
Report to Clackmannanshire Council

Date of Meeting: 14 May, 2015

Subject: Clackmannanshire Local Scrutiny Plan 2015

Report by: Chief Executive

1.0 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Council formally of the publication in April by Audit Scotland of the Clackmannanshire Council Local Scrutiny Plan for 2015.

1.2 While the Resources & Audit Committee will be invited to review the Plan in more detail, given the overarching nature of the publication, it is being submitted to full Council for information and noting.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Council notes:

- a) the recent publication by Audit Scotland of the 2015 Local Scrutiny Plan for Clackmannanshire;
- b) the findings and intended planned scrutiny activity in 2015-16.

3.0 Background

3.1 The Local Scrutiny Plan (attached as the Appendix to this report) sets out the planned scrutiny activity in Clackmannanshire Council in this financial year. The Plan is based on a shared risk assessment undertaken by the local area network (LAN) which comprises representatives of all the scrutiny bodies who engage with the council.

3.2 The Local Scrutiny Plan has replaced the annual update on the Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP) which councils have received for the last few years. The Local Scrutiny Plan is very much slimmed down from the AIP annual update and Audit Scotland's rationale for this is as follows:

"The main change that we have introduced is to sharpen the focus on scrutiny risks. This is in recognition of the fact that over the five years of the operation of the shared risk assessment we have observed ongoing confusion about the extent to which Assurance and Improvement Plan is a scrutiny risk assessment or a performance assessment. Whilst we have been clear that it is the former, feedback that we have

received suggests that the length and format of the AIP has contributed to confusion about this. This change means that the output from this year's process will be a much shorter, sharper document than you will have seen over the last few years.

We have also strengthened the links between the planning and scheduling of national scrutiny activity and the local risk assessment activity that takes place in the 32 local area networks (LAN). Better aligning national and local scrutiny work will inevitably be an ongoing process, but we hope that you will see some improvements in this area this year."

3.3 The Local Scrutiny Plan does not identify or address all risks in the council. It covers only those risk areas which the LAN has identified as requiring scrutiny, or where scrutiny is planned as part of a national programme.

4.0 Clackmannanshire Local Scrutiny Plan - Findings & Conclusions

4.1 Overall, the LAN has judged that: *'the majority of risk assessments of corporate functions and service areas in the AIP remain as not requiring scrutiny and does not consider there to be any significant new concerns that require additional scrutiny.'*

4.2 The LAN comments that:

- the council is pro-active in identifying and managing risks
- corporate risk and external audit actions are reported in detail to elected members.
- the Council is taking positive steps to address the projected overspend in social services budget and governance compliance issues through implementing an agreed action plan
- progress is being made in progressing Health and Social Care integration.

4.3 Based on its assessment, in 2015-2016, the LAN will monitor progress in the following areas:

- the pace of progressing full shared services for education and social work, including the outcome of the full business case for full lead authority
- progress made in implementing and evidencing visible benefits in the delivery of re-aligned council services through Making Clackmannanshire Better
- how the Clackmannanshire and Stirling Public Protection Forum provides leadership and oversight of the governance arrangements for public protection.

4.4 Planned scrutiny this year for the Council will be as follows:

- the council and its community planning partners will be subject to a follow-up joint inspection of services for children (this is starting on 18 May for one week)
- a joint thematic review of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) is currently being undertaken across Scotland to assess the

status, efficiency and effectiveness of the MAPPA process in Scotland; the Council and its partners have already contributing to that on a Forth Valley wide basis

- Education Scotland will be working in partnership with councils to carry out a Validated Self Evaluation (VSE) of educational psychology services across all councils over a two-year period beginning in 2015/16.

4.5 There will also be audits of police and fire and rescue services and the Scottish Housing Regulator intends to carry out some thematic enquiries. The localities covered by these have not yet been confirmed so Clackmannanshire may or may not be involved in them.

4.6 In addition, Audit Scotland will carry out a programme of three performance audits across Scotland during 2015/16 on social care, health and social care integration and a roads maintenance (a follow-up audit) and the Council and its partners will feed into these as required.

5.0 Sustainability Implications - N/A

6.0 Resource Implications - N/A

7.0 Exempt Reports

7.1 Is this report exempt? No

8.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) **Our Priorities** (Please double click on the check box)

The Council is effective, efficient and recognised for excellence ✓

(2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

9.0 Equalities Impact

9.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations? N/A

10.0 Legality

10.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes

11.0 Appendices

11.1 Clackmannanshire Council Local Scrutiny Plan 2015

12.0 Background Papers

12.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report?

- Clackmannanshire Council Local Scrutiny Plan 2015 - http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/docs/best_value/2015/aip_150331_clackmannanshire.pdf
- Email from Audit Scotland of 22/12/14 re Shared Risk Assessment

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Clackmannanshire Council

Local Scrutiny Plan

2015/16



March 2015

Clackmannanshire Council

Local Scrutiny Plan 2015/16

Introduction

1. This local scrutiny plan sets out the planned scrutiny activity in Clackmannanshire Council during 2015/16. The plan is based on a shared risk assessment undertaken by a local area network (LAN), comprising representatives of all the scrutiny bodies who engage with the council. The shared risk assessment process draws on a range of evidence with the aim of determining any scrutiny activity required and focusing this in the most proportionate way.
2. This plan does not identify or address all risks in the council. It covers only those risk areas that the LAN has identified as requiring scrutiny, or where scrutiny is planned as part of a national programme. Planned scrutiny activity across all councils in Scotland informs the National Scrutiny Plan for 2015/16, which is available on the Audit Scotland website.

Update on local scrutiny plan 2014-15

3. In the 2014-17 Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP) the LAN did not identify any specific areas where scrutiny was required. However, some non-risk based scrutiny activity was identified in the AIP, to be carried out across all councils during 2014-15. This included:
 - In October 2014 Education Scotland reviewed the quality of information and advice and guidance services delivered by Skills Development Scotland. Overall the review highlighted a very positive picture regarding the quality of service provided to young people.
 - Care Inspectorate: Joint inspection of Services for Children in the Clackmannanshire Community Planning Partnership completed early 2014. Whilst a number of strengths were evident a number of areas for improvement were identified. As a result the Care Inspectorate together with other bodies will revisit to assess and report on progress one year from publication of original report (2015).
 - During 2014, Audit Scotland carried out a targeted follow-up of two national performance audits - *Arm's-length External Organisations (ALEOs): are you getting it right?* (June 2011) and *Major capital investment in councils* (March 2013). External audit completed the ALEOs review and reported it to the council in June 2014. Whilst Clackmannanshire Council has not directly set up any ALEOs to provide council services, there are organisations which the council has an interest in and elected members have been nominated to and are involved with these

bodies. The external audit report was generally positive, with some minor improvements identified. External audit provided information on *Major capital investment in councils* to Audit Scotland in August 2014. The external auditor's report did not raise any issues of concern. Audit Scotland is still analysing the responses from all councils and intends to prepare a national follow-up report for publication during 2015.

- Audit Scotland initiated a housing benefit risk assessment towards the end of 2014/15. Audit Scotland recently issued a self-assessment to the council which was due back by 6 February 2015 and is now expected later in the month. The review team arranged a visit to the council after it had reviewed the self-assessment to clarify any high risk areas with relevant officers. This visit took place in March 2015.

Scrutiny risks

4. Within the context of major financial challenges the council continues to deliver a wide range of services. The chief executive continues to work closely with the recently appointed chief executive for Stirling, to ensure strong partnership working continues and that the agreed shared service arrangements keep moving forward. Despite the differences in political allegiance across the two council areas, there is a shared long term vision and commitment to shared education and social services in Clackmannanshire and Stirling.
 - The council is pro-active in identifying and managing risks. Effective internal controls reduce likelihood of risk occurring and/or the impact if it does. Corporate risk and external audit actions are reported in detail to elected members.
 - Within the report to Resources and Audit Committee (4th December 2014) the council has identified a projected overspend in its Social Services budget. Weaknesses in governance and the understanding of, and compliance with financial regulations were also identified. It is taking positive steps to address this issue through implementing an agreed action plan.
 - Progress is being made in progressing Health and Social Care integration on a joint basis across Clackmannanshire and Stirling. A shadow Health and Social Care Integration Joint Board made up of elected members from both Clackmannanshire and Stirling councils has been established and is now operational. A draft integration scheme was formally signed off in March 2015.
5. The LAN, having considered the evidence from key management documents and performance indicators, has judged that the majority of risk assessments of corporate functions and service areas in the AIP remain as not requiring scrutiny. There are no significant new concerns that require additional scrutiny. However this year the LAN will look to monitor progress within a number of key areas of scrutiny risk. These include:
 - The pace of progressing full shared education and social work services, including the outcome of an options appraisal by Ernst and Young jointly commissioned by

both Clackmannanshire and Stirling councils around viability of full lead authority/shared services approach.

- Progress made in implementing and evidencing visible benefits in the delivery of re-aligned council services through Making Clackmannanshire Better (MCB) will be monitored.
- The G5 group, previously responsible for governance arrangements decided to place public protection within local community planning partnership structures. In December 2014, the Clackmannanshire and Stirling Public Protection Forum (CSPPF) was established to provide leadership and oversight of the governance arrangements for public protection. In the coming year the LAN will look to monitor how the CSPPF governance arrangements progress.

Planned scrutiny activity

6. As shown in Appendix 1, the council will be subject to a range of risk-based and nationally driven scrutiny activity during 2015/16. For some of their scrutiny activity in 2015/16, scrutiny bodies are still to determine within which specific council areas their work programmes will cover. Where a council is to be involved, the relevant scrutiny body will confirm this with the council and the appropriate LAN lead.
7. The council and its community planning partners will be subject to a follow-up joint inspection of services for children. This further joint inspection is in light of areas for improvement identified as a result of the full joint inspection of children's services in Clackmannanshire and Stirling published in May 2014. This is part of the Care Inspectorate's wider programme of national inspection, and is not a result of the LAN shared risk assessment.
8. The Care Inspectorate and HMICS will be undertaking a joint thematic review of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) in Scotland during 2015. The purpose of the review will be to assess the status, efficiency and effectiveness of the MAPPA process in Scotland, in terms of keeping people safe and reducing the potential risk of serious harm by registered sex offenders in our communities. It will cover all 32 local authority areas and involve local authorities, Police Scotland, NHS boards and the Scottish Prison Service. The joint review will cover the Forth Valley local authorities (including Clackmannanshire Council) in May 2015.
9. Education Scotland will be working in partnership with councils to carry out a Validated Self Evaluation (VSE) of educational psychology services across all councils over a two-year period beginning in 2015/16. Education Scotland will notify councils of its VSE plans each academic term. Audit Scotland will carry out a programme of [performance audits](#) during 2015/16. Audit Scotland has three planned performance audits covering local government during 2015/16. It will be working jointly with the Care Inspectorate looking at social care and jointly with both the Care Inspectorate and Health Improvement Scotland (HIS) on a Health and Social care integration position statement. It will also carry out a follow-up audit on roads maintenance. Any engagement with

councils is still to be determined. Publication of these reports is scheduled for between October 2015 and February 2016.

10. The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) has a planned programme of thematic inquiries into housing services which will be carried out largely in the first quarter of 2015-16, with publication of inquiry reports in the first and second quarters of the year. The thematic inquiries will cover a range of housing services including: Gypsy/Travellers; factoring services; gas safety; complaints handling; customer service standards; repairs; rent consultation; equalities; and openness and accessibility. Some of the thematic inquiries will not involve any on-site work at all and no local authority will be selected for on-site work in more than one thematic. The SHR will contact individual landlords with details about their potential inclusion.
11. During the first and second quarters of the year, the SHR will review the Charter data submitted by social landlords in May 2015 and identify topics for a further programme of thematic inquiries to be taken forward in the second and third quarters of the year.
12. In addition to specific work shown in Appendix 1, routine, scheduled audit and inspection work will take place through the annual audit process and the on-going inspection of school and care establishments by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate respectively. Individual audit and inspection agencies will continue to monitor developments in key areas of council activity and will provide support and challenge as appropriate. This will help to inform future assessment of scrutiny risk.
13. The LAN will have on-going oversight and monitoring of the scrutiny risks identified in paragraph 5.

Appendix 1: Scrutiny plan

Scrutiny body	Scrutiny activity	Date
Audit Scotland	Possible performance audit work	TBC
Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland	Joint Children's Services inspection of Stirling and Clackmannanshire (follow-up)	May 2015
Education Scotland	Education Scotland will be working in partnership with councils to carry out a validated self-evaluation (VSE) of educational psychology services across all councils over a two-year period beginning in 2015/16.	TBC
Care Inspectorate and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICS)	Joint Thematic Review of Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA).	May 2015
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICS)	HMICS will be inspecting local policing across Scotland over the next three years. These inspections will examine, amongst other things, local scrutiny and engagement between Police Scotland and councils. Two local Policing Divisions are programmed to be inspected in addition to Edinburgh Division in 2015/16. The Divisions will be identified approximately three months prior to inspection, the first being no earlier than October.	TBC
Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate (HMFSI)	HMFSI will be inspecting local fire and rescue services across Scotland over the next five years. These inspections will examine, amongst other things, local scrutiny and engagement between the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and councils. As part of its programme, HMFSI will inspect four local fire and rescue services during 2015/16. Clackmannanshire is not included in the programme this year.	TBC
Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)		
	The SHR will carry out a number of thematic inquiries in 2015/16. If a council is to be involved in a thematic inquiry the SHR will confirm this with the council and the appropriate LAN lead.	TBC