

# South Ayrshire Council

## Local Scrutiny Plan

2018/19



April 2018

# South Ayrshire 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 South Ayrshire 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 conclusion of this year's shared risk assessment is that no scrutiny risks have been identified which require specific scrutiny by the LAN in the coming year; however, there are a number of areas where the LAN will carry out ongoing oversight and monitoring. This is in line with the 2017/18 Local Scrutiny Plan issued in May 2017.
5. Financial management is strong with a robust budget setting process in place to deliver services in line with the council's priorities. In common with many other councils, South Ayrshire is now projecting funding gaps over the next few years as a result of public sector funding continuing to reduce against a backdrop of increasing costs, demand for services and public expectations. The 2019/20 revenue budget identifies an indicative budget gap of £10.772 million analysed between £6.949 million for council services and £3.823 million for services delegated to the Health & Social Care Partnership (IJB).
6. The joint inspection of services for children and young people in the South Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership area, which took place between 25 April and 10 June 2016, concluded there was a need for more effective partnership working to lead and direct services for children. During week commencing the 29<sup>th</sup> January 2018 there was a Joint Inspection of Children's Services Progress Review. Strategic leaders have revised their strategic planning and delivery framework and are now sufficiently challenging of their partners. The IJB, community planning partners and chief officers all demonstrated a strengthened strategic overview of services for children. In doing so, partnership agencies including education, community child health and children and families social work services were more effectively

coming together in a strategic partnership and beginning to overcome barriers arising from their chosen model for integrating health and social care.

7. South Ayrshire Council has appointed the deputy chief executive and director people to oversee the improvement plan and progress. Partners have worked hard to develop a very robust plan approved by all stakeholders including the Children's Services Planning Group (CSPG), IJB and CPP. This takes account of all the areas requiring to be improved. The progress review found that, in the main, the improvement plan had been central to this progress and strict governance of progress by the CSPG.
8. The Care Inspectorate will continue to work very closely with the partnership as a 'critical friend' to monitor progress of this work in the coming year using the established quality improvement framework. The partnership is positive about this support.
9. The council has appropriate governance in place to ensure that educational provision is both well organised and well led. Scrutiny outcomes, including inspections, have been positive overall in recent years, with only two establishments requiring follow up activity across 2015, 2016 and 2017. All other evaluations from school establishment inspections have been satisfactory or better, with most evaluations being good or very good. Outcomes for young people by the point at which they leave secondary school are good to very good and are often better than outcomes for young people with similar needs and backgrounds from across the country in several key measures. Approaches to ensure quality improvement within education services are now well embedded and demonstrating clear impact. There is strong and very effective leadership of education services in South Ayrshire.
10. Overall there are no particular concerns with South Ayrshire Council's educational provision. In 2018/19, there will be no further scrutiny other than the planned cycle of inspections and reviews. This is in line with the previous year.
11. Schools in South Ayrshire Council have Pupil Equity Funding plans in place where they receive funding and these are being progressed. Education Scotland will continue to liaise with establishments as appropriate.
12. 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 in this council beyond statutory/ongoing work during 2018/19.
13. The 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

14. 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.
15. 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.
16. 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 South Ayrshire 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 Improvement and Financial Governance and Resource Management, and will be reported in the Annual Audit Report.
17. Audit Scotland plans to undertake performance audit work in a range of areas covering local government during 2018/19. These include City Deals, Health and social care Integration; progress update and Children and young people's mental health. Any engagement with individual councils is still to be determined. Details of future audit work are available on Audit Scotland website [here](#).

## Appendix 1: Scrutiny activity

Scrutiny body	Scrutiny activity	Date
External auditor	Best Value audit work this year will focus on the council's arrangements for demonstrating Best Value in financial governance and resource management; and improvement. The outcome of this will be reported in the annual audit report.	April-September 2018
Audit Scotland	Audit Scotland plans to undertake performance audit work on City Deals, Health and social care integration and Children and young people's mental health. Engagement with individual councils is still to be determined and the council will be notified if it is to be included in any of these audits.	Timing to be confirmed
Care Inspectorate	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. During 2018/19 we intend to visit three partnerships to report on their progress.	Dates and locations to be determined
	From April 2018, Scottish ministers have asked the Care Inspectorate to lead another 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. They have asked us to provide assurance about how community planning partners are protecting and meet the needs of children and young people who have experienced, or are 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. We intend to carry out five joint inspections in 2018/19.	Dates and locations to be determined
	The Care Inspectorate are currently undertaking preparatory work for a thematic review of self-directed support which we will carry out during 2018/19. Throughout the year, it will conduct an inspection in up	Dates and locations to be determined.

	to six areas across the country.	
Education Scotland	Strategic inspection of Community Learning and Development functions	September to December 2018
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.	Q2 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](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk) 

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