

Perth & Kinross Council

Local Scrutiny Plan

2015/16



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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	HMICS will be inspecting local policing across Scotland	Date over next three

Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICS)	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.	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>	Perth & Kinross Council will not be included in the 2015/16 programme. TBC
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.