

City of Edinburgh

Council

Local Scrutiny Plan

2018/19



April 2018

City of Edinburgh Council

Local Scrutiny Plan – April 2018 to March 2019

Introduction

1. This local scrutiny plan sets out any scrutiny risks identified by the local area network (LAN), proposed scrutiny responses and expected scrutiny activity for the City of Edinburgh Council during the financial year 2018/19.
2. The scrutiny risks and responses are 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 risks in the council and 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 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 BVAR report for the City of Edinburgh Council is not planned in the period covered by this scrutiny plan. The Best Value audit work planned this year will focus on the council's arrangements for demonstrating Best Value in the following areas:
 - Improvement
 - Partnership working
 - Resource management.

Findings will be reported in the Annual Audit Report.

5. Audit Scotland has several planned performance audits covering local government planned during 2018/19 informed by the Accounts Commission's strategic audit priorities, public sector audit risks and policy developments, as well a wide range of policy monitoring and external engagement. It will be carrying out audits covering children and young people's mental health, health and social care integration and the value for money of non-profit distributing (NPD) projects. Any engagement with individual councils is still to be determined. Further details on each of the audits in the performance audit programme for 2018/19 and beyond are available at <http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/our-work/future-work/our-work-programme>.

6. The council has a well-developed Financial Strategy and clear understanding of future pressures and the impact on the medium term financial position. However a Revenue Budget Framework update in February 2018 highlighted that the council is projecting a cumulative savings gap to 2022-23 of £151.2million with no clear plan at this stage to deliver the required savings. In addition, financial risks such as demand pressures on health and social care, and the impact of EU withdrawal place additional uncertainty on the council's future budgets.
7. The council continues to implement a third phase of the transformation programme, along with the programme management necessary to deliver on this challenging target.
8. The LAN will continue monitoring the council's financial position and plans as part of the annual audit process.
9. In August 2015 the council awarded CGI the contract for the provision of ICT services. Since the contract commenced, however, the council has reported that CGI has underperformed on the contractual commitments. Transformation programmes have missed the original delivery dates, and in some cases the revised delivery date and this has meant that the council has been unable to realise the benefits and/or savings envisaged. At the outset, the contract was expected to save the council at least £45million over the first seven years. Improvements have been made; however this has not been at the pace required by the council or in line with the contract specifications. A paper was presented to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee in August 2017, giving members an overview of the services delivered by CGI including options available to the council regarding contractual remedies.
10. In 2017, the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee considered an external audit report on the effectiveness of security management controls within CGI over the council's ICT network. Following consideration of external audit's findings, the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee requested external audit carry out a follow up review on the audit recommendations and report back to it at the January 2018 meeting. The Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee has requested a further report to be presented at its May 2018 committee.
11. A follow up of the CGI security management audit will be carried out by external audit and the findings presented to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee in May 2018.
12. While the council acts to tackle areas of poor performance, including developing improvement plans, in some service areas, including waste, roads and delayed discharges performance remains poor. During 2016/17 Edinburgh regularly had the highest number of delayed discharges of any integration authority in Scotland.
13. The LAN will consider the council's approach to improvement through the best value work carried out by external audit. External audit will seek evidence that outcomes are improving and that the pace of improvement is managed in line with resources. The work will include consideration of the impact of transformation work, how effectively the

council has identified improvement priorities, and how self-aware the council is in understanding its relative performance and improvement needs.

14. In September 2017, the council approved the commencement of Stage 2 activities in respect of the tram extension (York Place to Newhaven). Stage 2 of the project is the procurement phase, and is scheduled to take approximately 12 months. Public consultation will also commence during Stage 2. Stage 2 milestones include the completion of tender evaluations by September 2018. Subject to approval by council, the main construction contract is expected to be awarded, and stage 3 of the project approved by November 2018.
15. Following the original trams project, which was completed after significant delays and over-spends, an independent inquiry chaired by Lord Hardie was convened and is currently underway. Lord Hardie is expected to publish his findings by Summer 2018, to allow recommendations and lessons learned to be built into the final contract for award for the York Place to Newhaven project.
16. Audit work will be carried out, by external audit, over the course of 2018/19 in respect of the Edinburgh Trams project (York Place to Newhaven).
17. A joint inspection of health and social work services for older people was carried out by the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland in the autumn of 2016. The inspection highlighted several areas which were evaluated as weak and one as unsatisfactory. The Care Inspectorate has since been engaging with officers in Edinburgh and collaborating with colleagues in the ihub and the Scottish Government to support the partnership with the improvement agenda. This work will continue and the Care Inspectorate will monitor and report on progress against the recommendations arising from the joint inspection carried out in 2016.
18. From April 2018, Scottish ministers have asked the Care Inspectorate to lead a programme of joint inspections of service for children and young people, with scrutiny partners Education Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland. Scottish ministers have asked the Care Inspectorate 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 intention is to carry out up to five joint inspections a year; in 2018/19 one of these will be in the Edinburgh area.
19. There is strong strategic leadership in Schools and Lifelong Learning Services. The council has appropriate governance arrangements in place to ensure that educational provision is well organised and well led. Scrutiny outcomes, including inspections, have been positive, overall, in recent years. However, a number of recent inspections, across sectors, have evaluated some important aspects of provision as satisfactory or weak. Outcomes for young people are generally improving but are, overall, less positive than

outcomes for young people with similar needs and backgrounds from across the country. Approaches being taken to ensure quality improvement within education are appropriate and have the capacity to lead to improvements in provision.

20. Overall there are a few concerns with the council's educational provision. In 2018/19, 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 planned inspections and reviews.
21. The council has 12 schools participating in the Schools Programme of the Scottish Attainment Challenge. Schools have Pupil Equity Funding plans in place and are being progressed. Education Scotland will continue to liaise with establishments as appropriate.
22. 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.
23. It found that the council has weaknesses in relation to: complaints handling and complaints responded to within the SPSO timescales; rent collected and arrears; SHQS exemptions and abeyances and 'repairs completed 'right first time'. In relation to the council's homelessness service, it identified risks in relation to provision of temporary accommodation; use of B&Bs; length of time in temporary accommodation; lost contacts before discharge of duty; repeat assessments; case duration and percentage of RSL lets to homeless households.
24. The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) will monitor the council's progress in addressing the housing and homelessness service weaknesses identified in this plan. It will review the council's quarterly performance management reports and meet council officials as necessary.
25. 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.

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 work programmes and which specific council areas they will cover. 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.

March 2018

Appendix: Scrutiny activity

Scrutiny body	Scrutiny activity	Date
Audit Scotland	Audits covering children and young people's mental health, health and social care integration and the value for money of non-profit distributing (NPD) projects	2018/19
External Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit work will be carried out over the course of 2018/19 in respect of the Edinburgh Trams project (York Place to Newhaven). A follow up of the CGI security management audit will be carried out and the findings presented to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee in May 2018. 	2018/19 May 2018
Care Inspectorate	The Care Inspectorate will continue to work with the Edinburgh partnership to support improvement and will monitor and report on progress against the recommendations arising from the joint inspection carried out in 2016.	Ongoing
Education Scotland	Care Inspectorate led multi-agency inspection of children's services	Q4 2018/19
Education Scotland	No additional scrutiny is required beyond on-going and statutory work.	
Scottish Housing Regulator	The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) will monitor the council's progress in addressing the housing and homelessness service weaknesses identified in this plan. It will review the council's quarterly performance management reports and meet council officials as necessary.	Quarterly
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.	2018/19

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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 

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