

# Renfrewshire Council

## Local Scrutiny Plan

2017/18



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## Local Scrutiny Plan – April 2017 to March 2018

### Introduction

1. This local scrutiny plan (LSP) sets out the planned scrutiny activity in Renfrewshire Council ('the council') during the financial year 2017/18. 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 2017/18, which is available on the Audit Scotland website.

### Scrutiny risks

3. The conclusion of this year's shared risk assessment is that no scrutiny risks have been identified which require specific scrutiny by the LAN in 2017/18. This maintains the positive position reported last year.
4. The LAN has assessed the following areas as requiring ongoing oversight and monitoring :
5. **Financial Sustainability:** the council is facing significant financial pressures. Following the announcement of the Scottish Government Settlement for 2017/18, the council has identified a need to make savings of £20 million to £30 million in 2017/18 and further recurring annual revenue savings of £16 million to £27 million per annum for the two year period 2018/19 and 2019/20. A significant programme of work is underway to develop options as part of its Better Council Change Programme. Making these additional savings will be challenging given the significant service reforms and workforce reductions implemented to date. There is also a risk the level of planned budget savings will adversely affect the level and quality of service provision.
6. **The Audit, Scrutiny and Petitions Board** act as the council's Audit Committee. The focus of the Board is substantially on petitions. There is a risk that the council's current governance arrangements for audit and scrutiny do not allow members to adequately focus on audit, corporate governance and risk management.

## Best Value

7. At its meeting in December 2014, the Accounts Commission agreed the principles of the new best value approach. The Accounts Commission agreed the overall framework for a new approach to auditing Best Value in June 2016. Best Value will be assessed over the five year audit appointment, as part of the annual audit work. In addition a Best Value Assurance Report (BVAR) for each council will be considered by the Accounts Commission at least once in this five year period. The current programme includes a Best Value audit of Renfrewshire Council in 2017 with the publication of a Best Value Assurance Report for Renfrewshire Council in August 2017.

## Planned scrutiny activity

8. As shown in Appendix 1, the council will be subject to a range of risk-based and nationally driven scrutiny activity between April 2017 and March 2018. For some of their scrutiny activity in 2017/18, scrutiny bodies are still to determine their work programmes which specific council areas they will cover. Where Renfrewshire Council is to be involved, the relevant scrutiny body will confirm this with the council and the appropriate LAN lead.
9. **Audit Scotland:** plans to undertake national performance audit work in a number of areas covering local government during 2017/18. These include Arms Length External Organisations (ALEOs), city deals, children's mental health and health and social care integration. Any engagement with individual councils is still to be determined. Details of future audit work are available on the Audit Scotland website. Engagement with councils is still to be determined on some of these studies, and councils will be updated. More information on future audit work is available on the Audit Scotland website [here](#).
10. **Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland:** will introduce a revised approach to the joint strategic inspections of services for adults for 2017/18 which will assess the extent to which the planning, organisation and coordination of services comply with the principles of integration and contribute to the national health and wellbeing outcomes. Inspections will include a focus on joint strategic commissioning. In 2017/18, the Care Inspectorate will also lead on thematic activity in the areas of adult support and protection and self-directed support, working with a range of scrutiny partners. All Alcohol and Drug Partnerships (ADPs) have received individual feedback to support continuous improvement and a national report will be published in May 2017.
11. **Education Scotland:** A new model of inspection for Community Learning and Development (CLD) has been developed. Inspections will be based on the local authority area and will include local authority CLD provision and partners. It is anticipated that all local authorities will be covered in the next three years. In addition there will be a follow-up review of the quality of Careers Information Advice and Guidance (CIAG) services delivered by Skills Development Scotland across all council areas. The authority has spent less than half of its allocated Scottish Attainment

Challenge funding. Plans for taking forward the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) are under discussion.

12. **Scottish Housing Regulator:** To assess the risk to social landlord services, 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 in the council beyond statutory/ongoing work during 2017/18. SHR will publish the findings of its thematic inquiry work into gas safety and repairs completed during 2016/17. It may carry out further thematic inquiries during 2017/18. SHR will also review the Scottish Social Housing Charter data submitted by landlords and carry out data accuracy visits during the second quarter of 2017/18. Where councils are to be involved in a thematic inquiry or a data accuracy visit, the SHR will confirm this directly with the council and the LAN lead.
13. 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 2017/18 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.

**May 2017**

## Appendix 1: Scrutiny plan

Scrutiny body	Scrutiny activity	Date
Audit Scotland	Audit Scotland has a number of performance audits covering local government in 2017/18 focusing on Arms Length External Organisations (ALEOs), city deals, children's mental health and health and social care integration.	Dates to be determined
Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland	Joint inspection (with HIP) of adults' services as part of the Care Inspectorate's wider programme of national work and not as a result of the LAN's assessment.	Nov - Dec 2017
Education Scotland	A new model for Community Learning and Development (CLD) has been developed. The inspection will be based on the local authority area and will include local authority CLD provision and its partners.	Jan - March 2018
Scottish Housing Regulator	SHR will publish the findings of its thematic inquiry work into gas safety and repairs completed during 2016/17. It may carry out further thematic inquiries during 2017/18. SHR will also review the Scottish Social Housing Charter data submitted by landlords and carry out data accuracy visits during the second quarter of 2017/18. Where councils are to be involved in a thematic inquiry or a data accuracy visit, the SHR will confirm this directly with the council and the LAN lead.	Dates to be determined

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#### A summary of local government strategic scrutiny activity

This report is available in PDF and RTF formats, along with a podcast summary at:

[www.audit-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk) 

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