

East Lothian Council

Local Scrutiny Plan

2018/19



April 2018

East Lothian Council

Local Scrutiny Plan – April 2018 to March 2019

Introduction

1. This local scrutiny plan sets out the scrutiny risks identified by the local area network (LAN), proposed scrutiny responses and expected scrutiny activity for East Lothian Council (the Council) during the financial year 2018/19.
2. The scrutiny risks and responses are based on a shared risk assessment undertaken by the 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 risks in the council and the Integration Joint Board (the IJB).
3. Expected scrutiny activity across all councils in Scotland informs the National Scrutiny Plan for 2018/19 which is available on the Audit Scotland website.

Scrutiny risks

4. The SRA for East Lothian Council concluded that there were no significant risks for the council in the coming 12 months that would warrant any specific scrutiny activity.
 5. **Financial Sustainability:** Last year's Local Scrutiny Plan (LSP) highlighted financial challenges facing the Council. In common with other councils, East Lothian continues to face significant challenges and uncertainties. In December 2017 the Council prepared a Financial Strategy for the five year period from 2018/19 to 2022/23 which recognises challenges arising from reduced grant funding and a rapidly expanding population. Current approved spending plans require delivery of over £12.5 million of additional efficiencies between 2018/19 and 2020/21. The total estimated revenue savings which will be required over the next five years, in addition to current planned savings based on a number of different scenarios, range from £12.4 million to £39 million. The Council has a programme of transformational change to explore new ways of working and further options for partnership working. Progress in this area will be considered as part of the Best Value Assurance Review in 2018 and the external auditors will continue to monitor progress through the 2018/19 annual audit.
 6. **Education:** The LAN has concluded that no specific additional scrutiny work is required beyond the ongoing inspection and support activity that Education Scotland provides to the Council.
 7. The Council has appropriate governance arrangements in place to ensure that educational provision is well organised and led. Appropriate arrangements are also in place to support the
-

planning and spend related to the Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) with clear officer responsibility and lines of accountability. Education Scotland will continue to liaise with establishments as appropriate.

8. The new senior leadership team have put in place a range of well-considered processes to support professional learning and bring about improvements across the educational stages. The ethos and culture of the education service has changed significantly in recent years. Senior leaders have a sound understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement across the educational stages and are making good progress in implementing change.
 9. The Council has a performance reporting approach which provides accessible and regularly updated information about Education Services. The most up-to-date report covering indicators across 2015 to 17, presents a mixed picture in terms of outcomes although there are self-reported improvements in terms of P1 progress in reading and maths. Overall, scrutiny outcomes including inspections, have been positive in recent years. However in a number of inspections, across sectors, Education Scotland has evaluated aspects of provision as satisfactory or weak.
 10. Outcomes for young people are generally improving but in a few specific measures, including rates of exclusion, less positive than outcomes for young people with similar needs and backgrounds elsewhere in the country. The newly enhanced quality improvement team are strengthening their support and direction for their schools. They are providing more effective support and challenge across the educational stages with high expectations of all provision.
 11. The Best Value Assurance Review in 2018 will consider the educational performance of the Council as part of the wider Review process. Education Scotland will engage in ongoing oversight and monitoring as part of the support provided by Area Lead Officers but will not engage in a formal scrutiny response other than already planned inspections and reviews.
 12. **Social care:** East Lothian Integration Joint Board (IJB) is making progress in the implementation of the integration of health and social care. Governance and management arrangements continue to be streamlined and there is evidence of processes, procedures and plans being put in place such as a workforce plan and performance outcomes, where impact will be measured.
 13. During the past two financial years, both the Adult Wellbeing and Children's Wellbeing services have been identified as at high risk of not operating within their approved budgets, with additional funding required (and provided by Partners) in 2016/17. Both services continue to be monitored closely by management and the external auditors will continue to monitor progress through the annual audit process.
 14. Both Children and Adult Services in East Lothian Council area have been the subject of joint inspections. Comprehensive improvement plans are in place to address areas for improvement identified from these joint inspections. Progress against follow up actions
-

continues to be monitored by the Care Inspectorate at link inspector meetings with chief officers.

15. Current grades across all Community Care services provided by the Council demonstrate satisfactory performance. Regulated services will continue to be monitored by the Care Inspectorate through regulatory inspection.

Social Care – national scrutiny activity

16. **Duties under the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act:** From April 2017 the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland have a joint duty under the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 to assess and report on the effectiveness of integration authorities' strategic plans. In these early stages of the integration of health and social care, the Care Inspectorate will report on the progress which integration authorities are making towards a more collaborative culture and integrated approaches to planning and delivering services which should deliver improved outcomes for people in communities. During 2018/19 the Care Inspectorate intends to visit three partnerships and report on their progress. Where councils are to be involved, the Care Inspectorate will confirm this directly with the relevant council and respective LAN lead.
 17. **Self-directed support:** The Care Inspectorate is currently undertaking preparatory work for a thematic review of self-directed support which will be carried out during 2018/19. The aim is to build on the key findings of Audit Scotland's progress report (August 2017) particularly to explore the ability and confidence of front line staff to implement self-direction support legislation by offering choice and control and making decisions with people about their support.
 18. Throughout the year the Care Inspectorate will conduct an inspection in up to six areas across the country with the aim of identifying factors which support effective implementation of the legislation and barriers which require to be overcome. The Care Inspectorate will provide feedback on each area and publish an overview report which will be disseminated more widely, with the expectation that all areas will then use these findings to evaluate their own practice and make improvements where necessary. East Lothian has been selected for the Thematic Review of SDS with fieldwork taking place in Quarters 3 and 4 in 2018/19.
 19. **Joint inspections of services for children and young people:** From April 2018 Scottish Ministers have asked the Care Inspectorate to lead another programme of joint inspections of services for children and young people alongside scrutiny partners Education Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland. Scottish Ministers have asked these organisations to provide assurance about how community planning partners are protecting and meet the needs of children and young people who have experienced, or at risk of, abuse and neglect, and how they are working together to improve outcomes for children and young people who are subject to corporate parenting
-

requirements. The intent is to carry out five joint inspections in 2018/19. It has been agreed with Ministers that for the duration of this programme of inspections, an area of specific enquiry will be incorporated each year, with the aim of identifying key lessons and best practice which all partnerships could use to support their own continuous improvement. An overview report will be published at the end of each year. Where councils are to be involved, the Care Inspectorate will confirm this directly with the relevant council and respective LAN lead.

20. **Housing and Homelessness:** To assess the risk to registered social landlord (RSL) services, the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) has reviewed and compared the performance of all Scottish RSLs and has identified that the Council is in the bottom quartile for a number of key indicators.
21. East Lothian Council was one of the first councils to pilot the introduction of Universal Credit. In the Council's 2017/18 LSP, SHR said that it would monitor performance in relation to arrears. Since then the SHR has met with Council officials on a number of occasions and reviewed performance reports. The SHR is assured that the Council understands the challenges it faces and has robust plans in place to improve performance
22. In relation to the Council's homelessness service, the SHR continues to identify risks in relation to how people access its services and the number of homeless applications submitted. There are high numbers of people in bed and breakfast temporary accommodation and people spend long periods of time there. The Council has developed a Homelessness Action Plan and increased the number of allocations it makes to homeless people.
23. The SHR will monitor the Council's progress in addressing arrears and the homelessness service weaknesses identified in this plan. The SHR will review the Council's quarterly performance management reports and meet Council officials as necessary.

Best Value

24. **Best Value Assurance Review:** The Accounts Commission agreed the overall framework for a new approach to auditing Best Value in June 2016. Best Value will be assessed comprehensively over the five year external audit appointment, both through the ongoing annual audit work and also through discrete packages of work to look at specific issues. Conclusions and judgements on Best Value will be reported through:
 - the Annual Audit Report for each council, that will provide a rounded picture of the council overall
 - an Annual Assurance and Risks Report that the Controller of Audit will provide to the Accounts Commission that will highlight issues from across all 32 council annual audit reports
-

- a Best Value Assurance Review (BVAR) for each council that will be considered by the Accounts Commission at least once in a five year period.

25. As part of this approach, audit work is now underway which will result in a Best Value Assurance Review of East Lothian Council in October 2018. The scope of the audit work includes consideration of:

- leadership, governance and scrutiny
- outcomes and performance
- improvement
- partnership working.

Planned scrutiny activity

26. Any expected scrutiny activity between April 2018 and March 2019 is shown in [Appendix 1](#). For some of their scrutiny activity in 2018/19, scrutiny bodies are still to determine their specific work programmes including the councils and areas to be covered. Where a council is to be involved, the relevant scrutiny body will confirm this with the council and the appropriate LAN lead.
27. 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. The outcomes of this work will help to inform future assessment of scrutiny risk.

April 2018

Appendix: Scrutiny activity

Scrutiny body	Scrutiny activity	Date
Audit Scotland	<p>Best value assurance review. The scope of the review covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership, governance and scrutiny: vision, priorities, member and officer roles and responsibilities – focusing on Following the Public Pound and ALEO governance arrangements, internal audit, and City Deal • Outcomes and performance: Overall assessment of outcomes, performance and public reporting – focus on Education performance • Improvement: self-evaluation, change/transformation plans and programmes • Partnership working: Community Planning Partnership - including community empowerment 	<p>Spring – Summer 2018</p> <p>Publication October 2018</p>
	<p>Audit Scotland is due to publish the following performance audit reports in 2018/19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arm’s length and external organisations (ALEOs) - Spring 2018. • Scottish Fire and Rescue Service: an update - Spring 2018. • Managing the implementation of the Scotland Acts – Spring 2018. • Children’s mental health services - Autumn 2018. • Integration of health and social care - Autumn 2018. • City deals - Winter 2018/19. 	<p>Dates and locations of 2018/19 fieldwork to be determined</p>
Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland	<p>Joint inspections of services for children and young people. Where councils are to be involved, the Care Inspectorate will confirm this directly with the council and the LAN lead.</p>	<p>Dates and locations to be determined</p>
	<p>Review of the progress which integration authorities are making towards a more collaborative culture and integrated approaches to planning and delivering services which should deliver improved outcomes for people in communities. Where integration authorities are</p>	<p>Dates and locations to be determined</p>


	to be involved, the Care Inspectorate will confirm this directly with the council and the LAN lead.	
	Thematic review of self-directed support. Where councils are to be involved, the Care Inspectorate will confirm this directly with the council and the LAN lead.	Q3-Q4 in East Lothian
Scottish Housing Regulator	The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) may carry out thematic inquiries during 2018/19 or it may carry out survey or on-site work to follow up on published thematic reports. The SHR will also review the Scottish Social Housing Charter data submitted by landlords and carry out data accuracy visits during the second quarter of 2018/19. Where councils are to be involved in a thematic inquiry, any follow-up work to a published thematic inquiry, or a data accuracy visit, the SHR will confirm this directly with the council and the LAN lead.	Dates and locations to be determined
	East Lothian Council will be the subject of a careers information advice and guidance (CIAG) review.	February 2019
Education Scotland	East Lothian Council will not be subject to any educational psychology service (EPS) or community learning and development (CLD) inspections during 2018/19.	N/A
	East Lothian Council will not be subject to any inspection activity within challenge authority councils or follow-up strategic inspection activity during 2018/19.	N/A

East Lothian Council

Local Scrutiny Plan 2018/19

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 

If you require this publication in an alternative
format and/or language, please contact us to
discuss your needs: 0131 625 1500
or info@audit-scotland.gov.uk 

For the latest news, reports
and updates, follow us on:



Audit Scotland, 4th Floor, 102 West Port, Edinburgh EH3 9DN
T: 0131 625 1500 E: info@audit-scotland.gov.uk 
www.audit-scotland.gov.uk 