

East Dunbartonshire Council

Local Scrutiny Plan

2015/16



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Introduction

1. This local scrutiny plan sets out the planned scrutiny activity in East Dunbartonshire Council during 2015/16. The plan is based on a shared risk assessment undertaken by a local area network (LAN), comprising representatives of all the scrutiny bodies who engage with the council. The shared risk assessment process draws on a range of evidence with the aim of determining any scrutiny activity required and focusing this in the most proportionate way.
2. This plan does not identify or address all risks in the council. It covers only those risk areas that the LAN has identified as requiring scrutiny, or where scrutiny is planned as part of a national programme. Planned scrutiny activity across all councils in Scotland informs the National Scrutiny Plan for 2015/16, which is available on the Audit Scotland website.

Scrutiny risks

3. The council is continuing to focus on delivering its ambitious transformation programme which sets out how organisational change, efficiencies and improvements will be achieved. The 2014-17 Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP) outlined the Accounts Commission's request for further Best Value audit work to be undertaken during 2014/15 in response to the findings of the 2012/13 Best Value audit work reported in the annual audit report of that year.
4. The Best Value follow-up fieldwork commenced in December 2014 and focusses on:
 - Transforming public services
 - People management
 - Asset management
 - Procurement
 - Financial controls and reconciliations
 - Performance management, governance and scrutiny.
5. The Controller of Audit will provide a statutory report to the Accounts Commission, under Section 102 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, in May 2015 with publication of the report in June 2015.
6. During the year the council have continued to restructure the workforce in line with the transformation agenda. This is an evolving process, driven by a programme of service

reviews and the continuation of the voluntary trawl process. Further changes to the structure of the Corporate Management Team are planned with the departure of the Director of Governance and Regulation and the removal of this post. During the 2013/14 audit of the financial statements it was noted that workforce monitoring information within the council requires to be strengthened, to ensure that reliable, up to date information is available to support the decision making process.

7. The council face significant financial challenges, with savings of £23.3m required by 2017/18. To support the achievement of financial balance throughout this period, the council must ensure the financial control environment is strong and that financial information is reliable and up to date. As reported in previous internal controls reports, the council have a number of controls areas requiring significant improvement.
8. The council plans for significant savings to be achieved through the delivery of the transformation programme. This includes completion of a number of major asset developments, including the community hub project, office accommodation and school improvement programme, within approved budgets and timescales. The council updated their capital plan in November 2014 and re-profiled the budget, however, high levels of capital slippage across a number of different projects, continue to be reported. The LAN have agreed that the local audit team continue to monitor the capital position.
9. The council have improved their procurement capability score from 25 in 2012, to 60 in 2014. The implementation of the e-procurement system is progressing and the council expect that this will transform procurement practices within the council and lead to greater efficiencies. A high level of savings are planned around procurement, however, the targets reported are based on industry benchmarks and not actual activity within the council. This should be aligned to develop more robust savings plans tailored to the council. The LAN have agreed that the local audit team will continue to monitor progress in the procurement function during the course of the year.
10. The LAN has considered the other key risk areas within their scope and concluded that there are no further scrutiny risks that have been identified which require specific work by the scrutiny bodies this year. This does not mean that in relation to these other areas the council has addressed all risks, or that all areas of performance are improving. However, it does mean that the LAN is satisfied that:
 - there has been further information gathered by the LAN to demonstrate performance in areas where, previously, further information was required, or
 - the council has demonstrated self awareness of the standards of performance required at a service level, or
 - there is evidence to demonstrate the council's awareness of, and monitoring of, the key risks to meeting outcomes and service delivery.

Planned scrutiny activity

11. In addition to the Best Value follow-up work, the council will be subject to a range of risk-based and nationally driven scrutiny activity during 2015/16. This is set out in appendix 1. For some of their scrutiny activity in 2015/16, scrutiny bodies are still to determine their work programmes indicating which specific council areas they will cover. Where a council is to be involved, the relevant scrutiny body will confirm this with the council and the appropriate LAN lead.
12. Audit Scotland has three planned performance audits covering local government during 2015/16. It will be working jointly with the Care Inspectorate looking at social care and jointly with both the Care Inspectorate and Health Improvement Scotland (HIS) on a Health and Social care integration position statement. It will also carry out a follow-up audit on roads maintenance. Any engagement with councils is still to be determined.
13. Education Scotland will be working in partnership with councils to carry out Validated Self Evaluation (VSE) of educational psychology services across all councils over a two year period beginning in 2015/16. This is scheduled to take place in East Dunbartonshire in June 2015
14. The Care Inspectorate and HMICS will carry out a joint thematic review of multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) in Scotland during 2015. This forms part of the Care Inspectorate's wider programme of national inspection, and is not a result of the LAN shared risk assessment. The purpose of the review will be to assess the state, efficiency and effectiveness of the MAPPA in Scotland, in terms of keeping people safe and reducing the potential risk of serious harm by registered sex offenders in our communities. It will cover all 32 local authorities and involve local authorities, Police Scotland, NHS Boards and the Scottish Prison Service. The joint review will cover the East Dunbartonshire Council area during May 2015.
15. The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) has a planned programme of thematic inquiries into housing services which will be carried out largely in the first quarter of 2015-16, with publication of inquiry reports in the first and second quarters of the year. The thematic inquiries will cover a range of housing services including: Gypsy/Travellers; factoring services; gas safety; complaints handling; customer service standards; repairs; rent consultation; equalities; and openness and accessibility. Some of the thematic inquiries will not involve any on-site work at all and no local authority will be selected for on-site work in more than one thematic. The SHR will contact individual landlords with details about their potential inclusion.
16. During the first and second quarters of the year, the SHR will review the Charter data submitted by social landlords in May 2015 and identify topics for a further programme of thematic inquiries to be taken forward in the second and third quarters of the year.
17. In addition to specific work shown in Appendix 1, routine, 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. Audit Scotland will carry out a programme of [performance audits](#) during 2015/16 and 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.

March 2015

Appendix 1: Scrutiny plan

Scrutiny body	Scrutiny activity	Date
Audit Scotland	There are currently three local government related performance audits in our proposed programme: Roads maintenance follow-up; social care; and health and social care integration. Details for these audits are still to be developed together with which councils will be involved	Report – second half of 2015.
Care Inspectorate and HMICS	Review of the multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) in Scotland.	Fieldwork 1 st quarter 2015/16
Education Scotland	Education Scotland will be working in partnership with councils to carry out Validated Self Evaluation (VSE) of educational psychology services across all councils over a two year period beginning in 2015/16.	June 2015
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICS)	HMICS will be inspected local policing across Scotland over the next three years. This will examine, amongst other things, local scrutiny and engagement between Police Scotland and councils. Two local Policing Divisions are programmed to be inspected in addition to Edinburgh Division in 2015/16. The Divisions will be identified approximately three months prior to inspection, the first being no earlier than October.	Dates over next three years to be determined
Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate (HMFSI)	HMFSI will be inspecting local fire and rescue services across Scotland over the next five years. These inspections will examine, amongst other things, local scrutiny and engagement between the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and councils. As part of its programme, HMFSI will inspect four local fire and rescue services during 2015/16. East Dunbartonshire is not included in the programme this year.	Dates over five years to be determined
Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)	SHR will carry out a number of thematic inquiries in 2014/15. If East Dunbartonshire Council is to be involved in a thematic inquiry the SHR will confirm this with the council and the appropriate LAN lead.	Dates and councils to be determined