

North Ayrshire Council

Assurance and Improvement Plan

Update 2013–16

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Introduction

1. The first Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP) for North Ayrshire Council was published in July 2010. That document set out the planned scrutiny activity for the council for the period April 2010 to March 2013 based on a Shared Risk Assessment (SRA) undertaken by a local area network (LAN) made up of representatives of all of the main local government audit and inspection agencies. The aim of the SRA process was to focus scrutiny activity where it is most needed and to determine the most proportionate scrutiny response over a three year period. The LAN met again in November 2010 and in November 2011 to update the AIP. The last AIP Update was published in May 2012 covering 2012-15.
2. This update is the result of the SRA which began in October 2012. The update process drew on evidence from a number of sources, including:
 - The annual report to the Controller of Audit and elected members for 2011/12 from the council's appointed external auditors.
 - The council's own performance data and self-evaluation evidence.
 - Evidence gathered from Education Scotland, the Care Inspectorate and the Scottish Housing Regulator (including published inspection reports and other supporting evidence).
3. A timetable for proposed audit and inspection activity between April 2013 and March 2016 which reflects the revised and updated scrutiny risk assessment is at Appendix 1.
4. Following feedback about the clarity of the SRA process we have amended our criteria to make it clearer what we mean. Our assessment criteria descriptions used last year have changed from 'significant concerns' to 'scrutiny required'; 'no significant concerns' to 'no scrutiny required'; and 'uncertainty' to 'further information required'.

Summary

5. There continues to be no specific scrutiny required by the LAN as part of this SRA process.
6. The LAN identified four areas in the previous AIP where further information was required before we could conclude an appropriate scrutiny response. The LAN has obtained satisfactory evidence in each of these areas as follows:
 - The council has made improvements to its performance management arrangements, including those for self-evaluation. The council are committed to conducting a second council-wide PSIF assessment in early 2013, and have twenty two EFQM accredited assessors embedded within services. The LAN will continue to monitor progress in this area.
 - The LAN obtained information to demonstrate the council's improvements within certain aspects of its governance and accountability. While the LAN are satisfied with this progress, Audit Scotland will continue to monitor this area.
 - The council has made improvements to its strategic framework and mechanisms for monitoring asset management. While the LAN are satisfied with this progress, Audit Scotland will continue to monitor area.
 - The Care Inspectorate carried out work to establish whether the social work service had taken steps to address concerns raised regarding assessing and managing risk, and whether it had adopted improved case management practices. The Care Inspectorate concluded that sufficient improvements have been made. While there is further work to be done, the revised guidance and training delivered to staff means that no further information is required in this area. The Care Inspectorate will, however, continue to monitor progress in this area.
7. This does not mean that the council have addressed all risks or that all areas of performance are improving. However, it does mean that the LAN are satisfied that there has been either:
 - improved information available to demonstrate performance in areas where, previously, further information was required; or
 - improved self-awareness of the standards of performance required at a service level; or
 - more evidence to demonstrate awareness of, and monitoring of, the key risks to meeting outcomes and service delivery; and
 - hence, no specific scrutiny work is required by the LAN aimed at areas perceived to be at risk.
8. North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership (NACPP) was selected as a pilot site regarding the audit of Community Planning Partnerships. The audit, which was carried out during 2012/13, concluded that community planning is well established in North Ayrshire, the CPP has good awareness of the key issues facing the community, and there are examples of CPP partners working together to improve outcomes.

9. However, while there are pockets of good practice in many aspects of CPP working, health, economic and social outcomes for citizens remain poor, and significant gaps remain between the least and most deprived communities. The audit also noted that many of the performance measures for "a healthy and active North Ayrshire" are broad in nature and thus open to interpretation, making it difficult to ascertain progress against its healthy outcomes. The council's obligations under the CPP improvement plan will be monitored by LAN members.

National risks

10. Local councils are operating within a context of significant change as a result of the challenging financial environment and the public service reform agenda, including the review of community planning, health and social care integration, police and fire reform, college regionalisation, and welfare reform. The Local Government Scrutiny Co-ordination Strategic Group is currently considering how audit and inspection arrangements should collectively respond to these significant strategic developments, recognising the increasing importance of partnerships, place and outcomes for Scotland's public services.

11. A number of core national risk priorities will be applied to all 32 councils. These are:

The protection and welfare of vulnerable people (children and adults): No scrutiny is required.

12. At the request of Scottish ministers, the Care Inspectorate developed a methodology for the joint inspection of children's services in CPP areas in Scotland, working in partnership with other scrutiny bodies (Education Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland (HMICS)). These inspections will focus on how well local public bodies (councils, the NHS, police, etc.) are working together to deliver effective outcomes for children and young people. These joint inspections, which will report publicly, began in the autumn 2012. North Ayrshire Council's pilot joint inspection of services for children is currently underway and will be reported in 2013.

13. In addition, the Care Inspectorate is working in co-operation with Healthcare Improvement Scotland to develop an approach to inspecting services providing care and health for adults drawing on its experience of implementing joint inspections of child protection and children's services. Development work involving a number of local authorities is underway and will continue into the early part of 2013. Following this, the Care Inspectorate will implement a programme of these inspections. Further details of the schedule will be confirmed in due course.

14. Subject to ministerial approval, the Care Inspectorate, in partnership with the Association of Directors of Social Work (ADSW) and the Risk Management Authority (RMA), will undertake supported self-evaluation across the 32 local authority criminal justice social work services during the latter part of 2013. This will look at the impact of the Level of Service Case Management Inventory (LSCMI), otherwise known as the national assessment and care planning instrument. This particular approach is one of a number of approaches the Care Inspectorate will use in its current and future scrutiny and improvement work in this area.

15. The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) plans to carry out a thematic inspection into the outcomes that local authorities are achieving by delivering a Housing Options and Prevention of Homelessness approach. SHR will carry out this thematic inspection during the first half of 2013/14. This is likely to involve fieldwork visits to a small sample of local authorities. SHR is currently identifying potential fieldwork sites and will be contacting those councils that it would like to visit in early 2013.

16. North Ayrshire Council gives significant priority to the care and protection of vulnerable children and adults. It has worked successfully with its partners in developing plans and implementing new ways of working to fundamentally change how services and support are provided to older people. Modernisation of services continues for other adult groups, especially for people with a learning disability and people with addiction problems. The council has invested in children's services and has reviewed and revised its thresholds for children who did not meet child protection criteria. It has given prominence to the systematic consideration of significant case reviews through its practice governance board and has developed a range of tools and guidance to support effective risk assessment and risk management across the whole service.
17. School inspections have highlighted no issues in relation to the protection of children. Recent reports indicate that school procedures for ensuring the safety and welfare of young people are robust.

Assuring public money is being used properly: No scrutiny is required.

18. The annual audit of councils forms part of the baseline scrutiny of councils. This audit examines the financial management and controls in each council. The council has sound governance arrangements in place which are operating effectively. The 2011/12 audit did not find any material weaknesses in the accounting and internal control systems.
19. In the 2010/11 annual audit report, concerns were highlighted regarding the governance of goods and services ordered and invoiced at the year end. Additional audit testing was carried out in the 2011/12 audit and it was concluded that the issue had been satisfactorily addressed.
20. Members praised the good quality information available to them when setting the council budget for 2012/13, including an open and transparent basis for identifying and determining areas where savings were required.

How councils are responding to the challenging financial environment: No local scrutiny required other than monitoring of the financial position through the annual audit.

21. Recognising the significance of the uncertain financial context within which councils operate, Audit Scotland produced Scotland's Public Finances: Addressing the Challenges in August 2011. Follow-up work around the issues raised in the report will be undertaken in each council during 2013/14 to provide the Accounts Commission and the Auditor General for Scotland with evidence on the progress that public bodies are making in developing a strategic response to these long-term financial challenges. In addition, a specific piece of work on Reshaping Scotland's public sector workforce will be undertaken in 2013/14.
22. The council has usable reserves totalling £57.697 million as at 31st March 2012 and a history of spending within its budgets. These reserves include an unallocated general fund balance of £6.029 million, in line with the council's reserves strategy to retain 1.5 per cent of budgeted gross expenditure for the year. The council has demonstrated that it is engaged in identifying efficiency savings to address funding shortfalls.

23. The council has prepared indicative budgets for 2013/14 and 2014/15 in order to plan for these challenging times. The council has identified a funding gap for the three years to 2015/16 of £22.168 million. As noted in the 2011/12 annual audit report, the council is currently identifying strategically based savings to address the estimated funding gap.
24. The council is refreshing its current financial strategy to provide a longer term view of the council's position over a period of ten years to support financial planning. In addition to this overarching strategy, the council has implemented a three year rolling budget and provided members with an option based budget to target resources.
25. The EHRC has commissioned a piece of work to assess the extent to which Scottish public authorities have complied with the specific duties of section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 during 2013. Analysis of public authorities compliance with the duty to publish equality outcomes and employment information will be available later in 2013. The results of this activity will be reflected in future SRA work.
26. The LAN is committed to maintaining its engagement with the council between now and the next SRA cycle so that we can retain an overview of how the council is managing its response to the significant financial challenges that it and all other Scottish public bodies face.

Areas that remain 'no scrutiny required'

27. This update focuses predominantly on those areas assessed as 'scrutiny required' and 'further information required'. However, in the interest of providing a broader view of the council's overall risk assessment, it is important to highlight those areas that were previously assessed as requiring no scrutiny which continue to be so. The LAN identified no scrutiny is required in the following areas:

Area	Update
Service Areas	
Education and Skills services	<p>Almost all outcomes for young people across North Ayrshire schools continue to improve and self-evaluation is a strong feature of the local authority. However, senior staff in education and skills services need to ensure consistent action is taken as a result of self-evaluation to bring about well-paced improvement, particularly in attainment at S4 to S6.</p> <p>Education Scotland carried out inspections of two primary schools. Both were considered very strong and were given evaluations of excellent and very good. They have also completed the field work stage of the validated self-evaluation which showed that raising attainment and achievement remains a clear priority for the authority.</p> <p>Attainment in national qualifications remains mixed with better performance at SCQF levels 3 and 7. Attendance and exclusions were on target for 11/12.</p>
Social Services and Health - children, families and community justice	<p>Effective partnership working has continued between the council and a range of partners. Relationships have continued to develop between social work services and the local NHS.</p>

Area	Update
	<p>Children's services have continued to prioritise the implementation and improvements in assessing and managing risk. This is the case across the entire service, including criminal justice and community care.</p> <p>The findings from the joint inspection of children's services will be reported in 2013.</p>
<p>Social Services and Health - community care, housing and homelessness</p>	<p>Social work services indicators show good performance for personal care and weekend service. Homecare hours and evening/overnight service are also improving.</p> <p>Social work services and housing services are jointly managed and this has strengthened joint working between these two service areas. This has helped lead to developing a wide range of housing options for older people.</p> <p>The council's housing service is considered a sector leader and has hosted numerous best practice visits from other local authorities and organisations. The drop in homeless presentations is attributed to the council's proactive approach to early intervention and prevention.</p> <p>Housing management services and housing condition are considered good with most indicators comparing well to others.</p>
<p>Finance and Infrastructure - infrastructure & design</p>	<p>The council issued a Road Asset Management Plan (RAMP) which follows guidelines set out by Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS). The council have delivered well against the SCOTS carriageway indicators in 2011/12, particularly in relation to safety and response to category 1 defects.</p> <p>The council's annual investment in carriageway maintenance in 2011/12 (and the next four years) is less than that required to keep roads in a 'steady state'. Carriageway condition is currently in the lowest quartile and</p>

Area	Update
	<p>is unlikely to improve given the current investment commitments.</p> <p>Members are provided with balanced information regarding the poor condition of the roads and the investment required. The roads section carry out benchmarking and report performance in accordance with SCOTS performance indicators.</p> <p>The LAN considers, that while there are risks identified in this area, these are widely known, reported and are being managed. Therefore we conclude there is no further scrutiny risk within this service area.</p>
Finance and infrastructure - environment	<p>The net cost of refuse collection and disposal continues to be amongst the lower in Scotland, while the percentage of household waste that was recycled and composted increased from 43.5% in 2010/11 to 52.5% in 2011/12 and is in the top quartile in Scotland.</p> <p>The council planning service is the best in Scotland for processing planning applications within two months.</p>
Outcome Areas	
<p>A working North Ayrshire</p> <p>Regenerating our communities and increasing employment</p> <p>Educational Attainment</p>	<p>The CPP reports broadly positive progress against its SOA indicators, though business growth and employment are significantly adrift of target. The CPP has involved the private sector more directly, but needs to increase efforts to deliver improvements.</p> <p>The employment rate continues to be an issue and the number of new businesses per 10,000 working age population has decreased.</p> <p>The council achieved Enterprise Area status for Irvine from April 2012, and established the North Ayrshire Youth Employment Support Programme aimed at young unemployed people.</p>

Area	Update
	<p>By March 2012 the council recruited 90 apprentices (double the previous year); and delivered a future jobs fund project which provided 180 work placements and assisted over 1,000 North Ayrshire residents into work or training.</p> <p>Almost all education attainment indicators are improving over the long term and in short term comparisons. However, most indicators remain comparatively poor, with many in the lowest performing quartile.</p>
<p>A Healthy and Active North Ayrshire Protecting Vulnerable People</p>	<p>Many of the CPP performance measures for health are broad in nature and thus open to interpretation, making it difficult to ascertain progress against its healthy outcomes. Additionally, the SOA sets targets for only nine of the 25 'healthy' indicators which support the outcomes.</p> <p>In comparison to other councils performance in this area is relatively poor, with a significant number of indicators in the lowest performing quartile. However, 67% of Healthy and Active SOA indicators have met or are only slightly adrift of the targets set for 2011/12.</p> <p>An improvement plan was agreed following Audit Scotland's audit of NACPP. The LAN will monitor the improvement actions which the council carries out in response to this to demonstrate performance in relation to this outcome area.</p>
<p>A Safe and Secure North Ayrshire</p>	<p>The CPP reports good progress for most indicators under its 'safer North Ayrshire' priority. The council and its partners have a range of initiatives to contribute towards tackling community safety.</p> <p>Overall performance is mixed. Perceptions of safety and satisfaction with the area as a place to live are poor compared to other council areas but have improved from the</p>

Area	Update
	<p>previous year. Indicators relating to road safety show worsening performance, while those relating to crimes of serious violence and fire related accidents are improving.</p> <p>87% of Safe and Secure North Ayrshire indicators in the SOA have met the target for 2011/12.</p>
<p>Operating More Efficiently and Effectively</p>	<p>The amount of waste being recycled in North Ayrshire continues to increase and exceeds the nationally set target of 40%. A new Waste Strategy has been developed which helps the council meet the requirements of both the national waste agenda and local influences.</p> <p>The council is progressing through its Change Programme, with a focus on changing council services to meet the changing demands of the area. The efficiencies made have helped the council to deliver a balanced budget for 2012/13.</p> <p>The council's carbon emissions are reported regularly. From 2010/11 the council reduced its carbon dioxide emissions by 7%.</p>
<p>Corporate Assessment Areas</p>	
<p>Vision and strategic direction</p>	<p>The Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) action plan clearly states the community planning priorities of the council and partners and relates directly to the SOA. The SOA Annual Report includes outcomes in relation to these priorities.</p> <p>A council plan has also been implemented. This clearly states the council's core objectives, which are linked to the SOA priorities for North Ayrshire. These also show a clear link to service plans.</p>
<p>Leadership and culture</p>	<p>Following the local government election in May 2012, changes have been made to the structure of North Ayrshire council. A Cabinet structure has replaced the Executive</p>

Area	Update
	<p>committee. An audit committee has also been formed to undertake the audit functions of the previous scrutiny committee, leaving the scrutiny and petitions committee with new terms of reference.</p> <p>A revised senior management structure was also approved, increasing the number of directorates from three to four, with the introduction of a development and environment directorate. This change creates clearer and more streamlined functions. It aims to increase senior management capacity of the council. The new structure also aims to provide a dedicated focus on the environment.</p>
<p>Planning and resource alignment</p>	<p>Council services have been spending within their allocated budgets in recent years. The process for agreeing the 2013/14 budget makes provision for significant shifts in demography and other specific requirements highlighted by services.</p> <p>Service plans incorporate service budgets, with budgets being approved as part of the service planning process.</p>
<p>Partnership working and community leadership</p>	<p>The council is part of the Clyde Valley Partnership to secure a long term solution to the treatment of residual waste, and are involved in on-going work with partners to develop a response to the integration of health and social care.</p> <p>North, East and South Ayrshire Councils have developed a detailed business case for a shared service delivery model using a joint committee for all the roads and transportation services in Ayrshire. This is progressing but legal and re-deployment issues still require to be resolved.</p> <p>The NACPP audit concluded that community planning is well established in North Ayrshire, the CPP has good awareness of the key</p>

Area	Update
	<p>issues facing the community, and there are examples of CPP partners working together to improve outcomes. However, many health, economic and social outcomes for citizens remain poor, and significant gaps remain between the least and most deprived communities.</p>
<p>Community engagement</p>	<p>The council's annual performance report outlines the progression of the council's Straight Talking sessions, with more of these having taken place in 2011/12. 'Straight Talking' as a brand is planned to continue with a move from discussion on generic discussion to a focus on particular topics.</p> <p>A revised CPP community engagement strategy has been developed which takes into account Scottish Government consultation on the draft Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill, advice from the Scottish Governments working group on community councils and the Straight Talking consultation.</p>
<p>Customer focus and responsiveness</p>	<p>Indicators in the council's annual performance report for 2011/12 show that while the number of complaints received increased, the time taken to respond to customer complaints has improved.</p> <p>North Ayrshire was the first council to launch the 'report it' smartphone application. This allows residents to instantly provide comments to the council on a range of issues.</p>
<p>Risk Management</p>	<p>A revised risk management strategy for 2012/13 and strategic risk register were approved in September 2012. This provides a more consistent approach to monitoring risks through the risk register.</p> <p>There are satisfactory processes in place to determine strategic and operational risks.</p> <p>The Corporate Management Team agreed a</p>

Area	Update
	<p>risk management improvement plan which identifies six areas for development, including the establishment of a Corporate Risk Management group. This group, consisting of senior/chief officers, monitors the risk register on a regular basis and prepares a mid term report and annual report which are both presented to the CMT.</p>
ICT	<p>An ICT strategy was agreed for the period 2011-2016 and will evolve in response to changes in council needs and technology.</p> <p>The council has created an ICT steering group to oversee the delivery of the ICT strategy. Regular updates are issued.</p> <p>Investment is being provided to upgrade infrastructure and IT has secured funding for a software upgrade.</p>
Use of resources – efficiency	<p>The council is progressing through its change programme, with a focus on changing council services to meet the changing demands of the area. The efficiencies made have helped the council to deliver a balanced budget for 2012/13.</p> <p>The early realisation of efficiency savings contributed to the achievement of a general fund surplus of £4.507 million in 2011/12.</p>
Use of resources - competitiveness	<p>All 100 actions resulting from the 2011 best value improvement plan have been implemented.</p> <p>Progress regarding the change programme is reported to members every quarter. All services are covered. The council has plans in place to benchmark all services to ensure they remain competitive.</p> <p>Meanwhile, the council has continued to participate in a range of benchmarking exercises with other local authorities.</p>

Area	Update
Use of resources – financial management	<p>The council's usable reserves continue to stay in line with its strategy to retain 1.5% of budgeted gross expenditure for the year.</p> <p>The council has developed an overarching financial strategy, implemented a 3 year rolling budget and provided members with an option based budget to target resources.</p> <p>North Ayrshire council has identified the future funding gaps and are currently identifying savings to address these in line with the Change Programme.</p>
Use of resources – managing people	<p>The council has continued to downsize the workforce but has managed to avoid the need for compulsory redundancies. In 2011/12 the workforce was downsized by 308 full time posts with resultant savings of £8.527 million.</p> <p>Sickness absence performance indicators continue to be better than the national average. The council has introduced a new requirement for monthly absence reports to be presented to the corporate management team.</p>
Use of resources - procurement	<p>The council achieved a procurement capability assessment score of 51% in 2012, continuing the improving performance in this area and exceeding the Scottish Government expectation of 50% for councils.</p>
Equalities	<p>Council services implemented the Equality Action Plan for 11/12, with progress on this reported quarterly to the Corporate Equality Group. The council has reviewed its equality impact assessment processes during 2012 to ensure they comply with new legislation.</p> <p>Performance indicators relating to council buildings suitable for and accessible to disabled people, council employees with a disability and the percentage of females in top 2% and 5% of earners have all improved.</p>

Area	Update
	<p>The Equalities and Human Rights Commission have commissioned a piece of work to assess the extent to which Scottish public authorities have complied with the specific duties of section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 during 2013. The results of this activity will be reflected in future shared risk assessment work.</p>
Sustainability	<p>The council's carbon emissions are reported regularly. From 2010/11 the council reduced its carbon dioxide emissions by 7%.</p> <p>The recent senior management restructure involved the creation of a Development and Environment directorate. This aims to provide a clearer focus on the environment.</p>

Areas with changed assessments

28. The following table relates to assessments of scrutiny risk that have been changed from the 2012/13 update.

Area	2012/13 Risk Assessment	2013/14 Risk Assessment	Reason for Change
Education & Social Services			
Social services and health - risk assessment and management	Further information required	No scrutiny is required	The social work service has given high priority to making a range of improvements in its work on assessing and managing risk. In the last year this has included adopting a service wide approach to case file audit, producing and implementing practice guidance on chronologies of significant events, practice guidance on case recording, practice guidance on mental health officer services and introducing comprehensive guidance on risk assessment and risk management for all care groups. The implementation of this new guidance is leading to improved practice that is beginning to be evidenced through the case file auditing process. For example, a recent internal case file audit showed that

Area	2012/13 Risk Assessment	2013/14 Risk Assessment	Reason for Change
			<p>half of the files read contained a satisfactory chronology. This shows considerable improvement. Although there is further work to be done, the revised guidance and training delivered to staff should ensure improved practice in this area and for that reason we have moved this assessment from further information required to no scrutiny required.</p>
Corporate Areas			
Governance and Accountability	Further information required	No scrutiny required	<p>Issues were raised previously over the governance of goods and services ordered and invoiced at the year end, relating to services being processed in the wrong accounting year. Additional testing of orders and invoices covering the year end period of 2011/12 was carried out during the annual audit process. From this it was concluded that this issue had been satisfactorily addressed.</p> <p>The findings from the 2011/12 audit were that, overall, the council has satisfactory governance arrangements in place.</p>

Area	2012/13 Risk Assessment	2013/14 Risk Assessment	Reason for Change
Performance Management and Challenge and Improvement	Further information required	No scrutiny required	<p>The council's corporate management team have agreed to a second council wide PSIF self-assessment. This is due to commence in February 2013, with a target date of April 2013 for the completion of the improvement plan. The Corporate Management Team and Members will be included in this exercise.</p> <p>22 EFQM accredited assessors are now embedded within services. In Education and Skills, a further nine staff are qualified in assessment-related activity. The EFQM assessors facilitate internal self-assessments for their own services and for other services and external assessments as appropriate.</p> <p>The council achieved the Quality Scotland Committed to Excellence recognition in June 2012 and are committed to achieving full recognition by June 2014.</p> <p>The use of the Covalent electronic performance management system is now widespread throughout the council. All actions from action plans and internal audit reports</p>

Area	2012/13 Risk Assessment	2013/14 Risk Assessment	Reason for Change
			<p>are uploaded to Covalent for monitoring. This is contributing to an improved performance management culture.</p> <p>Overall, the LAN considers that the council has made considerable improvements to self-evaluation arrangements.</p>
Asset Management	Further information required	No scrutiny required	<p>The council has implemented six themed asset management plans covering property, roads, housing, open space, fleet and ICT. Each of these six plans are aligned with the council and community plan objectives. Each also has an action plan to ensure continued development of the councils approach to its core assets. These are also regularly reviewed by the Capital Programme and Assets Group (CPAG) and reported to the Cabinet. The council intend to use these to provide a more effective basis for investment decisions and to inform the development of a ten year capital plan.</p> <p>The council is working towards a 'corporate landlord' approach to the management of its properties. This involves a</p>

Area	2012/13 Risk Assessment	2013/14 Risk Assessment	Reason for Change
			<p>particular focus on corporate ownership and a proactive approach to management of assets in line with the Council's Property Asset Management Plan.</p> <p>The LAN considers that progress has been made in asset management. The plans have been formally approved and progress is being reported to the Cabinet.</p>

Scrutiny plans

29. The scrutiny plan at Appendix 1 reflects the scrutiny to be carried out at the council. None of the scrutiny is due to risks identified by the shared risk assessment process and, instead, is due to national work that is planned or supported self-assessment.
30. The Care Inspectorate is leading on a joint inspection of children's services at the request of ministers. North Ayrshire and its partners are currently subject to a pilot joint inspection of children's services. This is due for completion in May 2013 and this, together with other pilot inspections, will help inform future methodology for these inspections. The findings from this will be reported to the council and its partners in 2013.
31. Audit Scotland will be carrying out a follow-up of Scotland's public finances: addressing the challenges (published August 2011), to provide the Accounts Commission and the Auditor General for Scotland with evidence on the progress that public bodies are making in developing a strategic response to these long-term financial challenges. Audit Scotland will also be carrying out follow-up work resulting from the workforce planning element of the Scotland's public finances report.
32. Subject to ministerial approval, the Care Inspectorate, in partnership with the Association of Directors of Social Work (ADSW) and the Risk Management Authority (RMA), will undertake supported self-evaluation across the 32 local authority criminal justice social work services during the latter part of 2013. This will look at the impact of the Level of Service Case Management Inventory (LSCMI), otherwise known as the national assessment and care planning instrument. This particular approach is one of a number of approaches the Care Inspectorate will use in its current and future scrutiny and improvement work in this area.
33. In addition, as reported in the national risk priorities section of this report, a programme of national scrutiny work and joint inspections is being developed for the Care Inspectorate, Education Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland, HMICS and SHR to carry out a thematic inspection in a sample of councils. We will notify you of these in due course.

Appendix 1

National scrutiny activity does not result from the shared risk assessment but is either at the request of the council eg supported self-evaluation work or national activity eg national follow-up work or work requested by ministers.

North Ayrshire Council												
												2013-14
Scrutiny activity year 1	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
No local scrutiny work planned												
National or supported self-evaluation work year 1												
Audit Scotland: Follow-up of Audit Scotland national report "Scotland's Public Finances- addressing the challenges"		X										
Audit Scotland - Reshaping Scotland's public sector workforce	X											
Joint inspection of children's services (currently underway)	X											
Supported self-evaluation of the impact on quality of the newly introduced national assessment and care planning instrument (LSCMI) in local criminal justice social work services (to be confirmed- latter part of 2013)												

North Ayrshire Council		2014-15										
Scrutiny activity year 2	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
No local scrutiny work planned												
National or supported self-evaluation work year 2												
No national work planned												

North Ayrshire Council		2014-15
Indicative scrutiny activity for rolling third year	Potential scrutiny bodies involved	
No local scrutiny work planned		

Footnotes:

The focus of the AIP Update 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 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 benefit and council tax benefit arrangements. Education Scotland, through the District Inspector, will continue to support and challenge education services regularly and as appropriate. The Care Inspectorate will continue to regulate care services and inspect social work services in accordance with their responsibilities under the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010.

