

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

13 MAY 2015

LOCAL SCRUTINY PLAN 2015/16

REPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report outlines the Local Scrutiny Plan (LSP) for Perth and Kinross Council, prepared by the Local Area Network of audit, inspection and regulation bodies, as part of the annual shared risk assessment process. The LSP outlines the strategic scrutiny activity planned for 2015/16, which is based on the national scrutiny programme for 2015/16.

1. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 The assessment of the level of external scrutiny required for each Council is gauged through a shared risk assessment (SRA) undertaken annually by a Local Area Network (LAN) of audit, inspection and regulation bodies. The LAN for Perth & Kinross Council involves the following scrutiny bodies:

- Audit Scotland
- Education Scotland
- Care Inspectorate
- Scottish Housing Regulator
- HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, and
- HM Fire Service Inspectorate.

From 2015, the outcome of the SRA is a Local Scrutiny Plan (LSP) for each Council. Previously this document was known as an Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP).

- 1.2 The LAN makes an assessment of the challenges likely to be faced by the Council in achieving good outcomes for local people and identifies key areas for improvement. Using this information, a scrutiny plan is developed showing what scrutiny activity the LAN will undertake to make sure the Council keeps on track with what it is trying to do and any improvements it needs to make.
- 1.3 Since the first SRA was conducted in 2010, the LAN has consistently recognised Perth and Kinross Council as a low scrutiny risk. This reflects the scope and maturity of the Council's self-evaluation and performance management arrangements, and its preparedness for the increasingly challenging financial context that it faces. It is also recognised that the Council has a track record in securing improved performance and better outcomes for local people.

2. LOCAL SCRUTINY PLAN 2015/16

- 2.1 The LSP sets out the planned scrutiny activity in Perth and Kinross Council during 2015/16. It confirms that no requirement for specific additional scrutiny has been identified by the LAN for 2015/16. Where scrutiny is planned, this is part of a national programme, which all Councils are subject to. Appendix 1 sets out the scrutiny plan for Perth and Kinross Council for the period April 2015 to March 2016.
- 2.2 The LSP also refers to the innovative joint work between Perth and Kinross Council, its community planning partners and national scrutiny bodies (Appendix 1, section 10). This work aims to develop a methodology for the evaluation and scrutiny of how community planning is operating at a local level. The fieldwork for this place-based scrutiny pilot, in Eastern Perthshire, was carried out in March/April 2015.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Progress towards reducing the burden of scrutiny for Councils has been demonstrated by the introduction of the shared risk assessment process in 2010. Since then the Council has been assessed on an annual basis and has consistently received recognition for the continuous improvement of its services. This has resulted in the overall assessment by the LAN that the Council has a low scrutiny risk, and that no additional scrutiny is required.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the Council notes the Local Scrutiny Plan 2015/16.

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	None
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	None
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	None
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	None
Communication	
Communications Plan	None

1.1 Strategic implications

This report supports the delivery of the Community Plan, Single Outcomes Agreement and Corporate Plan objectives.

1.2 Consultation

The Executive Officer Team, the Depute Director (The Environment Service) and the Head of Finance have been consulted in the development of this report.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The background papers referred to within the report are:
Perth & Kinross Council Local Scrutiny Plan 2015/16.

3. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Perth & Kinross Council Local Scrutiny Plan 2015/16.

Perth & Kinross Council

Local Scrutiny Plan 2015/16

Introduction

1. This local scrutiny plan sets out the planned scrutiny activity in Perth & Kinross 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. In the 2014-17 Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP) there were no specific additional scrutiny risks identified. The following represent areas where national follow-up or work by Ministers was included in the scrutiny plan.
4. The *Arm's-length external organisations (ALEOs): are you getting it right? A follow-up report* was published in May 2014. The council demonstrated many elements of good or best practice in the governance arrangements in place for ALEOs, but further improvements were highlighted to strengthen the council's approach including the consideration of member's skills and expertise for appointment to ALEOs and the regular monitoring of ALEOs performance.
5. The *Major capital investments in councils: A follow-up report* was published in June 2014. Overall Audit Scotland found that the council, having considered the national report, has taken appropriate actions to strengthen its governance arrangements specifically in relation to significant capital underspends seen in recent years. The 2014/15 projections indicate the council have addressed this issue.

6. In relation to housing and homelessness, the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) requested some further information from the council at the end of November 2014, to assist with its risk assessment. The SHR has now received and assessed the council's response and is in the process of seeking further clarification on a number of issues, including asset management and homelessness in order to conclude its assessment of risk in housing and homelessness.
7. No other requirement for specific additional scrutiny has been identified by the LAN for 2015/16.

Planned scrutiny activity

8. As shown in Appendix 1, the council will be subject to nationally driven scrutiny activity during 2015/16. For some of their national activity in 2015/16, scrutiny bodies are still to determine specific council areas to be covered in their work programmes. Where a council is to be involved, the relevant scrutiny body will confirm this with the council and the LAN lead.
9. 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.
10. On behalf of the Local Government Strategic Scrutiny Coordination Group, national scrutiny partners will be continuing to carry out a collaborative piece of work in partnership with Perth and Kinross Council and its community planning partners during 2015/16. This work aims to devise and assess a potential methodology for the evaluation and scrutiny of how community planning is operating at a local level, known as place-based scrutiny. This methodology will have particular focus on the four pillars of public service reform – prevention, partnership, people and performance. The fieldwork for this place-based scrutiny pilot will be carried out in March/April 2015.

March 2015

Appendix 1: Scrutiny plan

Scrutiny body	Scrutiny activity	Date
Audit Scotland	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. Publication of these reports is scheduled for between October 2015 and February 2016.	TBC
	Audit Scotland will continue to carry out a programme of housing benefit risk assessments across councils in 2015/16.	Visit Q3 2015/16 and reporting Q4 2015/16
Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland	The Care Inspectorate and HMICS will be undertaking a joint thematic review of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) in Scotland during 2015 and 2016. The purpose of the review will be to assess the status, efficiency and effectiveness of the MAPPA process 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.	June 2015
Education Scotland	Education Scotland will be working in partnership with councils to carry out a 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.	Date over next two years to be determined
	Review of the quality of Careers Information Advice and Guidance services delivered by Skills Development Scotland across all council areas over the next three years.	February 2016
	Education Scotland is leading on behalf of the scrutiny bodies a collaborative piece of work to devise and assess a potential methodology for the evaluation and scrutiny of how community planning is operating at a local level.	March/April 2015

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICS)	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. 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.	Date over next three years to be determined
Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate (HMFSI)	<p>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 (SFRS) and councils. As part of its programme, HMFSI will inspect four local fire and rescue services during 2015/16.</p> <p>HMFSI also has a programme of thematic inspections, which in 2015 will include a look at SFRS preparedness for a serious flooding event. HMFSI may also carry out ad hoc inspections in response to specific events. If any inspection requires contact with a council, then notification will be provided to the affected council nearer the time.</p>	<p>Perth & Kinross Council will not be included in the 2015/16 programme.</p> <p>TBC</p>
Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	Date to be determined.