

East Renfrewshire Council

Local Scrutiny Plan 2015/16



East Renfrewshire Council

Local Scrutiny Plan 2015/16

Introduction

1. This local scrutiny plan sets out the planned scrutiny activity in East Renfrewshire 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 conclusion of this year's shared risk assessment process is that no scrutiny risks have been identified which require specific scrutiny by the LAN this year. This is the same position as in the previous AIP which was issued in May 2014. Scrutiny activity undertaken in the last 12 months was either at the request of the Council or part of national activity and reports have been issued on this work.
4. This does not mean that the Council has addressed all risks or that all areas of performance are improving. However, it does mean that the LAN is satisfied that the Council continues to demonstrate a sound corporate governance and performance management framework. In service areas we are satisfied that there has been either:
 - 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.
5. Last year's AIP noted that the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) identified that rent arrears and void rent loss performance was below the national figures and further information was required on progress against the planned improvement action. The use of B&B accommodation was also high and the Council's 2012 improvement plan

advised that a review of its available temporary accommodation was being undertaken. This aimed to reduce the use of B&B accommodation. Work undertaken this year identified that void rent losses and gross rent arrears have improved but they still remain higher than the national average. The Council's use of B&B accommodation remains higher than the national average although the average stay in B&B accommodation is lower than the national average. Action taken by the Council during 2014/15 has resulted in some improvements to void rent losses and the use of B&B accommodation. The Scottish Housing Regulator is engaging with the Council on these areas and will continue to monitor progress.

6. The LAN continues to monitor the Council's financial position and the challenges to service delivery in the future from increased demand and reducing resources. The Council has recently identified that it needs to make savings of £22 million over the next 3 years in order to bridge its identified funding gap. The Council has already identified £10.3 million and proposals for funding the difference were sent out for public consultation in November 2014. These savings proposals were ratified at the Council meeting in February.
7. The LAN acknowledges the ongoing requirement to achieve significant efficiency savings and recognises there will be challenges to meet these savings targets. This is against a backdrop of changes within the Council, which includes Health and Social Care Integration and the existing Community Health and Care Partnership being incorporated into the health and social care partnership which is currently operating as a Shadow Integrated Joint Board. There is also the move of leisure services to the new Leisure Trust in July 2015. The LAN will monitor the impact of the changes through its ongoing work and Audit Scotland will report on the Council's progress in managing the funding gap as part of the annual audit.

Planned scrutiny activity

8. As shown in Appendix 1, the Council will be subject to a range of risk-based and nationally driven scrutiny activity during 2015/16. For some of the scrutiny activity in 2015/16, scrutiny bodies have still to determine within their work programmes 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.
9. 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 statements. It will also carry out a follow-up audit on roads maintenance. Any engagement with councils is still to be determined. Publication of these reports is scheduled for between October 2015 and February 2016.
10. The Care Inspectorate and HMICS will be undertaking 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 Renfrewshire Council area during May 2015.

11. Education Scotland will be working in partnership with councils to carry out VSE of educational psychology services across all councils over a two year period beginning in 2015/16. Education Scotland will notify councils of its VSE plans each academic term.
12. 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.
13. 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.
14. In addition to the 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. 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	Performance audit work	TBC
Care Inspectorate and HMICS	Joint thematic review to assess the state, efficiency and effectiveness of multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) in Scotland.	May 2015
Education Scotland	Review of the quality of education psychology services across all councils over a two-year period beginning in 2014/15	To be determined over the next two years.
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICS)	HMICS will be inspecting local policing across Scotland over the next three years. These inspections 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.	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. For East Renfrewshire Council, HMFSI has confirmed that it will carry out a local fire inspection during May 2015.	May 2015
Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)	The SHR will carry out thematic inquiries during 2015/16. If ERC is involved SHR will confirm this with the Council and the appropriate LAN lead.	To be determined