

# Shared risk assessment: Assurance and improvement plan 2010–13

Midlothian Council



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# 1. Introduction

1. The Assurance and Improvement Plan sets out the planned scrutiny activity for Midlothian Council for the period 2010 to 2013. It explains the basis of our risk assessment of the council, and sets out the scrutiny response. The scrutiny activity is proportionate based on the assessed risks.
2. This Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP) is the product of a collaborative approach adopted by the following scrutiny bodies operating in Midlothian Council:
  - Audit Scotland
  - Care Commission
  - HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE)
  - Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)
  - Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA).
3. The overall objectives of this collaborative 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.
  - Drawing on, and taking account of each other's work.
  - Avoiding duplication of effort.
4. The AIP draws on a number of sources of information, including:
  - the 2008/09 Strategic Audit Risk Assessment (SARA) for Midlothian Council, produced by the Audit Scotland external audit team
  - the audit of Best Value and Community Planning in Midlothian Council 2007/08
  - the annual audit report to the Controller of Audit and elected members for 2008/09
  - the council's own self evaluation and supporting evidence
  - reports and data from HMIE, SWIA, SHR and the Care Commission (including published inspection reports and other supporting evidence).

## 2. Summary

The council has set itself a broad and challenging set of strategic objectives, particularly given the severe financial pressures it faces and the potential impact of the economic recession. The evidence suggests that progress towards achieving these objectives is variable. A number of improvement strategies have been introduced, but many are at a very early stage. Key risks relate to financial management and the possibility that recent change and improvement strategies do not have sufficient impact to generate the scale of efficiencies necessary to meet best value requirements. As a result, the level of scrutiny activity in the first year of this plan will be targeted in those areas assessed as highest risk. This includes the financial position and the ability of the council to meet its longer term ambitions. These are set out in the remainder of the AIP. Scrutiny activity in subsequent years will be influenced by the extent to which these risk areas are managed and trends in improvement identified. The AIP gives an overview of the information that informed the risk assessment and shows how this links to the proposed scrutiny response. There is some evidence of good practice on self-evaluation in individual service areas such as social work, libraries and schools but these are not coordinated or consistent across the council.

5. Midlothian Council is in a period of transition. The recently appointed chief executive has initiated a range of changes to policy and practice, particularly on quality assurance and improvement planning. Corporate priorities were updated in 2010 and clearer indicators set for identifying progress. The Council introduced a Business Transformation Programme in February 2010 and work is underway to deliver this, including organisational restructure (the management review). It is too early to assess the full impact of these changes on leadership, service delivery, best value and improvement.
6. In addition the Council faces significant risk with regard to financial management which are compounded by the current economic recession and spending cuts. These challenges cannot be met from simple service efficiencies alone and will require a more radical approach and a clearer articulation of priority service areas. As a result, scrutiny activity in the first year will be targeted at those areas related mainly to financial and resource management and economic development which provide highest risk. These are set out in the remainder of this AIP. In years two and three when it is likely that the impact of current changes will be more evident at corporate and service level, further scrutiny will be targeted as appropriate.
7. Overall, the council has responded positively to various inspections on service delivery and has introduced a number of improvements. In a recent Citizen's Panel Council Services Survey, 71 per cent of residents were satisfied with local services. Data from the Scottish Household Survey suggest that council services in Midlothian appear to be generally well regarded by those who use them, with social work services being the only service to receive a satisfaction score of below 50 per cent.

### National risk priorities

8. National risk priorities have been identified by the Scottish Government and these are reflected in national scrutiny priorities which have been considered in the shared risk assessment for all councils. The three national scrutiny priorities are:
  - protection, welfare and access to opportunities for: children, adults in need of support and protection, and older people

- assuring public money is being used properly
  - the impact of the recession.
9. These national risk priority areas are integrated into the council's six strategic priorities. These priority areas, particularly the latter two, pose risks for Midlothian Council and particular risk assessments against them are integrated into the AIP as part of the outcome (see pages 8-9), service (see pages 9-11/12) and corporate assessments (see pages 13-14).
  10. The priorities are reflected in the identified scrutiny responses (see pages 15 and 16).
  11. On priority area one, overall this is an improving picture in Midlothian and in year 1 planned scrutiny will comprise aspects of housing provision and adoption and fostering services. In year 2 scrutiny will involve joint inspection of child protection, incorporating risk thresholds in social work, and aspects of education. Scrutiny in year 3 will focus on social work.
  12. Priorities 2 and 3 provide greater risk for Midlothian. Due to corporate financial pressures, service budget pressures and the potential impact of the recession there is a risk that the Council may not achieve its budget projections and continue to have a general fund reserve, which is below the desired minimum of £3 million. As a result, in year 1 scrutiny will be largely linked to the annual financial audit process and focus on the Council strategic priorities of maximising business opportunities and delivering responsive, efficient and effective services. The outcomes of related scrutiny in year 1 will substantially inform the BV2 audit in year 2.

### 3. The council's context

13. Midlothian Council has a population of 80,560, which accounts for 1.5 per cent of the population of Scotland. Despite the General Registrar's Office for Scotland (GROS) estimates suggesting the population will decrease by 4.4 per cent by 2031, the council is of the view that, based on other indicators including the rate of house building, Midlothian will experience a long term growth in population. The proportion of older people is set to increase by 25.8 per cent, which is lower than the Scottish average of 31.2 per cent.
14. Midlothian has a mixed profile in terms of deprivation and employment. Deprivation is relatively low with 4.75 per cent of the population living in the 15 per cent most deprived areas in Scotland. A lower proportion of the working age population claim benefits than nationally. However, Midlothian has the fourth highest figure for people in work claiming housing benefits, indicating a higher proportion of people living in low income households. Unemployment, at 3.6 per cent, is lower than the 4.7 per cent level for Scotland as a whole. Median gross weekly earnings are 13.5 per cent lower than that for Scotland as a whole.
15. Over the last few years there has been an increase in the number of businesses registered for VAT, but this increase was below the national rate. While a much higher proportion of the workforce (12 per cent) is employed in construction compared to Scotland as a whole (5.7 per cent), lower proportions are employed in manufacturing and service industries.
16. Home ownership is close to the Scottish average, whereas renting from the social rental sector is lower by around eight per cent. Midlothian has the eighth highest house prices of local authorities in Scotland. The proportion of households in council tax bands F to H is slightly lower than average. The number of dwellings has risen by four per cent since 2003, close to the Scottish rate of 4.4 per cent.
17. Crimes and offences recorded are lower than average, but clear up rates at 62 per cent are substantially lower than the Scottish figure of 73 per cent. Use of anti-social behaviour orders is higher than average.
18. Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy are higher than the national average for men, but equal to the average for women. Admissions to hospital for alcohol misuse is lower than average and admissions for drugs misuse at 126.88 per 100,000 is close to the national average of 127.46. A higher proportion of the population claim Disability Living Allowance.
19. Educational attainment at S4 is very close to the Scottish average, but attainment at S5 is below the Scottish average. The working age population has fewer qualifications than the national average.
20. As a consequence of the council's operating context and the serious financial position it faces there are a number of key challenges which are reflected in the risk assessments and planned scrutiny. These include:

- Managing financial and budget constraints.
- Managing the impact of population changes.
- Alleviating the effects of poverty in pockets of deprivation and lower income households.
- Attracting employment to the area and reducing the impact of the recession on employment in the construction sector.
- Reducing traffic congestion and improving important transport links.
- Lessening the effect of high house prices and lower levels of social rented housing on affordable housing.
- Decreasing anti-social behavior and increasing clear up rates for crime.
- Focusing on lifestyle issues around drug misuse.
- Improving road safety.
- Increasing educational attainment and skills levels.

## Self-evaluation

**Self-evaluation has been undertaken using the Best Value Statutory Guidance and the Priorities and Risks Framework, but this approach is now felt to be out of date. The council has not undertaken any overall self-evaluation through the application of commonly applied tools such as ‘How Good is Our Council?’ or the Public Sector Improvement Framework (PSIF). There is some evidence of good practice on self-evaluation in individual service areas such as social work, libraries and schools using external frameworks developed by the Care Commission, SWIA, PLQIM and HMIE. However, these are not coordinated or consistent across the council. The council is to adopt PSIF.**

21. The council has undertaken a range of internal best value and service reviews to identify areas for improvement and generate efficiencies. It is currently in the process of implementing an Integrated Improvement Plan which has brought together a number of improvement projects and actions resulting from the audit of Best Value and Community Planning, the Shared Service Diagnostic, the Efficient Government programme and a range of internal best value service reviews. The council is about to embark on a business transformation project and is using the draft Audit Scotland Best value toolkits as a means of identifying key improvement areas to be addressed. These will be consolidated into an overarching Corporate Improvement Plan.
22. The council has comprehensive performance management arrangements developed as part of its Planning and Performance Management Framework (PPMF) in place which provide details of service performance against local and national indicators and progress against the Single Outcome Agreement. A supported self-evaluation in Education was carried out in 2008 and a self-evaluation calendar is now in place in Education and Communities division. As part of the Community Planning Partnership, the council has access to a citizens’ panel which provides regular feedback on levels of customer satisfaction. These measures provide useful context and demonstrate that the council has much in place by way of corporate strategies, governance structures and initiatives. However, in the

absence of a mature process of self assessment it is not possible to fully assess the effectiveness of these processes as a basis for the council's self-evaluation.

23. It is widely accepted that rigorous self-evaluation should be a central part of council's performance management arrangements to support continuous improvement, and that self-evaluation evidence should be at the heart of the risk assessment process, using it to ensure that external scrutiny is well targeted and proportionate.



# 4. Delivering outcomes for communities

In 2010 the council updated and clarified its six strategic objectives and identified how these would be met in terms of outcomes for residents and actions for the council. The update provided greater clarity on indicators to measure progress and how these link to the Single Outcome Agreement. There is good alignment between the Council Corporate Plan and the Community Plan. The plans are based on the same strategic objectives and focus well on the challenges posed by the socio-economic context of the area. There is a focus on social and financial inclusion, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, promoting economic development, supporting the growth of a skilled workforce and improving services.

## Strategic priorities

24. Objective 1: Supporting healthy, caring and diverse communities where local needs are met.

- Provide quality, affordable housing including increasing homelessness accommodation.
- Maximise opportunities for people to stay in their own communities.
- Strengthen services for children & young people.
- Provide suitable infrastructure for the efficient and effective delivery of service to meet the full range of community needs.

It is difficult to assess progress towards strategic objective 1 as much of the data is not yet available, but comprehensive measures have been put in place to assess social inclusion, health and wellbeing.

25. Objective 2: Maximising business opportunities.

- Promote inward investment and create quality and sustainable business locations.

Progress in maximising business opportunities is variable and this is a risk to Midlothian in being able to attract business and residents to the area.

26. Objective 3: Maintaining Midlothian as a safe place to live, work and visit.

- Reduce levels of drug and alcohol misuse.
- Work with communities to reduce anti-social behaviour and offending and promote positive social development.
- Work with partners to protect vulnerable people.
- Improve road safety.

Strategic objective 3 is improving with good progress being made on the majority of targets. However, it is proving difficult to improve residents' perceptions of safety. Reducing anti-social behaviour and offending, protecting vulnerable people, and reducing levels of drug and alcohol misuse continue to be key priorities for residents.

27. Objective 4: Conserving and improving Midlothian's natural environment.

- Reduce the environmental impact of waste.
- Contribute to sustainable development, including in securing best value.

Satisfactory progress is being made towards conserving and improving Midlothian's natural environment. However, although Midlothian achieves above average recycling rates, fewer residents are satisfied with refuse collection and street cleaning compared to Scotland overall.

28. Objective 5: Improving opportunities for people in Midlothian.

- Improve the level of achievement/attainment for children and adults in lifelong learning.
- Promote social and financial inclusion in Midlothian.
- Regenerate and improve Midlothian's town and village centres.
- Support the growth of a skilled workforce.

Progress towards achieving strategic objective 5 is mixed. Ensuring services are best value for money remains a key priority for residents.

29. Objective 6: Delivering responsive, efficient and effective service to the people of Midlothian.

- Ensure a sustainable strategy for the delivery of Council services.
- Deliver Best Value.

Financial and budget constraints are a very significant risk to delivering responsive, efficient and effective services to the people in Midlothian.

## Services

### Executive and strategic services

**The functions of these Divisions are addressed as part of the corporate assessment.**

### Commercial Services

30. Commercial Services Division delivers a wide range of front line and facilities management services. These include roads and transport; lighting; housing repairs and maintenance; waste recycling and refuse collection; new build, building refurbishment, maintenance and improvement; and catering services. The council has embarked on a major Zero Waste Recycling project in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council. Although Midlothian achieves good recycling rates, refuse collection attracts considerable customer criticism and collection costs appear high.

## **Social work**

31. Following the publication of a very critical joint child protection inspection report in 2007, the social work division faced a severe test of capacity and leadership. Elected members and senior Council officers responded positively and a follow through report published in February 2009 indicated that overall the Council and partners had made very good progress in meeting the points for action identified in the original inspection report. This included a return of confidence across staff in the social work division.
32. A performance inspection report of social work services in Midlothian was published in November 2008. Overall, Midlothian Council social work division performed to an adequate standard in delivering positive outcomes for people who used services. Performance was good in relation to provision for service users who had mental health problems, through care and aftercare services, and the educational attainment of looked after children. People who used the services were mainly positive about the difference these had made to their lives. Most social work staff in Midlothian were motivated and committed.
33. A follow-up inspection report was published in January 2010. Progress had been significant: five of the recommendations had been met in full; in seven, progress had been substantial; in five, there had been some progress; and there were none where there had been no progress. While considerable progress has been made towards implementing the agreed action plan, it is too early to assess fully how the actions taken since 2009 have improved outcomes. Further assurance is required in relation to the five recommendations where only some progress has been made. These areas are: modernising services for people with learning disabilities; outcome measurement; public information; consistency of risk assessment thresholds; joint financial information and monitoring.

## **Education and communities**

34. Midlothian Council has built eleven new schools using Public Private Partnership (PPP) funding, this has rationalised three special schools into one new special school on the Dalkeith schools community campus alongside two replacement secondary schools. The primary school programme has seen the closure of six school and the amalgamation of eight schools into eight new build schools. The Capital building programme has also created four replacement schools which also nursery provision thus reducing the number of free standing nursery schools from six to four. The council has sought to create fully integrated community schools through the refurbishment and rebuild programme in support of the delivery of integrated children's services and community learning into its schools.
35. In pre-school provision, there are important strengths, but there is headroom for improvement in leadership and meeting needs. Attainment in Primary schools in reading, writing and mathematics shows slow but steady improvement over the last three years. However, there has been some slight slippage in 2009, particularly in mathematics and numeracy. In Secondary schools, while there have been some improvements in attainment over the last three years, pupils' performance requires to be strengthened in a number of areas. Despite recent improvements, proportionately fewer pupils go on

to Higher and Further Education from Midlothian schools than occurs nationally. The figures for the More Choices More Chances (MCMC) group are worthy of concern as the figures for young people going into negative destinations are increasing on a yearly basis. The number of young people unemployed and seeking employment has increased over the last two year period. The council has a well established MCMC Partnership Board with a comprehensive MCMC strategy and plan which is seeking to address the challenges posed by the economic and employment downturn.

36. The authority has recognised the need to monitor the performance of its schools and other services relating to children's health and well-being more rigorously. One of the key challenges facing the Education and Communities Division is the maintenance of an effective quality assurance culture. This is particularly important given the age profile of the Quality Improvement team, where there are imminent retirements. This is also the case with secondary head teachers where the age profile is rising. There is a need to simultaneously lower the age profile and maintain and extend the improvement agenda.
37. Education and Communities has a central role in enabling the council to, in particular, achieve Objective 5: Improving opportunities for people in Midlothian through improving the level of achievement/attainment for children and adults in lifelong learning and supporting the growth of a skilled workforce. Current trends suggest a potential risk to the council in this area.

## **Corporate Services**

38. Corporate Services Division includes Finance, Internal Audit and Risk Management and Housing Management. The council faces serious financial pressures and was predicting a possible negative General Fund reserve before recently being granted permission to borrow to meet the costs of equal pay back pay costs. The impact of the economic recession, resulting in a delay in capital receipts and developer contributions and the consequent increased pressure on services continues to present challenges. The delivery of Internal Audit and Risk Management services continue to show significant improvement and no risks have been identified.

## **Housing**

39. The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) inspection in 2008 found strengths in housing asset management and in the council's plans and progress on building new affordable houses. It also found estates to be in a generally good condition and that Midlothian had relatively low rents and management costs. However, poor overall performance was found in housing management and services to homeless people. This included a range of weaknesses in access, service quality, customer focus, performance management, and legislation and a key nationally set target to reduce homelessness. The council did not act effectively upon improvement actions recommended by its own mock inspection. Since the inspection, the time it takes to re-let empty houses has significantly increased. It has lowered its arrears levels consistently but its 2009 figure is above the Scottish average. Its responsive repairs indicator has shown variable performance and was below average in

2009. The council agreed an improvement plan with SHR in 2008 and is due to report progress against this in January 2010.

## Implications for scrutiny activity

### Year 1

40. In addition to continuously monitoring the financial position, Audit Scotland's annual financial audit process will scrutinise key service developments and auditors will work with other appropriate Local Area Network (LAN) members to focus on strategic objectives 2 (maximising business opportunities) and 6 (customer focus and responsiveness) in year 1. As part of the Annual Financial Audit in year 1, Commercial Services, including refuse collection and the Zero Waste Recycling project, will be a focus of attention.
41. The HMIE District Inspector will support service improvement in education with a particular focus on the extent to which that service contributes to the overall achievement of the council's strategic objectives. Strategic objectives 1 and 5.
42. The Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care will inspect Adoption and Fostering services. Strategic objective 1.
43. The Scottish Housing Regulator will review the council's self-evaluation of progress with improvement plan actions. Strategic objective 1.

### Year 2

44. BV2, focus scoped in response to outcomes of year 1 scrutiny.
45. Child Protection Inspection, This will include a focus on social work risk thresholds.
46. ISLA social work risk assessment.
47. Scrutiny of the education functions of the council, focus informed by the outcomes of HMIE District Inspector supporting service improvement in contributing to the overall achievement of the council's strategic objectives, particularly strategic objectives 1 and 5.

### Year 3

48. Social work. Inspection, social work focused on outcome measurement, public information, modernising services for people with learning disabilities, and joint financial information and monitoring.

## 5. Corporate assessment

**The council has carried out a wide range of improvements in its corporate arrangements in recent years. While the impact of these changes has still to be fully realised in specific areas, such as performance management, the council has, in broad terms, sound arrangements in place. The most significant risks relate to financial management and the council's capacity to achieve necessary savings. Risk is associated with the planned impact recent and imminent changes in management structure and the business transformation programme not being fully realised.**

49. Following the publication of the report on the audit of Best Value and Community Planning in June 2008, Midlothian Council developed an improvement plan to address the issues raised. Progress in implementing this plan has been monitored by external audit. Assessment of the current risks relating to the council's corporate arrangements is based on the work of external audit and other inspections. Our detailed evaluation is contained within Appendix 2.
50. The council and its partners have a clear and ambitious vision for the area which is based on a sound understanding of the needs of the local community. These high level priorities are set out in the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) for the area and reflected in the council's corporate strategy and in divisional plans.
51. With a recently-appointed chief executive, there is evidence of changes in the leadership and culture of the council, with a greater emphasis on performance management and identifying areas in need of improvement. Councillors have developed their scrutiny role and external follow-up inspections have reported positively on the leadership provided by senior managers in key services such as social work and education. There is also evidence of good partnership working with other public sector bodies and a vision of developing this further. There are other areas which are still developing, such as performance management and customer responsiveness, but the council has overall made sound progress.
52. The main risks in the council's corporate arrangements relate to financial management. Budget monitoring is sound, but there is a need to develop medium and long term plans which integrate service delivery and financial planning. The council faces significant financial pressures, with the General Fund reserves currently below the desired minimum of £3 million limiting its ability to deal with unforeseen costs
53. The council has recognised the need to match its spending plans to the resources available, but it is not clear if it will be able to respond quickly and realise the necessary savings. Developments in procurement, asset management, and competitiveness are at an early stage and are unlikely to provide any short-term solutions to these pressures. The council has agreed a Corporate Asset Management Plan which links to financial planning arrangements. The six individual strands, including property and ICT, require further development. There is no overall ICT strategy to help identify further efficiencies.

## Implications for scrutiny activity

### Year 1

54. Given the severe financial pressures which the council is facing it should provide a statement for discussion with the LAN on its financial position and its plans for the short and medium term for maintaining service delivery, funding the business transformation programme and replenishing reserves.
55. As part of its scheduled work, external audit will continue to monitor the financial pressures on the council and its progress in matching its spending and resources. It will also assess the council's progress in establishing an effective approach to the BV components of procurement, asset management, ICT and efficiencies. Reports will be provided on customer focus and responsiveness, and competitiveness. In addition, external audit will continue to monitor the council's progress in implementing its improvement plan. Work in these areas will be used to inform the scope of the Best Value audit in Year 2.

### Year 2

56. A BV2 audit will be carried out in order to assess the impact of current and future changes. This will place a particular focus on leadership and culture, planning and resource alignment. In addition the BV2 will assess the progress made by the council in areas such as customer focus and responsiveness, performance management, public performance reporting, and sustainability. It will also include the council's approach to competitiveness, community engagement, partnership working and workforce planning.

### Year 3

57. With plans to develop shared services between Midlothian and other local councils, there may be scope for specific coordinated review, covering all of the councils involved.

# 6. Conclusion

## Summary of planned scrutiny activity

58. The appendices to this plan show a summary of the evidence considered and the overall risk assessments made by the LAN on the outcome, service and corporate risks. They show the scrutiny response the LAN has decided is appropriate to each area. These are clearly summarised in Appendix 3 which identifies the planned scrutiny for Midlothian Council for the period April 2010 to March 2013.

### Year 1

59. As the most significant risks facing the council relate to financial management and its capacity to achieve necessary savings, whilst delivering efficient and effective services related to the local context, the council should provide a statement of its financial position and short and medium term plans to ensure financial sustainability. Much of the further planned scrutiny can be integrated with the statutory financial audit process. Key areas of focus are, procurement, asset management, ICT, efficiencies, customer focus and responsiveness, and competitiveness. Meetings with key officers will be held to discuss progress in maximising business opportunities, delivering responsive and effective services. Where appropriate various members of the LAN will assist in this work.
60. Continued engagement with commercial services, housing, education and social work will assist in determining the nature and extent of future scrutiny in these service areas. Inspection of Adoption and Fostering services by the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care

### Year 2

61. Allowing for much of the most recent structural and process changes to bed in and demonstrate improvement a scoped and focused BV2 audit is more appropriate for year 2 of the plan. Overall, the focus will be determined by the findings from the overall scrutiny work completed in year 1, but should include leadership and culture, planning and resource alignment, customer focus and responsiveness, performance management, public performance reporting, sustainability, competitiveness, community engagement and workforce planning. It is possible that the INEA inspection could take place before the BV2 to contribute to the findings of and/or inform the focus of the BV2.
62. ISLA social work risk assessment.
63. A joint inspection of services to protect children will take place in year 2 as part of the second national cycle of inspection of these services. This will include a focus on social work risk thresholds.



64. Inspection of the education functions of the council, informed by the impact of HMIE District Inspector supporting improvement on the extent to which the service contributes to the overall achievement of the council's strategic objectives, particularly strategic objectives 1 and 5.

### **Year 3**

65. Social Work. Inspection focused on outcome measurement, public information, modernising services for people with learning disabilities, and joint financial information and monitoring.
66. With plans to develop shared services between Midlothian and other local councils, there may be scope for specific coordinated review, covering all of the councils involved.

### **Baseline scrutiny activity**

67. The focus of the AIP is strategic scrutiny, 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 client 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.

### **Ongoing role of Local Area Network**

68. 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 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 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.
69. 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.

## Appendix 1

Performance Assessment Midlothian Council			
Strategic priorities	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
<p><b>Supporting healthy, caring, diverse communities where local needs are met.</b></p>	<p><b>Uncertainty</b></p>	<p>Basis established for good performance measurement framework, however current gaps in health and well-being data make it difficult to evaluate performance and risk.</p> <p>Some progress in meeting recommendations on services for people with learning disabilities in the 2008 SWIA report, but more time required to see the full impact. Some progress in measuring outcomes and in making information about social work services more readily available to the public, but more needs to be done.</p> <p>The 2008 SRH inspection report found good housing asset management but poor housing management and services for homeless people.</p> <p>A number of reducing inequalities actions are off-target.</p> <p>Areas for increased partnership working identified but further work required to strengthen strategic approach to Community Planning.</p> <p>Inspection activity over the last few years, housing, social work and child protection, has highlighted some weak levels of service. Actions have been put into place to address weaknesses, but time required to evaluate longer term outcomes for service users.</p>	<p>Year 1 Inspection of Adoption and Fostering services. Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care</p> <p>Year 1 The Scottish Housing Regulator will review the Council's self-evaluation of progress with improvement plan</p> <p>Year 2 Scrutiny of the education functions of the Council</p> <p>Year 2 Child protection inspection, including risk thresholds</p> <p>Year 2 ISLA social work risk assessment</p> <p>Year 3 Inspection, social work focused on outcome measurement, public information and modernising services for people with learning disabilities, and joint financial information and planning. SCSWIS</p>
<p><b>Maximising business opportunities.</b></p>	<p><b>Concerns</b></p>	<p>Job creation, reducing wage gap and outward commuting have been adversely impacted by economic recession.</p>	<p>Year 1 Meet key officers to discuss progress on both themes of strategic</p>

Performance Assessment Midlothian Council			
Strategic priorities	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<p>Success in acquiring/developing land, but much of data on SMEs relate to advice rather than start up.</p> <p>An area of risk, resulting in Midlothian being unable to attract business and residents to the area.</p>	<p>objective</p> <p>Year 2 Possible inclusion in BV2</p>
<p><b>Maintaining Midlothian as a safe place to live, work and visit.</b></p>	<p><b>No significant concerns</b></p>	<p>Overall, improving position for this objective. However, residents' perception of safety is not improving.</p> <p>Improvements identified in follow through inspections of child protection, March 2008 and February 2009.</p> <p>Improvement in social work and housing services working jointly to meet the housing needs of the most vulnerable, particularly young people whom leave care.</p> <p>Clear up rates for crime have reached targets.</p> <p>Reduction in recorded violent crime, road deaths and fires.</p>	
<p><b>Conserving and improving Midlothian's natural environment.</b></p>	<p><b>Uncertainty</b></p>	<p>Progress is generally satisfactory and on target where information is available.</p> <p>Recycling rates have increased and less municipal waste is sent to landfill. Reduction in vacant and derelict land.</p> <p>Above national average waste collection costs.</p> <p>Significantly fewer residents are satisfied with refuse collection than the national average.</p>	<p>Year 1 Included in financial audit, focus on Zero Waste Management project and refuse collection</p>

Performance Assessment Midlothian Council			
Strategic priorities	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<p>Significantly fewer residents are satisfied with street cleaning than the national average.</p> <p>However, substantial gaps in performance information on environmental footprint, public travel and air and river pollution.</p> <p>Midlothian has embarked on a Zero Waste recycling project with City of Edinburgh Council. This initiative should allow the Council to manage its approach to meeting EU landfill directives and mitigate the risk of significant fines from failing to achieve the EU targets.</p>	
<b>Improving opportunities for people in Midlothian</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>	<p>Unemployment rate rising.</p> <p>No inspection of education since follow through in 2003. Pupils achievement and attainment levels mixed, but above national average in most cases.</p> <p>Not on target for 16-18 year olds progressing to positive destinations.</p> <p>Limited data on supporting the growth of a skilled workforce and improving town and village centres.</p> <p>Target on increase in % of people rating Midlothian as a good place to live not met.</p>	Year 2 Inclusion in BV2, focus on strategic objective 5
<b>Delivering responsive and effective services to the people of Midlothian</b>	<b>Concerns</b>	<p>Customer satisfaction with Council services is off target.</p> <p>At the end of Q2 2009/10 almost all Council summary PIs were off target.</p>	Year 1 Meet with key officer for discussion on progress, focus on strategic objective 6

Performance Assessment Midlothian Council			
Strategic priorities	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<p>Targets for general fund contingency reserve and increase in council tax collection not met.</p> <p>Target to ensure employees have training to gain skill levels to deliver modern and improved services not met.</p> <p>Stronger partnership working with other council areas required to enhance further service delivery and quality.</p>	Year 2 Inclusion in BV2
<p><b>Strategic Services</b></p> <p>Business and employment,</p> <p>Estates,</p> <p>Food Health &amp; Safety</p>	<b>Uncertainty</b>	<p>Very good performance in planning, costs around national average.</p> <p>Trading standards performance around average.</p> <p>Food safety inspections – staffing difficulties often mean targets not met</p> <p>Corporate asset management plan recently approved but still need further development.</p> <p>Support to SMEs off target.</p> <p>Data required on job creation.</p>	<p>See P18 Maximising Business Opportunities</p> <p>And P32 Financial Management</p>
<p><b>Executive Services</b></p> <p>Communications</p> <p>Performance management</p>	<b>Uncertainty</b>	<p>Communications – website, etc poor. Contact centres improving with plans in pace to drive these forward. A web manager and preferred supplier have been appointed. The project is being driven forward by the web programme project board (chaired by the Chief Executive).</p> <p>New Corporate Communication standard to be finalized by end of</p>	<p>See 30 Performance Management, BV2 Year 2</p>

Performance Assessment Midlothian Council			
Strategic priorities	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
HR policy.		<p>May 2010.</p> <p>New Customer Care Strategy to be finalized by end May 2010. Revised customer care training devised and will be rolled out in next few months.</p> <p>Performance management – no overall self –evaluation processes currently in place. The Council is progressing implementation of PSIF with pilot exercises due to start in the second half of 2010.</p> <p>Business transformation programme introduced which will address number of areas for improvement.</p>	
<p><b>Commercial Services</b></p> <p>Waste Management,</p> <p>Land Services</p> <p>Road Services</p> <p>Travel Team</p> <p>Construction Services</p> <p>Public Buildings,</p> <p>Housing Repairs and Maintenance</p>	<b>Uncertainty</b>	<p>House building, school building and care home projects successfully managed</p> <p>Reduction in level of housing voids.</p> <p>Roads and lighting maintenance performance significantly below average with costs lower than average</p> <p>Higher than average complaints for rubbish and below average cleanliness index.</p>	<p>Year 1 Included in financial audit, focus on Zero Waste Management project and refuse collection See P19 Conserving and improving Midlothian's natural environment</p> <p>Year 1 Review of progress report on implementing action plan in response to SHR to determine scrutiny See P25 Housing Management</p>

Performance Assessment Midlothian Council			
Strategic priorities	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
Building Cleaning Catering Services Facilities Management			
<b>Social work</b>	<b>No significant concerns</b>	<p>Strengthening of management of social work following HMIe 2007 inspection report on child protection services.</p> <p>A follow up inspection in 2009 to the 2007 report on services to protect children noted improvements in key processes where social work play a pivotal role.</p> <p>A SWIA follow up report in 2010 to an initial inspection in 2008 indicated:            Substantial or better progress has been made in permanency planning; provision of community care service; case assessment and review; risk assessment; and management.            Some progress had been made to ensure the threshold for identifying and responding to child protection risks is consistent across frontline staff and team leaders, but more work required to be done to increase consistency.</p> <p>Service complaints upheld are above the national average. No enforcement action taken, in place or being considered.</p> <p>Significantly more of all respondents to the SHS are dissatisfied with social work services compared to Scotland overall, but there were no significant differences among those who had experience of social work services.</p>	<p>Year 1 Inspection of Adoption and Fostering services. Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care</p> <p>Year 2 Child protection inspection, including risk thresholds</p> <p>Year 2 ISLA risk assessment</p> <p>Year 3 Inspection – Social work focused on outcome measurement, public information, modernising services for people with learning disabilities, and joint financial information and monitoring</p>

Performance Assessment Midlothian Council			
Strategic priorities	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
<b>Education and communities. .</b>	<b>No significant concerns</b>	<p>Pre-school provision has important strengths. Inspection evidence shows that provision for children’s emotional, personal and social development was good or very good in almost all cases.</p> <p>Primary - In reading, writing and mathematics, the picture is of slow but steady improvement in attainment over the last three years. However, there has been some slight slippage in 2009, particularly in mathematics and numeracy.</p> <p>Secondary - There have been five inspections over the last four years. The picture has been mixed with three strong inspections and two schools where performance was weaker. In attainment at S4, results over the last four years show a static picture broadly in line with both comparator authorities and national averages, although there are positive fluctuations in both mathematics and at 5 + Level 4. At S5, there is a broadly an improving picture matching comparator and national averages. At S6, the authority slightly outperforms national and comparator averages at 5+ Level 4 and 5+ Level 5.</p> <p>CLD- CLD Services and their partner agencies were inspected in July 2007. Inspectors found that the quality and impact of CLD provision had improved. The Learning Community inspection report based on the catchment of Newbattle High School was positive.</p> <p>Significantly more of all respondents to the SHS are dissatisfied with education services compared to Scotland overall, but there were no significant differences among those who had experience of local schools.</p>	<p>Year 1 Support from District Inspector HMIE - contribution to meeting strategic objectives, with a particular focus on attainment and achievement, skills and leaver destinations</p> <p>Year 2 Scrutiny of the education functions of the Council</p>
<b>Corporate Services</b>	<b>Concerns</b>	Council facing severe financial pressures. Until reserves are replenished no cash reserves to deal with unforeseen events.	Year 1 Council statement of financial position and plans See page 14



Performance Assessment Midlothian Council			
Strategic priorities	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
Finance Internal audit Revenues.		High levels of borrowing.  Significant improvement in internal audit/risk management in the past year.	
<b>Corporate services - Housing management</b>	<b>Concerns</b>	<p>The SHR inspected the Council in 2008 .</p> <p>There are strengths in housing asset management, in the Council's plans and progress on building new affordable houses and its estates are in a good condition. Rents and management costs are relatively low. Its current arrears KPI shows an improving trend but is still below Scottish average performance. It has an excellent approach to asbestos management. Gas safety is improving, but not yet in line with legislation.</p> <p>The Council has a range of significant weaknesses in housing management, particularly in how it manages lettings. It had further weaknesses in access, service quality, customer focus, performance management and non-compliance with some legislation. It made little use of performance management and reporting. The Council had also intimated that it would not change practices prohibited in law and it did not act effectively upon improvement actions recommended by its own mock inspection The time it takes to re-let empty houses is declining from a below average position and it does not have a comprehensive understanding of tenant satisfaction with its services.</p> <p>The Council has a new homelessness strategy but did not meet key operational and strategic targets, including the nationally established 2009 interim target. It creates barriers to access the service, incorrectly cancels homeless applications and its approach to allocating permanent property results in long stays in temporary accommodation. Its approach to advice and intervention is poor, it</p>	Year 1 Review of the Council's self-evaluation of progress with improvement plan actions

Performance Assessment Midlothian Council			
Strategic priorities	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<p>has not responded to changes in demand by increasing its allocation targets for homeless people and it regularly breaches the unsuitable accommodation order.</p> <p>The Council has completed an improvement plan, but still has issues with the number of homeless presentations. An advice centre has been successfully established in Dalkeith and operates a needs based allocation system.</p>	

## Appendix 2

Corporate Assessment Midlothian Council			
Corporate assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
<b>Vision and strategic direction</b>	<b>No significant concerns</b>	<p>Council and partners present a clear vision for the future of the areas in the SOA.</p> <p>Ambitious Council vision, based on a clear understanding of the needs of the area, shared with partners.</p> <p>Coherent set of values and aims for social work, which were reasonably well understood by staff, clearly articulated by senior managers and supported by the chief executive and elected members.</p> <p>A clear and appropriate vision for the development of education services to children, young people and adults.</p> <p>Poor vision and direction noted by HMle in 2007 report on child protection services. However, follow up inspections identified that the CPC now had a clear vision for child protection and that elected members were clear about their responsibilities.</p>	
<b>Leadership and culture</b>	<b>No significant concerns</b>	<p>Recent appointment of a new Chief Executive has provided impetus and drive for culture change.</p> <p>Cultural change beginning to happen – change to Performance Scrutiny and Audit Committee remit, greater councillor engagement and uptake of training.</p> <p>The leadership throughout the organisation had responded positively and pragmatically to the outcomes of the SWIA inspection report. The positive role of the chief social work officer was well established.</p> <p>HMle child protection follow through report 2009 notes “ There has also been significant improvement in the leadership and direction</p>	Year 2 include in BV2

Corporate Assessment Midlothian Council			
Corporate assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		provided by senior managers in the local authority, particularly in the social work service”.	
<b>Planning and resource alignment</b>	<b>Concerns</b>	<p>Issues over medium to long-term financial planning – budget deficits-Need to develop medium and long term plans which integrate service delivery with financial plans.</p> <p>Sound underlying budgetary control processes are in place. Budget Review Group established to make recommendations to Cabinet on agreeing priorities and aligning resources.</p> <p>Further improvement would produce greater effectiveness and sustainability in certain aspects of social work services.</p> <p>There are ongoing catchment area reviews to align school resources to local education needs.</p>	Year 2 BV2
<b>Partnership working and community leadership</b>	<b>No significant concerns</b>	<p>Good progress in developing good partnership working. Joint financial planning under –developed.</p> <p>Community Planning Partnership [CPP] worked effectively to develop a SOA.</p> <p>The Internal Audit Report on Community Planning 2009 identified some weaknesses in the operation of the CPP and areas where community engagement could be improved. Action Plan being implemented.</p> <p>Community Planning Steering Group meets regularly and includes representatives from all relevant bodies including NHS Lothian and the CHP. Most recent performance report for April – September 2009 notes issues around the availability of performance data from NHS. Clear summary of progress against targets (of 122 actions , 69 on target, 20 off and 33 no data available)</p>	<p>Year 3 Inspection: progress in developing joint financial information and monitoring between social work division and partners. SCSWIS</p> <p>Year 3 Potential Inspection of service provided jointly with neighbouring councils</p>

Corporate Assessment Midlothian Council			
Corporate assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<p>The social work division worked well in partnership with other agencies, progress on developing shared services was adequate.</p> <p>There was evidence of good partnership working with education and with neighbouring councils. Some progress has been made in developing joint financial information and monitoring with partners , but more requires to be done.</p> <p>HMIe CP report 2009 notes significant improvement in joint leadership and in the development of partnership working at a strategic level and between senior and operational managers.</p> <p>Education and Communities - Good working relationships and effective partnerships with other agencies.</p> <p>Business continuity arrangements required to ensure they continue to be relevant.</p>	
<b>Community engagement</b>	<b>No significant concerns</b>	<p>The Council and its partners regularly seek the views of the community eg Citizens' Panel Survey.</p> <p>Ongoing work to revise the community planning.</p> <p>Education and Communities A strategy for community engagement has been published. New community development trusts are energetically engaged in seeking to improve their communities.</p> <p>Score above average against other local authorities in Scotland in regard to Participation of Service Users.</p> <p>The involvement of children and families in planning and development of services for children is at an early stage.</p> <p>Improved working relationships between the social work division and the voluntary sector.</p>	

Corporate Assessment Midlothian Council			
Corporate assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
<b>Governance and Accountability</b>	<b>No significant concerns</b>	<p>Generally sound – evidence of improvement through provision of elected member training and revised financial regulations,</p> <p>The Council's 'Code of Corporate Governance' almost fully complies with best practice set out in national guidance.</p> <p>The Council's Performance Scrutiny and Audit Committee has wide ranging remit.</p> <p>There is a need for continued professional development opportunities to support elected members in increasing the effectiveness of their work.</p>	
<b>Public performance reporting</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>	<p>Planned actions to improve public performance reporting arrangements but limited progress has been made to date.</p> <p>Particular concern over the content and functionality of the Council's web site. Funding identified for content management system for the Council website.</p>	Year 2 BV2
<b>Customer focus and responsiveness</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>	<p>Some evidence of improvement in Customer First Strategy (proposals approved in paper to CMT in January 2010) .</p> <p>Contact Centre and MidCon identified as areas for further development/improvement – customer interface.</p>	<p>Year 1 Report and discussion with key officers December 2010</p> <p>Year 2 BV2</p>
<b>Performance management</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>	<p>Integrated Improvement Programme to coordinate and monitor a broad range of improvement projects. Monitoring reports indicate some delays in implementation. Going forward, the Integrated Improvement Programme may be discontinued with relevant aspects being integrated into the Business Transformation Programme.</p>	Year 2 BV2

Corporate Assessment Midlothian Council			
Corporate assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<p>Overall, significant progress in developing a performance framework and associated structures. Comprehensive reports are published on a quarterly basis. However, Midlothian Council currently has no overall self-evaluation process.</p> <p>Need to ensure indicators are appropriate, relevant, reviewed for their continued relevance and information is used to inform the decision making process.</p> <p>Of 58 SPIs in 2008/09 22 improved. Although 21 declined many of the variances are slight and easily impacted by small numbers.</p> <p>Occupancy levels in schools continue to improve.</p> <p>Performance management in housing services is not strong.</p> <p>Education and Communities There is a well-established performance management system based upon EFQM in place.</p>	
<b>Efficiency</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>	<p>Scottish Government efficient targets for Local Government are built into the 2009/10 and 2010/11 integrated financial/service planning process. Pressure to deliver efficiency gains but also provide existing services when there are constraints on available financial resources.</p> <p>Carbon Reduction Plan being developed.</p> <p>Shared Services Diagnostic Project identifies opportunities to simplify, standardise and share activities.</p> <p>Council's Efficient Government Plan, 9 projects underway – asset rationalisation, management structures, customer access and contact, social work external shared services, information management, asset management, managing sickness absence, procurement, and transportation.</p> <p>Starting to look at shared services: member of consortium of Edinburgh, the three Lothians, Borders and Fife Councils.</p>	<p>Year 1 Include in annual financial audit.</p> <p>Year 2 BV2</p>

Corporate Assessment Midlothian Council			
Corporate assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
<b>Competiveness</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>	<p>Generally, limited evidence of market testing although benchmarking is undertaken in some areas.</p> <p>Internal BV review of areas where further review was considered necessary to test competitiveness completed in April 2009 – this identified 3 areas – leisure services, waste management and Environmental Health &amp; trading Standards.</p>	<p>Year 1 Report and discussion with key officers January 2011</p> <p>Year 2 BV2</p>
<b>Risk management</b>	<b>No significant concerns</b>	<p>The Council's risk management function is well embedded and operates effectively.</p> <p>Risk management function highly regarded and has been recommended to several other councils as an example of good practice.</p> <p>Internal Audit and Risk Management functions are managed effectively.</p>	
<b>Use of resources</b>			
<b>Financial management</b>	<b>Concerns</b>	<p>£2.3 m deficit factored into the budget strategy for 2010/11</p> <p>Recognition by CMT of challenges of matching expenditure commitments to available resources – planned efficiencies and cost savings planned. The Council may not be able to respond to funding constraints and be able to identify savings timeously.</p> <p>No General Fund Reserve and no capacity to deal with unforeseen costs or losses. Midlothian Council were granted consent to borrow</p>	<p>Year 1 Council statement of financial position and plans</p> <p>Year 2 BV2</p>



Corporate Assessment Midlothian Council			
Corporate assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<p>up to £9,091,000 to meet expenditure on meeting equal pay back pay costs incurred in 2009/10 and 2010/11.</p> <p>Budgetary control reports now routinely report variances and actions taken to address them.</p> <p>Sound framework for governance and internal control arrangements but appropriate staff do not always comply with it.</p> <p>The effectiveness of the Budget Review Group is inhibited by the refusal of political groups not currently represented to participate.</p> <p>Refuse collection costs remain very high.</p>	
<b>Asset management</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>	<p>Strategic asset management vision by CMT in and Corporate Asset Management plan approved by Cabinet in December 2009. This also noted need to ensure community and partner engagement. Plan needs to be further developed with the completion of detailed plans for each of the 6 supporting strands.</p> <p>House building programme continuing successfully.</p> <p>School replacement programme progressing well</p> <p>Council requires to review alternative sources of funding to achieve capital plans.</p>	Year 1 Include in annual financial audit
<b>Managing people</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>	<p>Modernising Midlothian, single status agreement, given new pay and grading and terms and conditions.</p> <p>Management review currently underway.</p> <p>Council's People Strategy is establishing improved workforce planning.</p> <p>Revised PDP process and competency framework implemented.</p>	Year 2 BV2 focus on workforce planning

Corporate Assessment Midlothian Council			
Corporate assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
		<p>Staff surveys have not been carried out for a number of years, due to the implementation of Modernising Midlothian, but survey planned for spring 2010.</p> <p>Given the financial position of the Council there is a potential risk of insufficiently robust workforce planning.</p>	
<b>Procurement</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>	<p>Procurement function is more fully developed than in many other councils.</p> <p>Although there are some risks to continuous improvement the Council has a sound procurement base from which it can move forward. Subject to review by Audit Scotland in 2009 and a number of actions for improvement identified.</p> <p>There is scope for greater shared services/partnership arrangements.</p> <p>Identified as an area likely to yield business transformation savings.</p>	Year 1 Include in annual financial audit
<b>ICT</b>	<b>Concerns</b>	<p>Satisfactory use of ICT to support and deliver services in specific areas but no overall ICT strategy</p> <p>Number of resilience measures introduced.</p> <p>Policies and procedures in place on data handling and security. However, there is a need to ensure staff are aware of these measures, that they are adhered to and that they keep abreast of developments – e.g. web- enabled hosted services .</p> <p>The implementation of a new social work service information system has significant potential to improve the reporting of performance.</p>	Year 1 Include in annual financial audit

Corporate Assessment Midlothian Council			
Corporate assessment area	Initial risk assessment	Evidence/rationale	What we plan to do
<b>Equalities</b>	<b>No significant concerns</b>	<p>The Council has put in place appropriate policies, structures, procedures and training to promote diversity and equalities.</p> <p>Increased use of Equalities Impact Assessments, becoming embedded as part of policy development.</p> <p>Education and Communities demonstrates clear policy commitments to equalities, with examples of positive action on equal opportunities.</p> <p>The induction of new staff to social work takes into account the diversity needs of those appointed.</p> <p>Equalities monitoring has tended to focus on employment issues, but now starting to look at service delivery.</p>	
<b>Sustainability</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>	<p>The Integrated Improvement Programme will provide a sustainable approach to planned improvement activities.</p> <p>Sustainability Strategy in place. All policy papers required to consider sustainability. Aspects such as social, environmental and financial in terms of continuity can be addressed.</p>	Year 2 BV2

## Appendix 3

### Midlothian Council Assurance and Improvement Plan 2009-13: Summary of Scrutiny and Improvement

The AIP is a three year rolling programme.

2010-11 (Year 1)												
Scrutiny activity	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Annual financial audit to incorporate focus on procurement, asset management, ICT, and effectiveness. Commercial Services, including refuse collection and the Zero Waste Recycling project, will be a focus of attention Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland and LAN Lead. 15 inspector days on site												
The Council provide a statement of its financial position and short and medium term plans to ensure financial sustainability, discussion at meeting with key officers. Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland and LAN Lead. 3 inspector days on site												
Inspection of Adoption and Fostering services. Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care. 16 inspector days on site												
Meet with key officers to discuss strategic objective 2 Maximising business opportunities, both themes Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland and LAN Lead. 3 inspector days on site												
Meet with key officers to discuss strategic objective 6 Delivering responsive and effective services to the people of Midlothian, themes one and two Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland and LAN Lead. 3 inspector days on site												
Housing - SHR review Council's self-evaluation of progress with improvement plan actions. Maximum 10 inspector days on site												
Customer focus and responsiveness. Report from and discussion with key officers. Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland and LAN Lead. 3 inspector days on site												
Competitiveness. Report from and discussion with key officers. Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland and LAN Lead. 3 inspector days on site												

2011-12 (Year 2)	
Issues for scrutiny /improvement	Scrutiny bodies /council potential involvement
Child protection services, including risk thresholds	SCSWIS led joint inspection
BV2 scope informed by Year 1 scrutiny	AS
ISLA risk assessment	SCSWIS
Scrutiny of the education functions of the Council	HMIE

2012-13 (Year 3)	
Issues for scrutiny /improvement	Scrutiny bodies /council potential involvement
Social work – Outcome measurement, public information, modernising services for people with learning disabilities, and joint financial information and monitoring	SCSWIS
Potential focus on joint council project	