

Angus Council

Local Scrutiny Plan

2016/17



March 2016

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Introduction

1. This local scrutiny plan sets out the planned scrutiny activity in Angus Council during 2016/17. 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 2016/17, which is available on the Audit Scotland website.

Scrutiny risks

3. Through the 2016 shared risk assessment process, no new scrutiny risks were identified in respect of Angus Council. The LAN had previously concluded that Best Value work should be undertaken in 2015/16. The council had undergone a significant management restructuring in 2012/13 and had commenced a transformation programme. The LAN therefore concluded that it would be appropriate to assess the extent of the council's leadership and change programme and its impact on delivery of corporate and service priorities. It was also noted that the audit would provide assurance to the Accounts Commission on progress made in delivering improvement since the council's last Best Value audit in May 2010. The 2015/16 fieldwork was carried out in March 2016 and the report is scheduled for publication in July 2016.
4. The Care Inspectorate and HMICS carried out a joint thematic review of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) across all 32 local authority areas in Scotland in 2015. The purpose of the review was to assess the state, efficiency and effectiveness of MAPPA in Scotland in terms of keeping people safe and reducing the potential risk of serious harm by registered sex offenders in our communities. It involved local authorities, Police Scotland, NHS Boards and the Scottish Prison Service. Findings from across the country were positive with arrangements viewed as making a positive contribution to the effective and efficient management of registered sex offenders. The Strategic Operational Group of Tayside Community Justice Authority received specific, local feedback in December 2015.

5. To assess the risk to social landlord services, the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) has reviewed and compared the performance of all Scottish social landlords to identify the weakest performing landlords. SHR has assessed that no additional scrutiny is required for Angus Council beyond statutory work during 2016/17.
6. The SHR will publish the findings of its thematic inquiry work completed during 2015/16. It will carry out further thematic inquiries during 2016/17. SHR will also review the Charter data submitted by landlords and carry out data accuracy visits during the second quarter of 2016/17. If the council is to be involved in a thematic inquiry or a data accuracy visit SHR will confirm this directly with the council and the LAN lead.
7. The LAN continues to monitor the council's financial position and the challenges to service delivery in the future from increased demand and reducing resources. During the past two years, there has been significant organisational restructure with staff and service changes. In 2014/15, the council underspent against budget by £11.7 million (4.6 per cent of the revenue budget) due to an underspend in employee costs across all services from slippage in filling posts or planned non-filling of posts in anticipation of potential deletion as part of future years budget reductions, lower principal loan repayments and additional council tax income.
8. The council published a workforce strategy in summer 2015 which provided a framework for further work to produce associated workforce plans. Such plans are essential to inform budget decisions, they should demonstrate where staff are needed to deliver priorities and identify services where reduction options are possible to meet budget savings. The council's progress in developing workforce plans will be considered as part of the targeted follow-up work on workforce planning being carried out by Audit Scotland in summer 2016.
9. The 2016/17 revenue budget is approximately £240 million while revised budget proposals for the next three years have a £26 million funding gap. The budget was developed using Priority Based Budgeting principles in order that the focus of the budget setting process would move towards spending on priority areas. The council also has an established process of medium term financial planning. The most recent strategy covers the period 2016/17 to 2019/20 and identified a funding gap of £30 million. Savings of £6.8 million were already anticipated which left a shortfall of £23.2 million to be identified. The council's baseline projections assumed a cash reduction in government grant of 1.5 per cent for 2016/17, however the Finance Settlement announced by the Scottish Government in December 2015 resulted in a reduction of 3.4 per cent in 2016/17. The council's recent review of its baseline projections took account of the reduction in government grant and identified a revised funding gap of £26 million. The council expects its change programme, Transforming Angus, to deliver the necessary savings required to fund this shortfall. The medium term financial strategy will be reviewed again by the council in September 2016 and the financial position will continue to be monitored through the local annual audit process.

10. The LAN will monitor progress with implementation of health and social care integration during 2016/17. This is a significant strategic development with important implications for the council and its NHS partner (NHS Tayside). The council and NHS Tayside agreed to implement a body corporate model in the form of an Integrated Joint Board of health and social care integration. A shadow board was put in place in April 2015 with partner agencies working closely together to develop a strategic plan and appropriate governance arrangements including the identification and agreement of devolved budgets to support operational responsibility from April 2016. Financial pressures facing NHS Tayside were highlighted by the Auditor General in October 2015. Due to the scale of the reforms and the financial pressures facing the NHS board and the council, the LAN will continue to monitor developments in this area.

Planned scrutiny activity

11. As shown in [Appendix 1](#), the council will be subject to a range of risk-based and nationally driven scrutiny activities during 2016/17. For some of their scrutiny activity in 2016/17, scrutiny bodies are still to determine which specific council areas they will cover in their work programmes. Where a council is to be involved, the relevant scrutiny body will confirm this with the council and the appropriate LAN lead.
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 ongoing inspection of school and care establishments by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate respectively. Audit Scotland will carry out a programme of performance audits during 2016/17 and individual audit and inspection agencies will continue to monitor developments in key areas of council activity and will provide support and challenge as appropriate. This will help to inform future assessment of scrutiny risk.
13. The Care Inspectorate will work together with partner regulatory agencies to continue to deliver a coordinated programme of joint scrutiny of Community Planning Partnerships and integration joint boards. Partner agencies are reviewing the methodology for joint inspections of Adults' services. In respect of Children's Services, there are plans to undertake six joint strategic inspections including Angus Council in the 2016/17 year. As well as joint strategic scrutiny programmes, the Care Inspectorate will also be reviewing its approach to strategic commissioning, reviewing the validated self-assessment of Alcohol and Drug Partnerships and undertaking a variety of thematic programmes of work.
14. HMICS will continue to inspect local policing across Scotland during 2016/17 as part of its rolling work programme. These inspections will examine, amongst other things, local scrutiny and engagement between Police Scotland and councils. HMICS will identify and notify LANs and the local Policing Divisions to be inspected approximately three months prior to inspection.

15. In December 2014, the Accounts Commission concluded its review of Best Value and set out principles for a new approach to auditing Best Value to be rolled out from October 2016. While preparation for the new approach progresses, existing plans for Best Value audit work in 2015/16 will continue in line with the Accounts Commission's agreed work programme.
16. The new principles include the need for more frequent assurance on Best Value across all 32 councils, integrating the audit processes, an increased emphasis on driving improvement, and a strong focus on the quality of service experienced by the public and the outcomes achieved.
17. The new approach will include assessment each year of specified aspects of Best Value as part of an integrated annual audit. With other audit activity, this will bring together an overall picture of the council which will enable a public report (i.e. a Controller of Audit report to the Accounts Commission) to be prepared for each council at least once in a five year cycle.
18. The results of this current shared risk assessment will make a significant contribution to the audit intelligence that will underpin the new approach, and inform the development of the initial programme.

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Appendix 1: Scrutiny plan

Scrutiny body	Scrutiny activity	Date
Audit Scotland	<p>Audit Scotland plans to undertake performance audit work in three areas covering local government during 2016/17. It will undertake a performance audit on early learning and childcare and a follow-up audit on self-directed support. Audit Scotland will also carry out audit work on equal pay, but is still considering the focus and outputs of work in this area. Any engagement with councils is still to be determined. Details of future audit work are available on the Audit Scotland website here.</p> <p>In addition, there will be targeted follow-up of the national performance audit report <i>Scotland's Public Sector Workforce</i> published in November 2013.</p>	<p>To be confirmed</p> <p>June 2016</p>
Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland	<p>The Care Inspectorate will undertake validated self-evaluation (VSE) activity with Alcohol and Drug Partnerships (ADP). The purpose of this activity is to support the validation of ADP and services' self-assessment of local implementation and service compliance with the Quality Principles: Standard Expectations of Care and Support in Drug & Alcohol Services. The findings from this validation work will be reviewed by the Scottish Government to consider and inform the future programme of national support that will further encourage and support delivery of continued improvements at ADP and service level. It is anticipated that all 30 ADPs will participate. The Care Inspectorate will also provide brief, customised feedback to each ADP in order to help build their capacity for self-evaluation.</p> <p>The Care Inspectorate will lead a joint inspection of services for children and young people, and will also involve participation by Healthcare Improvement Scotland, Education Scotland and HMICS. These inspections are part of the Care Inspectorate's wider planned programme of national scrutiny work.</p>	<p>On site activity commenced in March 2016 with a national overview report to be completed by the end of 2016</p> <p>Summer 2016</p>


Education Scotland	Review of the quality of Careers Information Advice and Guidance (CIAG) services delivered by Skills Development Scotland across all council areas over the next two years.	To be determined during 2017/18
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICS)	HMICS are inspecting local policing across Scotland over three years commencing in 2015/16. These inspections will examine, amongst other things, local scrutiny and engagement between Police Scotland and councils. The Divisions will be identified approximately three months prior to inspection.	Date over the next two years to be determined
Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate (HMFSI)	HMFSI are inspecting local fire and rescue services across Scotland over five years commencing in 2015/16. 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. Angus is not included in the programme this year.	Date over the next four years to be determined
Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)	The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) will publish the findings of its thematic inquiry work completed during 2015-16. It will carry out further thematic inquiries during 2016-17. SHR will also review the Charter data submitted by landlords and carry out data accuracy visits during the second quarter of 2016/17. If the council is to be involved in a thematic inquiry or a data accuracy visit, SHR will confirm this directly with the council and the LAN lead.	To be determined

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A summary of local government strategic scrutiny activity

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