

Fife Council

Local Scrutiny Plan

2015/16



March 2015

Fife Council

Local Scrutiny Plan 2015/16

Introduction

1. This local scrutiny plan sets out the planned scrutiny activity in Fife 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 Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP) covering the period 2014-17 identified one piece of scrutiny activity to be carried out at the council during the year to 31 March 2015. This related to a planned joint inspection of Adult Services by the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland. A report on the inspection was published in January 2015 which highlighted some areas of good practice but also included ten recommendations for improvement. The Fife Partnership (Fife Council and NHS Fife) is preparing a joint action plan to address the recommendations. The Partnership's progress in implementing the action plan will be subject to monitoring by the Care Inspectorate's link inspector in conjunction with Healthcare Improvement Scotland colleagues.
4. The 2014-17 AIP also included two pieces of national work to be carried out across all councils in 2014: a targeted local follow-up of Audit Scotland's national report on *Major capital investments in councils* (2013); and a targeted local follow-up of Audit Scotland's national report on *Arm's length external organisations (ALEOs): are you getting it right?* (2011).
5. Audit Scotland's local targeted follow up review of *major capital investments in councils* identified some areas for improvement. An action plan was agreed with the council and will be followed up as part of the annual audit process. The report also noted that an Asset Management Plan was formally approved by the council in October 2014. Audit

Scotland is still analysing the responses from all council reviews and intends to prepare a national follow-up report for publication during 2015.

6. Audit Scotland's local targeted follow up review of *Arm's length external organisations (ALEOs): are you getting it right?* found that the council demonstrates many of the better practices highlighted in the toolkit for improving the governance of ALEOs, which accompanied Audit Scotland's 2011 report. Some areas for improvement were identified and an action plan agreed, which will also be followed up as part of the annual audit process.
7. In the 2014-17 AIP, the LAN also assessed that 'further information was required' on housing income maximisation and progress towards meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standards.
8. During 2014/15 the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) met with council officers to discuss housing service performance in a number of areas including rent collection rates and the homelessness service. In addition a review of tenancy satisfaction indicators reflected that a number of indicators were below the national average. The LAN is of the opinion that the pace of improvement in these areas could be improved but do not believe that further specific scrutiny would benefit the council at the current time. The LAN intends to monitor performance in these areas.
9. In 2014, Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) conducted an inspection of Police Scotland's Fife Division. This was a pilot inspection to test the methodology for a rolling programme of divisional inspections, based on an ongoing scrutiny risk assessment, as well as providing a robust evidence-led inspection of the Fife Division. A report on the inspection was published in October 2014 and identified eight recommendations, of which three were for the local policing commander (the remainder for Police Scotland's management). HMICS intend to monitor progress on the Fife Divisional recommendations during 2015/16.

Planned scrutiny activity

10. As shown in Appendix 1, the council will be subject to a range of nationally driven scrutiny activity during 2015/16 and further detail on this activity is noted below. For some of their scrutiny activity in 2015/16, scrutiny bodies are still to determine in their work programmes which specific council areas they will cover and/or when this activity will be undertaken. Where a council is to be involved, the relevant scrutiny body will confirm this with the council and the appropriate LAN lead.
11. Audit Scotland has three planned performance audits covering local government during 2015/16:
 - Joint work with the Care Inspectorate looking at social care.
 - Joint work with both the Care Inspectorate and Health Improvement Scotland (HIS) on a Health and Social Care Integration position statement.

- 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.

12. The Care Inspectorate will lead a joint inspection of services for children and young people, which will also involve participation by Healthcare Improvement Scotland, Education Scotland and HMICS. These inspections are part of the Care Inspectorate's wider programme of national scrutiny work.
13. The Care Inspectorate and HMICS will undertake 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 Fife Council area during April 2015.
14. 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. Education Scotland will notify councils of its VSE plans each academic term.
15. Education Scotland will also 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. The review in Fife Council will take place in November 2015.
16. 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 inquiry. The SHR will contact individual landlords with details about their potential inclusion.
17. During the first half 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 half of the year. If Fife Council is to be involved in these visits, the SHR will confirm this with the council.
18. 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. It has yet to confirm all the local areas in its 2015/16 programme.

19. 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 assessments of scrutiny risk.

March 2015

Appendix 1: Scrutiny plan

Scrutiny body	Scrutiny activity	Date
Audit Scotland	Three performance audits covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social care • Health and social care integration • Roads maintenance follow-up. 	Fieldwork councils and dates to be confirmed
Care Inspectorate	Joint inspection of services for children and young people.	August – October 2015.
Care Inspectorate and HMICS	Joint thematic review of multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA).	April 2015
Education Scotland	Validated self-evaluation of educational psychology services within the council.	Dates to be confirmed.
	Review of the quality of Careers Information Advice and Guidance Services delivered by Skills Development Scotland.	November 2015.
Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)	The SHR will carry out a number of thematic inquiries in 2015/16. If Fife Council is to be involved in a thematic inquiry, the SHR will confirm this with the council.	Councils are yet to be determined.