

Shared risk assessment: Assurance and improvement plan 2010–13

Fife Council



Contents

1. Introduction	2	Outcomes	9
Purpose	3	5. Service performance	12
Ongoing role of the LAN	3	6. Corporate assessment	15
Baseline scrutiny activity	3	7. Collaborative workimng	16
2. Summary	4	8. Conclusion	17
Outcomes	4	Appendices	18
Corporate assessment	4	Appendix 1	18
Service performance	4	Appendix 2	29
Self-evaluation	5		
National risk priorities	5		
3. The council's context	8		
4. Delivering outcomes for communities	9		

1. Introduction

1. This Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP) sets out scrutiny activity in Fife Council for the period from April 2010 to March 2013. It is the product of a collaborative approach adopted by the following scrutiny bodies operating in Fife Council:
 - Audit Scotland
 - Care Commission
 - HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE)
 - Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)
 - Scott-Moncrieff (external auditor)
 - Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA).

2. Contributions and observations were also received from the following organisations:
 - Fife Fire and Rescue and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland (reflecting Fife's position as a unitary authority in terms of Fire and Police services).
 - NHS Quality Improvement Scotland.

3. The AIP explains the basis of our risk assessment of the council, and sets out the scrutiny response. The focus of scrutiny activity is on areas where it is most needed. It draws on a number of sources of information, including:
 - the council's self-evaluation process and supporting evidence
 - reports from Audit Scotland (including national studies and reports from the external auditor) and the Audit of Best Value and Community Planning in Fife Council (published March 2009)
 - the annual audit report to the Controller of Audit and elected members for 2007/08
 - performance information: statutory performance indicators, SOA outcome reports and local key performance indicators
 - reports from HMIE, SWIA, SHR and the Care Commission (including published inspection reports and other supporting evidence)
 - user satisfaction data.

Full details of the initial risk assessment is included at Appendix 1.

Purpose

4. The overall objectives of this new approach are to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of scrutiny work and minimise the impact of scrutiny activity on the council. This will be achieved by:
 - Coordinating the timing and approach of our risk assessment work.
 - Helping to identify and monitor key risks through the sharing of intelligence and information.
 - Building on each other's work to maximise its value.

- Working collaboratively together.

It should be noted that where authorities can demonstrate clear ownership of the improvement agenda, consideration will be given to limiting the level of scrutiny activity within the relevant area. This is a fundamental principle of the proportionate and risk based approach being undertaken through the development of the AIP.

Ongoing role of the LAN

5. We recognise that risk levels will change as significant events occur and as councils take action to address identified risks. Scrutiny bodies, through local area network (LAN) contacts, will maintain awareness of activity, including unit level inspection. As new information comes to light the LAN lead, in consultation with other LAN members will update the AIP as appropriate. LAN members will draw any significant matters to the attention of the LAN lead as they arise. The LAN lead will determine what action should be taken in terms of initiating contact with other LAN members.
6. The council is expected to initiate contact with the LAN lead where significant events occur that are likely to influence scrutiny activity. Councils are encouraged to maintain contact with LAN leads to discuss any concerns arising from the AIP or any joint scrutiny activity.

Baseline scrutiny activity

7. The focus of the AIP is strategic scrutiny activity - that is, scrutiny activity which is focused at corporate or whole service level, but there will also be baseline scrutiny activity at unit level ongoing throughout the period of the AIP. This will include, for example, school and residential home inspections. Scrutiny bodies also reserve the right to make unannounced scrutiny visits. These will generally be made in relation to care services for vulnerable groups. The annual audit of local government also comprises part of the baseline activity for all councils and this includes work necessary to complete the audit of housing and council benefit arrangements.

2. Summary

8. We have identified a range of risks and improvement need for Fife Council, both at corporate and service levels. Overall, the strengths identified in this AIP outweigh the risks. However, the risks identified affect some of the most vulnerable people within the community.

Outcomes

9. The council has defined its priorities as the 'Big 8':
 - Improving educational attainment and achievement for all.
 - Making Fife the leading green council.
 - Improving local conditions for economic development.
 - Increasing access to housing.
 - Improving community safety.
 - Targeting support to vulnerable people.
 - Improving sport, leisure and cultural opportunities.
 - Becoming a top performing council.
10. These clearly reflect its operating context. While the council has made some progress in relation to all these stated outcomes, challenges remain in the improvement of support to vulnerable people, addressing homelessness and access to affordable homes. These identified risk areas impact on a number of the national risk priorities identified in respect of the Shared Risk Assessment process and which are in line with the Scottish Government's adopted priorities for scrutiny.

Corporate assessment

11. Overall, the council demonstrates good self awareness. Following a recent Audit of Best Value and Community Planning, it is implementing an improvement plan to address the areas highlighted in the report. Scott-Moncrieff will be monitoring progress made in relation to the improvement plan, and the scrutiny activity set out for the first year of this plan reflects this work.

Service performance

12. Service performance is more variable. While education, including community learning and development (CLD) is generally performing well, social work and housing have a number of areas where significant risk and improvement need have been identified. SWIA and SHR will focus scrutiny activities on the areas of significant risk (see Appendix 1). During our discussions one potential area of exceptional practice stood out - the Education Psychology Service (EPS) within education services.

Self-evaluation

13. Fife Council has used a variety of approaches to undertake self- evaluation including European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) assessments, best value reviews and service planning and performance monitoring. The council has developed the 'Fife Excellence model', which integrates the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) model with its existing EFQM approach. It has been proactive in seeking advice from external scrutiny bodies, including HMIE and SWIA. While the council exhibits good self awareness, it is too early to fully assess the effectiveness of the Fife Excellence model. However, early indications are that the council is taking a more cohesive and robust approach to self-evaluation. Scott-Moncrieff will evaluate the effectiveness of the Fife Excellence model as part of the review of the council's improvement plan. As the model matures, greater reliance may be placed on it, reducing scrutiny activity in future years.

National priorities

14. The Scottish Government has identified its national scrutiny priorities. These are addressed in this AIP as follows:

- 1. Protection, welfare and access to opportunities for children, adults in need of support and protection and older people*

One of the council's 'big 8' priorities – targeting support for vulnerable people – has a significant bearing in considering this scrutiny priority. The LAN in Fife have identified areas where the council is performing well and there are no significant risks – eg avoiding delayed discharge from hospital. However, significant concerns and risks have been identified in regard to some service provision and outcomes for older people. This, along with assessment of the needs of vulnerable people (including assessment and management of risk), will be covered by SWIA in its scrutiny response.

- 2. Assuring public money is being used properly*

There are no significant risks emerging from the shared risk assessment regarding the use of resources in Fife. There is effective management of corporate resources, and asset management arrangements are being progressed. Staff absence rates are improving. On the other hand, there is some uncertainty in relation to a number of key areas – eg some aspects of competitiveness, including the development of commissioning strategies for all care groups. This uncertainty surrounding competitiveness will be subject to scrutiny response involving Scott-Moncrieff and SWIA in year one of this plan.

3. *The impact of the greater financial pressure faced by councils associated the current economic climate*

The public sector is coming under greater financial pressure due to the current economic climate. Fife Council faces a challenge to deliver services within this climate. Regular reports have been reported to the council's Policy, Finance and Asset Management Committee (PFAM) on the actions being undertaken by the council in response to the economic recession. The most recent paper presented to PFAM in March 2010 noted how the recession was impacting adversely in relation to a number of council scorecard measures. Most notably, however, the report also provided performance measures which could have been impacted by the recession, but despite this, many targets continued to be met or exceeded. These included:

- Target achieved for the indicator 'annual number of jobs created through Fife Council supported business development initiatives'.
- Target achieved for inward investment.

We will be reviewing how the council is responding to the current economic climate as part of the annual audit work undertaken by Scott-Moncrieff, as well as a stronger focus on the council's strategic use of resources.

15. Appendix 1 provides details of the information that informed our risk assessment and shows links to planned scrutiny activity. The programme of scrutiny activity is outlined in appendix 2. The following table sets out a summary of all scrutiny activity over the next three years:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Competitiveness (Scott-Moncrieff and SWIA)	√		
Public performance reporting (Scott-Moncrieff)	√		
Shared services (Scott-Moncrieff)	√		
Sustainability (Scott-Moncrieff)		√	
Governance and accountability (Scott-Moncrieff)		√	
Partnership working and community leadership (LAN and council self-evaluation)		√	
Performance management		√	

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
(LAN and council self-evaluation)			
Joint Child Protection (SCSWIS ¹)			√
SHR baseline inspection	√		
SWIA scrutiny (arising from initial scrutiny level assessment (ISLA))	√		
Care Commission: Adoption and fostering services	√	√	√

¹ Social Care & Social Work Improvement Scotland – proposed name of new scrutiny body incorporating functions of the Care Commission, HMIE (joint child protection) and SWIA from 1 April 2011, subject to parliamentary approval and Royal Assent.

3. The council's context

16. Fife Council has a growing population, currently standing at more than 360,500. It covers a diverse area with a mix of urban and rural settlements. It has pockets of severe deprivation and areas of relative affluence. It is the third largest local authority in Scotland and enjoys co-terminous boundaries with NHS Fife and Fife Constabulary. Within this operating context, challenges include:
- providing services to dispersed rural communities
 - attracting employment opportunities to the area
 - increasing public transport usage
 - an increasing population, impact on services and communities, greater demands being placed on social care services
 - focusing on lifestyle issues around drugs and teenage pregnancies
 - improving attainment levels.
17. Coterminous boundaries with key partners offer almost unique opportunities for effective partnership working across the agencies in Fife. The council has formed strong strategic partnerships, both with health and police colleagues. Despite the opportunities offered by such arrangements and successes achieved, (eg in the management of people whose discharge from hospital has been delayed, and the development of a range of community based services for people with learning disabilities), there is ample potential for further progress in the development of coordinated and integrated services. This has therefore been identified as an area for further review, and we will consider this issue with the council during year one of this plan.

4. Delivering outcomes for communities

In assessing whether Fife Council is delivering outcomes for its communities, we considered relevant performance measures from a number of key sources including community planning performance reports, statutory performance indicators (SPIs), key performance indicators and other inspection/audit reports. The Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) performance report was not available at the time of the main analysis being undertaken. We focused the work around the Big 8 priorities, excluding the priority of becoming a top performing council.

Outcomes

18. Fife Council demonstrates variable performance in relation to delivering outcomes for its citizens. There are clear indications that the council performs well in terms of economic development, educational attainment, community safety and in becoming a green council. We will, therefore, be limiting scrutiny work in these areas. However, as previously indicated, we have identified areas of significant risk in relation to support to vulnerable people and while the housing SPIs show an average performance, there is a lack of information from which to support the risk assessment. Scrutiny work will therefore focus on both these areas in the first year of this plan (see appendix 1, page 10 for details).

Improving local conditions for economic development

19. The council is making significant efforts in response to both the effects of the economic downturn, as well as preparing for an upturn; encouraging and equipping Fife's unemployed people to re-enter the workforce; and bringing positive and permanent change to the local economies of Fife's former industrial communities and key town centres.
20. Generally, performance is improving across a range of community planning indicators. According to council performance figures, the number of people placed into jobs through the council's employability activities had increased by 12 per cent in 2008-09 – well ahead of the target set. Moreover, this performance in the first quarter of 2009-10 was being maintained. However, the percentage of 16-19 year olds not in employment, education or training increased from 8.7 per cent in 2007-08 to 9.8 per cent in 2008-09. The current economic conditions are further reflected in the fact that there has been no change to the number of new larger businesses opening in the area or to the employment rate. In addition, retail vacancy rates in 2008-09 have shown a general increase, reflecting the number of retail businesses going into administration.
21. Although we will not be undertaking any scrutiny activity in the first year of this plan, we will monitor progress in this area of activity, and consider whether specific scrutiny activity is required as part of our annual review of the SRA and AIP.

Improving support to vulnerable people

22. Overall, there has been no change in a number of community planning indicators. These include: fewer people abusing drugs and alcohol, fewer people developing long-term conditions and people eating healthily and being physically active.

23. SPIs highlight need for improvement in social work, with eight out of the 21 indicators in the bottom quartile. The most recent resident's survey highlights high levels of satisfaction for adults and children services at 94 per cent. This is still to be reflected in the Scottish Household Survey, where only 49 per cent of respondents were satisfied with social work services overall. Performance is showing some signs of improvement but this needs to be accelerated. In response, SWIA will be undertaking scrutiny targeted at the risks identified in relation to a number of vulnerable groups, including older people, carers and children with disabilities.

Improving sport, leisure and cultural opportunities

24. Overall, people appear to be more satisfied with their area and are participating more in culture, leisure and community activity. The council demonstrates progress in its efforts to increase participation in sport and physical activity. For example, the number of attendances across sport and leisure centres and community use of schools increased from the previous year during 2008-09. Latest performance figures show a slight fall in the number of visits to Fife's libraries during 2008-09, and a slight increase in museum visits over the same period.

We do not consider there to be significant risk in this area and will not be undertaking any scrutiny activity as a result.

Increasing access to housing

25. Housing indicators suggest an average performance overall. However, in the absence of a baseline inspection of housing services, performance in this area is unclear. SHR will undertake a baseline service review during 2010.

Improving educational achievement for all

26. SPIs highlight mixed performance, with some in the bottom quartile and half around the middle quartile. There have been gains in 5-14 figures in primary, secondary S1-S2, SQA figures in S4 and more recently in S5 and S6. The direction of travel had been positive in recent years. HMIE will continue to undertake pre-school, school and learning community inspections. The district inspector, in consultation with other HMIE link colleagues will continue to monitor where there are concerns.

Leading green council

27. We found that the majority of indicators demonstrated improvement in this area, including greater use of public transport, lower energy per household and in the public sector, more recycling and improved cleanliness index. Challenges identified by the council included the need for further reduction in carbon emissions associated with energy use, and continued improvements in waste management.

User satisfaction rates from the resident's survey and Scottish Household Survey were generally satisfactory, with the waste collection and recycling service provided - 91 per cent of residents satisfied with street cleansing services (up from 85 per cent in 2007).

We do not consider there to be significant risk in this area and will not be undertaking any scrutiny activity as a result.

Improving community safety

28. Almost all the community planning indicators show some level of improvement – for example, less fear of crime, fewer injuries and losses of life in homes and on the roads. We do not consider there to be significant risk in this area and will not be undertaking any scrutiny activity as a result. The reported fall in anti-social behaviour in Fife will be considered as part of the SHR baseline inspection, scheduled for April 2010.

29. In relation to high risk offenders in the community, the Association of Directors of Social Work (ADSW), in partnership with Scottish Government and SWIA, is leading follow-up activity in relation to the multi-agency inspection that led to the publication of the report 'Assessing and managing offenders who present a high risk of serious harm' in June 2009. We have agreed that rather than engaging in further scrutiny work, SWIA will plan and resource a programme of supported self-evaluation in order to build capacity in local authorities to enable criminal justice social work services to address the performance issues raised in the report. This will be provided to all 32 Scottish local authorities and will involve a series of six (one day) contacts for each council, between June 2010 and April 2011.

5. Service performance

Services demonstrate variable levels of service performance.

30. Education and CLD services in Fife are generally performing well and there will be no additional scrutiny in this area. Overall, the outcomes from inspections in pre-school and school inspections, including those involving learning communities are encouraging. Where there are concerns, the district inspector and link CLD HM Inspector continue to monitor progress. There is evidence of a positive impact as a result of the council's commitment to inclusion, and there are innovative approaches to addressing the behavioural needs of pupils. Effective continuous professional development (CPD) is having a positive impact on school leadership. Education services are also making increased and better use of high quality performance management information to track pupils' progress. In terms of attainment, the education service has been working well with schools to improve pupils' attainment. All those involved need to continue this work to ensure further improvement in pupils' performance at Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) qualifications. Again, the district inspector will continue to monitor attainment as part of on-going liaison with education services and any issues arising from inspection findings.
31. No significant risks were identified in a number of services, including environmental services, roads and transport, and planning and economic development. Whilst no specific scrutiny will be carried out in these areas in the course of the first year of this plan, we will be working to enhance our knowledge and understanding of the issues and potential risks faced in delivering related services.
32. The housing service in Fife is scheduled to undergo a baseline housing inspection by SHR in April 2010. The council is performing well in carrying out response repairs within its target timescales. However, the SRA identified a number of significant risks and concerns in four out of 19 housing performance areas:
- Concern regarding achievement of the Scottish Housing Quality Standards.
 - Lack of competition in relation to procuring housing repairs.
 - Homelessness targets not achieved.
 - Deterioration in arrears management performance.
33. We have no direct information available for other housing related performance areas. Social work services in Fife continue to achieve good outcomes for many service users. Performance is particularly strong in relation to the provision of direct payments, and avoiding delay in people being discharged from local hospitals who need social work services. Most recently, the Care Commission in its report "Making the Grade" generally evaluated care services in Fife positively, while adult care services were evaluated as the best in Scotland. These included directly provided and externally commissioned services. However, an initial risk assessment, carried out as part of SWIA's initial scrutiny level assessment (ISLA) indicated significant risk/levels of improvement need, or areas where further investigation required in relation to:

- Performance management and improvement.
 - Assessment and care management.
 - Risk management and accountability.
 - Some aspects of partnership working.
34. The joint inspection of child protection services, published by HMIE in April 2009, served to reinforce some of the areas of concern listed above – eg in relation to risk management and partnership working. In HMIE's follow through inspection, published in May 2010, notable progress had been made in all main points for action, although further work was needed in some key areas such as continuing to improve the rigour and quality of assessments and care plans. These issues will be addressed in years one and two of this AIP, as set out in Appendix 2.

Good practice

35. As part of the SRA process, we set out to identify areas of exceptional performance or promising innovation – ie practice or provision that is outstanding and/or groundbreaking, both in terms of operation and outcomes achieved.
36. During 2008-09, the council gained recognition and award for a number of services and initiatives. Examples include:
- Carbon trust award – for achievement of CO2 reductions, year on year
 - COSLA excellence awards – promoting safer communities (silver) and recruitment initiative (bronze)
 - E-Government National Award – Fife Child Protection Register.
37. In particular, we identified one area of exceptional practice within education services - the Education Psychology Service (EPS). HMIE inspectors considered that EPS staff displayed an excellent level of professionalism, commitment and high quality teamwork across the staff group. They had developed an approach to research which was embedded across the service and delivered clear benefits to children and young people. EPS staff made valuable contributions to a range of strategic and operational working groups across educational services. The EPS had also made important contributions to a number of wider developments in Fife. In partnership with other stakeholders, they had been actively involved in the development and implementation of the council's policy on inclusion.
38. For their part, the council highlighted a number of services where significant improvement had been achieved – a notable example of this being the processing of housing and council tax benefits. This was not only noteworthy in terms of outstanding performance improvement (both in relation to the amount of time taken to process claims and levels of accuracy), but also the manner in which improvement had been achieved. In reporting this, the council stressed that performance improvement had been delivered by the benefits team, not by senior management. While senior managers had identified the issues, challenged the status quo and offered support and resources,

dramatic improvement in this case had been achieved through complete buy-in from the team, and that buy-in had been achieved by empowering staff, giving them ownership of the project.

Details of examples of excellent practice will be published via the Accounts Commission website.

6. Corporate assessment

39. As stated at the outset, this shared risk assessment reveals variable levels of risk and improvement need across the council. At the corporate level, the council's improvement plan – prepared in response to the audit of Best Value and Community Planning – seeks to address a number of risks and improvement needs:

- Effective performance information to underpin improvements in service delivery.
- Elected members to take more of a leadership role in driving forward the best value agenda at a strategic level and to participate fully in training and development.
- Further development of workforce planning.
- Improved monitoring of the outcomes of partnership working.
- Development of the working of its area committees.
- Progress with shared services.

The improvement plan will be reviewed annually by Scott-Moncrieff.

40. Fife Council and Fife Constabulary form the police authority for the area. Initial work conducted as part of the Audit of Best Value and Community Planning identified that there was a lack of clarity within the governance arrangements in place and that elected members were not always clear which role they were considering information or making decisions on. An action plan is included in the Best Value Improvement Plan and Scott-Moncrieff will follow this up during their annual audit activity.

41. No work will be undertaken on the corporate equality agenda, as there are no identifiable risks at this point in time. An account of the corporate assessment, including initial risk assessment, details of evidence, rationale and corresponding scrutiny response is set out in the table contained in Appendix 1. Scrutiny activity will be targeted in those areas assessed as highest risk and these are set out in the remainder of this AIP (Appendix 2).

7. Collaborative working

42. The shared risk assessment process is designed to reduce the level of scrutiny activity - both by removing potential areas of duplication, and creating the conditions for more innovative, joined-up approaches to scrutiny. This will be achieved by scrutiny bodies sharing information and intelligence, focussing on risk areas and identifying areas for collaborative working. In Fife, the LAN has identified a number of areas where such a collaborative approach has been adopted. Examples include:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Partnership working and community leadership | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Council invited to consider self-evaluation or joint response during year 2 (2011-12). |
| Competitiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joint approach –Scott-Moncrieff and SWIA. |
| Social Work | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supported self-evaluation (Council + SWIA).• Joint approach – SWIA and Care Commission. |

8. Conclusion

43. This AIP plan is proportionate and risk based. It maintains a focus on areas previously identified in the Audit of Best Value and Community Planning, at the same time responding to identified risks, areas of uncertainty and improvement need identified in some service areas – notably housing and social work services. The achievements of the council in all areas are recognised and, as such, will not attract any scrutiny activity as a result of the shared risk assessment carried out as part of this planning process.

44. On conclusion of further discussions on the national risk factors and a strategic review of resource scheduling, this AIP will be finalised and issued to the council. There will be ongoing engagement with the council throughout the period covered by the AIP and prior to issuing the 2011-12 AIP.

Appendix 1 – Risk assessment

Outcomes	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
Improving local conditions for economic development	No significant risks identified	<p>The council is generally performing well in this area. Indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in number of new businesses • Higher productivity • More graduates in the workforce • Fewer adults not in work. 	No scrutiny activity
Improving support to vulnerable people	No significant risks identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The social work service is performing well in the provision of direct payments (2nd out of 32 local authorities). • Similarly, performance is good in relation to the management of delayed hospital discharges . • In terms of dealing with inequalities arising from debt caused by current economic difficulties, council performance reports refer to recruitment of additional temporary staff engaged to assist with a 25% increase in demand for debt advice. 	No scrutiny activity
	Significant concerns and risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For older people, key performance measures lag behind the Scottish average – for example, the council ranks amongst the lowest for the provision of evening and weekend care. 	<p>SWIA scrutiny response, year 1 - The SWIA scrutiny response is based on the initial scrutiny level assessment (ISLA)</p> <p>Care Commission will continue with a programme of inspection of care at home and housing support services</p>
	Area of uncertainty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More progress needs to be made in relation to the council's carers' strategy. • There is limited provision of residential short breaks for children with disabilities. The range and quality of non-residential provision to be considered as part of the SWIA scrutiny response. 	SWIA scrutiny response, year 1 - The SWIA scrutiny response is based on the initial scrutiny level assessment (ISLA)

Outcomes	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
Improving sport, leisure and cultural opportunities	No significant risks identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, indications are that people in Fife are participating more in culture, leisure and community activities. • A £50 million investment in leisure is underway, including new or refurbished sports facilities in Glenrothes Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline. • The number of attendances across sport and leisure centres and community use of schools increased from the previous year during 2008-09. • Latest performance figures show a slight fall in the number of visits to Fife's libraries during 2008-09, and a slight increase in museum visits over the same period. 	No scrutiny activity
Increasing access to housing	Significant concerns and risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are relatively low numbers of good quality, affordable homes available in Fife. • The council did not meet its targets in relation to homelessness in 2008-09. These included allocations to homeless households and the average time taken to deal with homelessness cases. There is a risk that the 2012 targets will not be achieved. 	SHR baseline assessment
Improving educational achievement for all	No significant risks identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attainment levels continue to show improvement. • Inspection evidence from pre-school and school inspections continues to show improvement in learners' achievements. • The council received a good INEA report. • Learning communities inspections indicate that outcomes for young people and adult learners are good or better. 	No scrutiny activity (other than planned HMIE inspection of nurseries, schools and learning communities, and Care Commission inspection of children's day care services including education pre school nurseries)
Leading green council	No significant risks identified	<p>Improvement can be found in the majority of community planning indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater use of public transport – particularly bus and community transport services. According to council surveys, satisfaction for these services has also increased. • Lower energy per household and in public sector. • More recycling. 	No scrutiny activity

Outcomes	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved cleanliness indicator. 	
Improving community safety	No significant risks identified	<p>Improvement is evident from a range of outcome measures, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less fear of crime. • Less anti-social and nuisance behaviour. • Fewer injuries – for example, the number of people killed or seriously injured on Fife’s roads in 2008/09 fell by 25% compared with 2007/08. 	No scrutiny activity

Corporate Assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
Vision and Strategic Direction	No significant risks identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is clear strategic direction evident at corporate level. • Vision and priorities are communicated effectively. • Corporate and service plans link well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No scrutiny activity
	Significant concerns and risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected members need to take a more active leadership role in relation to key aspects of Best Value. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Included in Best Value Improvement Plan – subject to annual external audit (Scott-Moncrieff)
Partnership working and community leadership	No significant risks identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are close, well established working arrangements with community planning partners. • Community planning structures are well established. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No scrutiny activity
	Area of uncertainty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community planning partnership needs to better understand how it is performing in relation to all outcomes for local communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement work proposed for year 2
Community engagement	No significant risks identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a wide range of consultation and community engagement activity in Fife. • Community learning and development (CLD) and schools engage well with communities at local level. • In Fire and Rescue, community engagement is recognised as a priority at strategic level and actioned at the point of service delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No scrutiny activity
Governance and Accountability	No significant risks identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council demonstrates a culture of openness, accountability, effective delegation and corporate working. • There is a willingness to apply alternative models of governance in some of the larger units of service delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No scrutiny activity

Corporate Assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
	Area of uncertainty	<p>Governance and accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Best Value review highlighted the need for improvements in areas of scrutiny and leadership of Best Value on the part of elected members. Since the introduction of the Scheme of Scrutiny and Performance in 2008, work has been ongoing to develop scrutiny arrangements. This scheme sets out mechanisms by which effective scrutiny could be carried out and recommends that all committees consider the adoption of an annual work programme including identification of any priority areas for scrutiny. Steps are being taken to improve training and development of elected members. Training arrangements have been reviewed, and Fife is one of seven councils participating in an Improvement Service initiative to pilot a continuous professional development framework for elected members. In the operation of the Police, Fire and Safety Committee, there is lack of clarity around respective roles of elected members in their different capacities as authority members and council committee members. The controller of audit and HMIC are working with the council and the chief constable to reach an agreed position over governance arrangements. 	Annual external audit (year 2)
	Area of uncertainty	<p>Public Performance Reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need for greater balance in public reporting – current emphasis is on positive messages. There is a risk of difficulties and challenges being masked. The council's performance reporting framework is being revised –the full effect of this is still to be seen. 	Annual external audit
Performance management and improvement	No significant risks identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priorities are clearly identified within the council plan (Big 8). A corporate balanced scorecard accompanies the plan. Plans reflect national priorities in education – at both service and school/establishment levels. In fire and rescue, benchmarking is undertaken nationally, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No scrutiny activity

Corporate Assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		taking account of a number of indicators covering operational activity, procurement, etc.	
	Significant concerns and risks	Customer focus and responsiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of link to asset management – ie duplication of offices/ sites in some settlements. Mixed views on customer service in some areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SWIA scrutiny response, year 1 SHR Baseline Assessment
	Area of uncertainty	Performance management In response to the Best Value report, the council has committed to develop its performance management framework. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of in year performance reporting to committees (November 2009). Cross party leaders to review progress on performance reporting and to identify further improvements (October 2009). Procure and implement a corporate performance management software solution (from April 2010). The role of area committees in performance management lacks clarity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement work proposed for year 2
	Area of uncertainty	Competitiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council's procurement strategy covers the period 2007-10. The strategy aligns the work of the procurement function with the council's Big 8. The council has restructured its procurement function to bring it within the finance and resources directorate. This has raised the profile of the function, allowing more effective reporting and line management structures. There is a lack of evidence that demonstrates the council's competitiveness. There has been progress in relation to larger areas of service (Sport and Leisure Trust, Theatre and Arts Trust), but evidence is lacking that this kind of approach extends to service level – eg repairs service in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint approach: External audit and SWIA scrutiny response, year 1 SHR Baseline Assessment

Corporate Assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<p>housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The balance between internal and external social care provision needs to be clearly supported by the publication of commissioning strategies for all key care groups. A commissioning strategy is in place for children and families services. 	
<p>Use of resources</p>	<p>No significant risks identified</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is effective management of corporate finances. Asset management arrangements are developing and the council has plans in place to take the work forward. The Council's updated asset management strategy and asset management plan for 2009-12 was presented to PFAM in September 2009. This document sets out how the Council will comply with the recommendations made in the Audit Scotland report, along with recommendations made in a number of other publications including the external audit report on the council's asset management arrangements. While the council does not have a corporate workforce strategy, services have developed their own strategies. According to council performance reporting, sickness absence rates continue to improve in percentage terms and targets have been exceeded in reducing absence for single status employees. The council absence figure is now below 5%, the Scottish average was 5.4% in 2007/08. There is an established ICT strategy board for managing both investment and strategy. In relation to the development of shared services, work is underway towards the establishment of South East Strategic Procurement – a collaboration with City of Edinburgh and Scottish Borders councils, with a view to achieving significant financial efficiencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External audit will monitor implementation of asset management plan over the next 3 years

Corporate Assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
Equality	No significant risks identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant policies, guidance notes and reporting are in place. • There is generally good performance regarding social inclusion in pre-schools, schools and in CLD practice. • The council report that 81% of council buildings are suitable for, and accessible to, disabled people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No scrutiny activity
Sustainability	Area of uncertainty	Fife Council has made good progress on environmental, economic and social sustainability issues. However, the council would benefit from a more structured approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of council's approach to sustainability to be undertaken by Scott Moncrieff, year 2

Service Assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
Education	No significant risks identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is effective leadership in education services, reflected in strong performance in most areas. Performance in pre-school and school settings is relatively good and improving. • Similarly, HMIE note positive leadership of CLD services, with good outcomes. • Overall, effective self-evaluation arrangements exist in pre-schools and in schools. There is an improving picture in CLD. • All schools and nurseries are provided with appropriate network facilities, supported by high capacity broadband. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme of school inspections to continue, years 1-3
Fire and Rescue	No significant risks identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance data from the council indicates effective delivery of operational service, particularly regarding house fires. • In terms of prevention, the number of house fire risk assessments conducted by the Fire and Rescue service over the first quarter of 2009-10 was 17% above target. • In relation to fire safety, the number of fire incidents and corresponding casualty figures are both within the national targets set. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No scrutiny activity
Housing	No significant risks identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing support services – higher than average performance indicated by Care Commission grades. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No scrutiny activity (other than planned Care Commission inspection of accommodation services (scheduled for April 2010))
	Significant concerns and risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottish Housing Quality Standards (targets set for 2015) – there is some concern regarding progress towards achieving these targets. • Although good performance has been achieved in relation to completing housing repairs within target, the council has not recently tendered its repairs service and it is not clear that it can demonstrate the service offers value for money. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline SHR inspection

Service Assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrears management shows signs of deterioration. 	
	<p>Area of uncertainty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no direct information or incomplete information for the following areas of Housing performance – access to housing, lettings, tenancy and neighbourhood management, income maximisation, asset management strategy and planning, investment and home safety, response repairs, value for money in procurement, homelessness access to the service, homelessness advice and prevention, homelessness assessment of homeless people, strategic planning, performance management, customer focus, equalities, efficiencies and value for money. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline SHR inspection, transitional year
<p>Social Work</p>	<p>No significant risks identified</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frameworks for assessing the needs of service users are in place. There are detailed frameworks for risk assessments across criminal justice, children and families and community care services. A relatively low number of upheld complaints and requirements (in care homes) were made in relation to council services. Similarly, a relatively low number of complaints for support services has been recorded. Fife social work services generally achieve above average grades for Care Commission regulated services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No scrutiny activity
	<p>Area of uncertainty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership arrangements and working at the strategic level appear robust and effective but benefits and impact has been slower to develop in respect of older people's services. There are questions regarding effective linkages between performance management/ service planning and financial planning in social work – e.g. the link between service and financial planning appears to require to be further developed. 	<p>SWIA scrutiny response, year 1</p>
	<p>Significant concerns and risks</p>	<p>Assessment and care management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is concern regarding the quality of a significant 	

Service Assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<p>number of assessments and care planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Late submissions of reports to SCRA continues to be an issue (although improvement reported for May 2010). <p><i>Risk assessment and risk management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are clear indications that the quality of risk assessment across all care groups requires improvement. Notable progress was reported by HMIE in its follow through inspection in assessing risks for children, but there was a need for further work to improve the rigour and quality of assessments and care plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint approach: SWIA scrutiny response and Care Commission inspection of Adoption and Fostering services, year 1
<p>Environment and Development</p>	<p>No significant risks identified</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Below average performance is evident in relation to the processing of planning applications. Waste collection and recycling are performing well, according to the council's performance figures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No scrutiny activity

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Appendix 2: Outline summary of scrutiny activity

The AIP is a three year rolling programme. The SRA will be carried out on an annual basis. At each stage, the AIP will be revised. This raises the possibility of additional risks emerging, and risk-based scrutiny responses being added to the plan in relation to subsequent years.

NB. The AIP does not include detail of unit-based inspection activity, such as that carried out by the Care Commission (care homes and other regulated services) and HMIE (schools and other educational provision). Ongoing contact between link and district inspectors from SWIA and HMIE respectively is also not specified in the plan, but occurs throughout the year.

2010-11 (Year 1)												
Scrutiny activity	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
SHR baseline inspection												
SWIA - social work scrutiny activity, arising from initial scrutiny level assessment (ISLA). Schedule for this activity to be agreed with the council												
Care commission inspection of Adoption and Fostering Services.												
Competitiveness – joint approach External Audit and SWIA												
Public Performance Reporting –review as part of External audit of SPIs												
Shared services –External Audit annual audit plan includes intention to monitor progress by the council in exploring alternative models for service delivery and working with other public sector organisations												
HMIE – Child protection follow-up												

2011-12 (Year 2)	
Issues for scrutiny /improvement	Scrutiny bodies /council potential involvement
Partnership working and community leadership	LAN (scrutiny and /or supported self-evaluation), Fife Council (self-evaluation)
Sustainability – review of council approach	External Audit
Governance and accountability – incorporated into annual external audit	External Audit
Performance management	LAN (scrutiny and /or supported self-evaluation), Fife Council (self-evaluation)
Adoption and Fostering Services	SCSWIS

2012-13 (Year 3)	
Issues for scrutiny /improvement	Scrutiny bodies /council potential involvement
Joint Inspection of services to protect children and young people – CP2	SCSWIS, with HIS ² (Health Improvement Scotland), HMICS and HMIE
Adoption and Fostering Services	SCSWIS

² Health Improvement Scotland – proposed name for new health regulator from 1 April 2011, subject to parliamentary approval and Royal Assent.