years.
17. Audit Scotland will follow-up two national performance audits during 2014. This will involve targeted follow-up of *Arm's-length external organisations (ALEOs): are you getting it right?* (June 2011) and *Major capital investment in councils* (March 2013). Audit Scotland will also carry out a programme of performance audits during the period of this AIP that will involve

work with councils. The performance audit programme for 2014/15 is available at <http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/work/forwardwork.php?year=2014>.

18. 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.
19. A timetable for the planned audit and inspection activity in South Lanarkshire Council between April 2014 and March 2017 is at [Appendix 1](#).

Local priorities and public service reform

20. 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 the new Single Outcome Agreements
 - police and fire oversight arrangements (following the introduction of new national police and fire and rescue services)
 - health and social care integration
 - welfare reform.

Community planning and single outcome agreements

21. In September 2013, the council and its partners agreed a single outcome agreement (SOA) for South Lanarkshire for the ten year period to 2024. The SOA:
- shows a clear understanding of place
 - includes specific plans for the delivery of improved outcomes, including how the SLCPP's approach aligns with the four pillars of public service reform (prevention, local integration and partnership, investment in people and performance improvement)
 - reflects local priorities and provides a sharper focus on the six national policy priorities (early years and early intervention; economic growth and recovery; employment; health inequality and physical activity; outcomes for older people; and safer and stronger communities)
 - demonstrates how communities are being involved in the development and delivery of outcomes.
22. The SOA contains an outline of the challenges facing South Lanarkshire, the purpose and scope of the agreement, governance arrangements, community engagement and management of risk. The SOA was developed from Partnership Improvement Plans (PIPs). The PIPs provide more detail on the partnership activity aimed at delivering the SOA and the steps that will be taken to monitor and report on the progress the SLCPP is making in delivering improved outcomes.
23. Tackling poverty is a specific priority for SLCPP over the next three years and the SOA includes a commitment to help deal with the impact of welfare reform on individuals and communities in the area.

24. As part of the process of developing the new SOAs, a new national quality assurance process was put in place. The quality panels comprised officials from bodies involved in community planning across Scotland. The panel that reviewed the SLCPP SOA noted that the SOA conveyed a strong sense of place and contained a strong vision which identified what the partnership wants to achieve for the area. This was especially relevant in relation to the economy and the need for targeted improvement. The emphasis and priority status given to tackling poverty in the SOA was seen by the quality panel as unique. Overall, the panel concluded that the SLCPP SOA was well developed and set the course for effective partnership working and ongoing improvement in the joint delivery of outcomes.

Police and fire

25. The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act created new single national Police and Fire and Rescue services, but with an important local dimension.
26. Under the legislation there is a statutory duty on the Chief Constable of Police Scotland and the Chief Officer of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to delegate an officer as a local commander or local senior fire officers. These local commanders/senior officers have a statutory duty to: involve the local authority in setting priorities and objectives; provide the local authority with performance reports; participate in community planning; and prepare local police plans and local fire and rescue plans.
27. In South Lanarkshire, local scrutiny of police and fire is carried out by the Safer South Lanarkshire Board which was drawn from partners involved in the previous Community Safety Partnership. The board will scrutinise and review local police and fire and rescue plans and all aspects of the community safety strategy and receive performance reports relevant to community safety.
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 (LSE) require more time to bed in and that it is therefore too early to assess the effectiveness of these arrangements. 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. 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

30. The purpose of health and social care integration is to provide the framework that will support improvement of the quality and consistency of health and social care services through the establishment of new statutory health and social care partnerships. All services for adults (including older people) are included as a minimum, but local areas have the flexibility to include other services as they feel relevant and appropriate.
31. During 2013, discussions took place between NHS Lanarkshire and the council on the approach and the options to achieve integration. In September 2013, of the two models ie the 'lead agency' model (delegation of functions and resources from one organisation to another, from councils to NHS boards or NHS boards to councils) and the 'body corporate' model (councils and NHS boards delegate functions and resources to an integrated joint board established as a body corporate), it was decided that the body corporate model was the most effective model to take forward. The council's contribution to the South Lanarkshire Partnership will incorporate older people and adult services, with a total financial value of £129 million and involving approximately 2,300 whole time equivalent staff.
32. The council and the health board established a Transition Integration Board which developed into a shadow board from April 2014 which will become the Health and Care Partnership Board in April 2015.

Welfare reform

33. The council has established a Welfare Reform Group to assess the impact of the changes on the community and council services. Work was also undertaken to identify the main risks to the council in relation to welfare reform and the mitigating actions which would be taken. Regular updates from the working group are reported to the council's Executive Committee and Corporate Management Team (CMT) eg in October 2013 the CMT considered a report on progress on key issues included the council's welfare reform action plan. The council continues to assess the risks associated with welfare reform and these are updated within the risk register to reflect changes and progress.
34. The council is actively engaged with other organisations to develop information sharing and a partnership approach to the challenges presented by welfare reform. Joint meetings with the Department for Work and Pensions and other councils are taking place and, at a local level, council officers and staff from housing associations, the voluntary sector and other community organisations are working together. A South Lanarkshire knowledge hub provides an online forum to share information, views and developments and aims to support partnership working in the area.
35. The full impact of welfare reform on the council's workforce requirements remains unclear. However, work is underway to identify the additional workload for services arising from the reforms.
36. 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

37. 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 has well developed arrangements for strategic planning and implementing its strategic objectives, including arrangements for working in partnership with others to improve outcomes for the area.</p> <p>The council's corporate plan (<i>Connect</i>) 2012-17 sets out the overall vision and the values the council will observe in the way it conducts its business.</p> <p>Despite restructuring, there is relative stability in the make-up of the council's senior management.</p>	No specific scrutiny activity
<p>Governance and accountability</p> <p>Whether governance arrangements are working effectively and whether good</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>The council operates within an established procedural framework that includes the Scheme of Delegation, Standing Orders, Standing Orders on Contracts, Financial Regulations and Committee Terms of Reference. This is supported by other policies and frameworks including the council's Corporate Standards and Personnel Policies and Procedures.</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
governance underpins council decisions and supports performance improvement.		Administration services and legal services merged with effect from 1 April 2013. However, there have been no other significant changes to the overall governance arrangements operating at the council during 2012/13 and the external auditors concluded that the overall governance structures and activities are as expected. The council has set up a working group to review its involvement in arm's-length external organisations (ALEOs).	
<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 has a wide range of arrangements in place for consulting local people on specific service developments and issues of more general concern to communities. Examples include the steps taken to consult with local people and community groups on the council's budget.</p> <p>Progress on community engagement and empowerment is reviewed as part of the council's wider self-assessment activity.</p> <p>South Lanarkshire Council's Community Engagement Coordination Group promotes a coordinated approach to community engagement. The group meets regularly to assess progress. Activities include community capacity building eg where people on paid work placements recruit and train volunteers who in turn support local people looking for jobs to make best use of the internet.</p>	No specific scrutiny activity
<p>Financial management</p> <p>How effectively the</p>	No scrutiny required	The council budgeted for a break-even position in 2012/13 and, in the event, returned an under-spend. After adding the surplus on the provision of services and transfers from the capital fund, the council's general fund balance at 31 March 2013 was £30.7	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
council is planning and managing its budgets.		<p>million, an increase of £10.5m compared with the position at the end of the previous year. In total, the council had useable reserves of around £108m at 31 March 2013.</p> <p>The auditors reported that the finance team and internal financial controls are well established. The results of the auditors work on systems of internal financial control are reported to the council's Risk and Audit Scrutiny Forum and the auditors are satisfied that matters arising are addressed.</p>	
<p>People management The effectiveness of the council's workforce planning and management arrangements.</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>The council continues to develop its approach to workforce management. Its corporate plan <i>Connect</i> sets out the council's commitment to ensure its workforce strategy and plans are kept up to date to reflect changes in national and local demand. <i>Connect</i> also states that the council will work in partnership with the trades unions to ensure that staff are involved in decisions that affect them. The council uses its employee audit arrangements to gauge staff views.</p> <p>The council is engaged in an employment tribunal in respect of equal pay claims. At September 2013, the total number of claims was 3,271. The external auditors reported that they were satisfied that the council's potential liability in this respect is disclosed properly in its annual accounts, as a contingent liability.</p>	No specific scrutiny activity
<p>Asset management The council's</p>	No scrutiny required	The council had a general fund capital programme budget for 2012/13 of £116m (2011/12: £120m).	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
arrangements for managing assets and how this key resource is used to support effective service delivery.		<p>The 2012/13 actual expenditure was £115m. The total capital expenditure was funded through capital grants, receipts from the sale of assets and other contributions totalling £40m leaving £75m to be funded through borrowing.</p> <p>Over the next five years the corporate asset management plan will provide a framework to monitor the performance of assets and how they support service delivery. The plan covers property assets as well as housing, roads, fleet and information and communications technology (ICT) to ensure the assets are fit for purpose, well designed and utilised to ensure value for money.</p>	
<p>Procurement</p> <p>How effectively corporate procurement contributes to the council maximising value for money in the goods and services it uses to deliver its services.</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>The appointed auditors reported in May 2013 that work was on-going to implement the new model for procurement. At that point the council was reviewing the impact of the model by questioning the main users.</p> <p>The revised procurement strategy has been approved by the Finance and Corporate Resources Committee in October 2013. This was the conclusion of about two years' work of change and improvement in the council's procurement arrangements. In addition to the updated strategy, the council has also implemented new controls, using 'gateway' style checks to ensure significant procurement initiatives can only progress when key officers are satisfied with the work and documentation in place.</p> <p>The council's December 2013 Procurement Capability Assessment (PCA) score was 62% which compares well with the Scottish average (55%).</p>	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
<p>Risk management</p> <p>The effectiveness of the council's arrangements for identifying, managing and mitigating risks and how its management of risk contributes to the successful delivery of public services.</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>The council's plan <i>Connect</i> states that the council has arrangements for the systematic identification, evaluation, management and monitoring of risk, which is embedded in its approach to service planning and delivery. This approach informs how the council reaches decisions, and is designed to improve performance, accountability, governance and transparency.</p> <p>Each year the council considers its top risks, and these will continue to be assessed in terms of the council plan objectives. The council also takes account of any new or emerging risks which come about from internal or external influences.</p> <p>Risk management also features in the development and execution of the internal audit plan.</p>	No specific scrutiny activity
<p>Information management</p> <p>The effectiveness of the council's arrangements for managing information as a key resource in delivering services.</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>As indicated above, the council's asset management plans include its arrangements for managing ICT. The corporate management team requests and receives regular reports on ICT and takes a close interest in new systems development, to ensure governance, consistent oversight and to ensure maximum benefits across the council.</p> <p>A key element in the development of ICT and information management concerns customer information, to support improvements in customer facing services and to identify opportunities for more joined-up services.</p>	No specific scrutiny activity
<p>Joint working</p> <p>Progress with any</p>	No scrutiny required	The council continues to focus on a clear set of strategic priorities that are shared with its partners across the public, private and	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
significant shared services initiatives, in particular in relation to governance or pace of implementation.		<p>third sector. It has a good track record of working productively with strategic partners to improve services and deliver better outcomes for the area. Examples include joint working with partners to address antisocial behaviour.</p> <p>There are effective working relationships with key partners.</p>	
<p>Efficiency</p> <p>How effectively the council is improving its efficiency in response to the budget challenges being faced.</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>The council's corporate management team recognises that significant savings, beyond operational efficiencies, are required to be identified to balance the council's budget over the upcoming period.</p> <p>The council's 2012/13 efficiency statement identified efficiency savings achieved across all resources, totalling £19m. This comprised of £12m cash efficiencies and £7m in non-cash efficiencies.</p> <p>Savings are monitored and reported during the year to maintain a focus on progress.</p> <p>The council also has significant reserves which provide future flexibility if unanticipated challenges or changes emerge which cannot be met from planned efficiency savings.</p>	No specific scrutiny activity
<p>Equalities</p> <p>Whether the council is providing effective leadership of equalities and is meeting its statutory obligations.</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>The Equality Act 2010 introduced a new public sector 'General Duty' which encourages equality to be mainstreamed, so that it is not a marginal activity but integrated into public bodies' activities.</p> <p>The council has initiatives to embed the equality agenda in its work and reports on progress. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A report on mainstreaming equalities was presented to 	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>the Finance and Corporate Resources Committee in July 2013. An update report is planned for April 2015.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each council department (resource) prepares an annual report on equalities and diversity. • Council-wide workforce reports include information on equalities monitoring. • The Equalities Forum considered a report in December 2013 on the Equality and Human Rights Commission's 'Measuring Up 3' report on the performance of public sector bodies in meeting the equality duties. The council's report notes that its priorities are fundamentally equality outcomes and that, in turn, this actively engages employees in the delivery of the equality duties. <p>The council is proactive in promoting the equality agenda and is well placed to mainstream equality within everyday work.</p>	

Service performance

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

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
<p>Education</p> <p>The quality of local education services and the resulting outcomes (including early years).</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>In the last year there have been changes to the management of the council's education resources department. The previous director left in 2012 and was replaced by the then depute director. Education Scotland's area lead officer continues to have a productive and open relationship with the director and other senior staff within the authority.</p> <p>Education resources and Education Scotland have entered into a partnership agreement to help to ensure that engagement with Education Scotland is planned and leads to clear outcomes for both parties. Although it is yet to be finalised, the focus is on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> raising educational attainment and achievement improving partnership working with parents and other stakeholders strengthening partnership working, community leadership and engagement. <p>The outcomes of the agreement will be monitored and evaluated with staff from education resources.</p> <p>The council continues to show an improving trend in terms of</p>	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>secondary attainment over the past five years. There are however areas where they recognise that they need to continue to improve in relation to their comparators and the national average.</p> <p>By the end of S4 in some measures there is an improving trend but others have remained static or are slightly below the national average. By the end of S5 the council is showing a strong improving trend and by the end of S6 English and maths at level 3 or better is improving although it is consistently just below comparator and national averages.</p>	
<p>Social care services The quality of local social work and care services and the resulting outcomes (including adult care, older peoples services, learning disability services, criminal justice services, mental health services, children and families).</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>There has been a range of changes in adult social care services, most notably in older people care with the Reshaping Care for Older People agenda, and home care with re-ablement and Supporting Your Independence (SYI). There are no significant concerns in relation to performance but there are challenges in delivering these models. The council's social work resources department are well sighted on these challenges and continue to work in partnership with health to progress these.</p> <p>There have been some changes to the management structure within justice services over the past year, which have not affected the way the service operates. Justice services have taken action on previous concern regarding notification of serious incidents and appear to be adhering to the guidance on this process effectively. They have engaged well in the supported self-evaluation activity on the implementation of Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LSCMI) and have evidenced a sound commitment and activity to</p>	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>quality assurance in these areas which is progressing well.</p> <p>Performance data in relation to children shows an overall positive picture with performance above the national average. The only area that indicates room for improvement is in relation to exclusion rates for looked after and looked after and accommodated children. Children and families social work, along with partners, have been participating in self-evaluation activity using the (draft) quality indicator framework for the joint inspection of children's services.</p> <p>Social work resources have invested further on the already positive approaches they have to quality assurance processes. They have developed their local information client systems to be more focused and gather better information. They are now moving to align their quality assurance processes with these developments and have involved the Care Inspectorate in discussion about how they progress this.</p>	
<p>Housing and homelessness</p> <p>The quality of housing and homeless services and the resulting outcomes.</p>	No scrutiny required	<p>Overall there are no risks associated with the housing and homelessness services.</p> <p>In housing services the overall performance is good and is consistently better than the national figures. The council was aware that its performance in tenancy sustainment could be improved and has introduced a range of methods to increase tenancy sustainment. These include recruiting additional staff, regular performance monitoring at the Tenancy and Estate Management Service Improvement Group and introducing 'pilot exit interviews' to understand the reasons for the tenancy terminations and to identify</p>	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>further service improvements.</p> <p>In homelessness services the overall performance is good, improving and consistently better than the national figures.</p> <p>The council was aware that the percentage of lets made by registered social landlords (RSLs) to homeless households was poor and has introduced a range of methods to improve this performance. These include quarterly meetings with RSL partners, engagement with SHR and agreeing annual lettings targets. Performance in this area is improving.</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><u>Leisure Services</u></p> <p>Attendance at council leisure facilities is increasing. The costs per attendance at leisure facilities have decreased and are below national averages.</p> <p><u>Protective Services</u></p> <p>Performance in dealing with residents' complaints is improving and is above or the same as the national averages.</p> <p>Areas for improvement include: the time to deal with major planning applications; the time taken to deal with customer complaints; and the time taken to deal with business advice requests. The council understands the underlying reasons and is taking steps to address areas it has assessed as priority.</p> <p><u>Road Maintenance Services</u></p> <p>The percentage of roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment has worsened and is above the national average. The</p>	<p>No specific scrutiny activity</p>

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		<p>overall condition of roads has worsened slightly: below the national average for A & B class roads but worse than the national average for C class roads. The cost of roads per kilometre has decreased considerably but is above the national average.</p> <p><u>Environmental Services</u></p> <p>The cost of refuse collection, disposal of refuse and street cleaning have decreased and are below the national averages. The percentage of household recycled material is improving. Overall cleanliness is stable and is just below the national average.</p>	

Improving and transforming public services/public performance reporting

39. 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>The council's plan <i>Connect</i> covers the period 2012-17 and provides the council's vision, objectives and values covering all service areas.</p> <p>Performance management is embedded within the organisation. Detailed actions and reports on key plans and strategies as well as regular updates on progress against <i>Connect</i> and resource plans are published by each department and are reported to relevant committees. Councillors use these reports to hold officers to account for service performance.</p> <p>The council has an electronic performance monitoring and reporting system (IMPROVe) which it uses to track progress against the measures and targets set out in <i>Connect</i>, the SOA and the plans published by individual council departments. Reports drawn from IMPROVe are included in the updates to committees.</p> <p>As part of ongoing continuous improvement, transformation and self-assessment activities, the council's 'Empower' programme applies the self-assessment Public Sector Improvement Framework toolkit (PSIF) in services.</p>	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
<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 council has well developed arrangements for public performance reporting on both its own services and partnership working linked to the SOA. A range of performance information is provided in a variety of ways including the South Lanarkshire Reporter and through the council's website. It now produces an annual performance report which draws together information on council performance from a range of sources.</p> <p>In June 2013 Audit Scotland published a report on Public Performance Reporting. The report presented the findings of an assessment of all 32 councils' PPR arrangements for the 2011/12 financial year in accordance with the Accounts Commission SPI Direction for 2013/14 (December 2012). The review assessed whether each council fully, partially or does not meet the corporate assessment themes and service areas set out in the Direction. The assessment of South Lanarkshire Council's PPR showed that in the majority of cases the arrangements fully or partially met the criteria.</p> <p>The council's performance reporting team has undertaken a self-review of PPR compared with other councils. It recognised that in many cases, while information is available, this may not always be easy to find or in a consistent format. Work is continuing to improve the council's PPR.</p>	<p>No specific scrutiny activity</p>

Appendix 1: Scrutiny plan

SOUTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL 2014/15												
Scrutiny activity year 1	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Care Inspectorate - inspection of children's services in South Lanarkshire			X		X							
National or supported self-evaluation work year 1												
Targeted follow-up of <i>Arm's-length external organisations (ALEOs): are you getting it right?</i> report	X											
Targeted follow-up of <i>Major capital investment in councils</i> report. (Initial questionnaire followed up by detailed audit work).			X					X				

SOUTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL 2015/16												
Scrutiny activity year 2	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
No risk-based scrutiny planned in 2015/16												
National or supported self-evaluation work year 2												
No risk-based scrutiny planned in 2015/16												

SOUTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL		2016/17
Indicative scrutiny activity for third year	Potential scrutiny bodies involved	
No risk-based scrutiny planned in 2016/17		

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.