

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 18 APRIL 2018

REPORT ON: LOCAL SCRUTINY PLAN 2018/19

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

REPORT NO: 138-2018

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide elected members with a summary of the Local Scrutiny Plan 2018/19 that was recently issued by Audit Scotland on behalf of the various regulatory inspection bodies responsible for scrutinising the services provided by the Council.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that elected members note the information contained within this report and in the attached Local Scrutiny Plan 2018/19.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

4 MAIN TEXT

4.1 The attached Local Scrutiny Plan (LSP) sets out a high-level programme of the scrutiny work planned to be undertaken during the period 2018/19 by the various regulatory bodies responsible for scrutinising the services provided by the Council.

4.2 The plan is the product of a collaborative approach adopted by the various scrutiny bodies. Through working together and sharing knowledge, expertise and information, this approach aims to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of external scrutiny arrangements and focus activity where it is most needed and to determine a proportionate scrutiny response over the period of the plan.

4.3 The plan is based on a shared risk assessment undertaken by a local area network (LAN) made up of representatives of the various inspection agencies. The process draws on a range of evidence with the aim of determining the appropriate level of scrutiny required. The LSP therefore covers a wide range of the City Council's activities and, whilst some areas for improvement and monitoring have been identified, the overall findings are positive for 2018/19.

- Education Scotland noted that the Council demonstrates evidence of improvement in some areas of educational attainment.
- The Scottish Housing Regulator highlighted that the Council has recognised the need for improvement action in relation to its Response Repair service and has re-assessed and re-categorised its repairs to assist with this. It is now reporting improvements in performance across the categories.
- The Council has recently introduced a number of actions to help address homelessness issues. It has introduced a central location for crisis applications, begun work to improve its lost contacts – working with partners to contact rough sleepers in the City and has revisited its homelessness allocation targets.

- 4.4 A summary of the nationally driven scrutiny activity planned for 2018/19 is shown in Appendix 1 of the LSP. For some of their scrutiny activity in 2018/19, scrutiny bodies are still to determine their detailed programmes including which specific Council areas they will cover. Where a Council is to be involved directly, the relevant scrutiny body will confirm this with the Council and appropriate LAN lead in due course.
- 4.5 The new approach to auditing Best Value is being rolled out over the five year audit appointments. It includes an assessment each year of aspects of Best Value as part of an integrated annual audit and a Best Value Assurance Report (BVAR) for each Council at least once in a five year period. A BVAR report is not planned for Dundee City Council in 2018/19. Best Value audit work planned for 2018/19 will focus on the Council's arrangements for demonstrating best value in delivering performance outcomes and improvement and will be reported in the 2018/19 Annual Audit Report.
- 4.6 In addition to the specific work outlined in Appendix 1, routine scheduled audit and inspection work will take place through the annual audit process and other ongoing inspection work.

5 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty and Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

6 **CONSULTATIONS**

The Council Management Team were consulted in the preparation of this report.

7 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

05 APRIL 2018

Dundee City Council

Local Scrutiny Plan

2018/19



April 2018

Dundee City Council

Local Scrutiny Plan – April 2018 to March 2019

Introduction

1. This local scrutiny plan (LSP) sets out any scrutiny risks identified by the local area network (LAN), proposed scrutiny responses and expected scrutiny activity for Dundee City 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:
 - Audit Scotland
 - Care Inspectorate
 - Education Scotland
 - Scottish Housing Regulator
3. The shared risk assessment process draws on a range of evidence with the aim of determining any scrutiny risks in the council and Dundee City Integration Joint Board.
4. Expected scrutiny activity across all councils in Scotland informs the National Scrutiny Plan for 2018/19, which is available on the Audit Scotland website: www.audit-scotland.gov.uk .

Scrutiny risks

5. The LAN's risk assessment of the council did not identify any areas where specific scrutiny was required, other than that which is nationally directed or part of a planned programme of work.

Scrutiny activity

6. 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.
 7. 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 inspections of school and
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care establishments by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate respectively. The outcomes of this work will help to inform future assessment of scrutiny risk.

Audit Scotland

8. In June 2016, the Accounts Commission agreed a revised approach to auditing Best Value. 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 for Dundee City Council is not planned in the period covered by this scrutiny plan. The best value work planned for this year will focus on the council's arrangements for demonstrating Best Value in delivering performance outcomes and improvement and will be reported in the Annual Audit Report.
9. Audit Scotland continues to monitor the council's financial position and the challenges to service delivery in the future from increased demand and reducing resources. The annual audit process will consider the council's financial sustainability and will be reported in the Annual Audit Report.
10. Audit Scotland also plans to undertake national performance audit work covering local government during 2018/19, including Health and social care integration and Children and young people's mental health services. Audit Scotland will engage with individual councils selected for site work in due course. Information on the future programme of audit work is available on the Audit Scotland website: <http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk>.

Care Inspectorate

11. The Care Inspectorate, working in partnership with Her Majesty's Inspection of Constabulary in Scotland and Healthcare Improvement Scotland, carried out a joint inspection of adult support and protection services in six partnerships across Scotland. The partnerships were chosen to reflect the geography and demography of Scotland. The on-site scrutiny phase of this joint inspection took place from late October to early December 2017.
 12. Dundee was one of the partnerships included within this inspection. Partners have been given early feedback on the findings of the joint inspection and a published report will follow this Spring.
 13. The Care Inspectorate led the validated self-evaluation of Alcohol and Drug Partnerships (ADPs) across Scotland during 2016 and published the national report in May 2017. Dundee received individual summary feedback to support continuous improvement.
 14. During 2018/19, the Care Inspectorate intends to visit three health and social care partnerships to report on progress towards a more collaborative culture and integrated
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approach to planning and delivering services. Dundee City Council has not been selected for a visit in 2018/19.

15. Scottish ministers have asked the Care Inspectorate to lead another programme of joint inspections of services for children and young people. The Care Inspectorate intends to carry out five joint inspections during 2018/19 and has already identified four of the councils where an inspection will take place. The fifth council is currently being considered by the Care Inspectorate. Dundee City Council is not one of the four councils already identified.
16. A thematic review of self-directed support will be carried out during 2018/19. Inspections will be undertaken in a number of areas with the aim of identifying factors which support effective delivery of self-directed support and any barriers to implementation. Dundee City Council has not been selected for an inspection in 2018/19.
17. The Care Inspectorate will work with Community Justice Scotland and other partners to support improvement in the implementation of the community justice strategy, to identify any particular risks and to carry out targeted scrutiny where this is required.

Education Scotland

18. Overall the council demonstrates evidence of improvement in some areas of educational attainment, however considerable improvement is required in others. The council performs less well than both the national average and the council's Virtual Comparator. The challenge for the council is to move from incremental to transformational change to improve its overall performance relative to: its virtual comparators; the national average; and close the attainment gap between the highest and lowest performing pupils.
19. Dundee City Council is one of nine Scottish local authorities which have been receiving significant additional investment from the Scottish Government through the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC). In addition, the council's schools received £4.97 million of Pupil Equity Funding in 2017/18. This additional funding from the Scottish Government's Attainment Scotland Fund is allocated directly to schools, targeted at closing the poverty related attainment gap and is to be spent at the discretion of head-teachers working in partnership with each other and their local authority.
20. In September 2017, Education Scotland announced plans to inspect the attainment-related aspects of the education functions of the nine SAC local authorities using a bespoke inspection framework which has been developed. An evaluative report is due to be published by Education Scotland.

Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)

21. 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. It
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found that the council is in the bottom quartile for all social landlords in relation to: re-let times, gas safety, the time it takes to complete both emergency and non-emergency repairs and repairs completed right first time.

22. In the council's LSP for 2017/18, we noted that the SHR would monitor performance in relation to gas safety. The SHR met with council officials on a number of occasions and reviewed performance data and reports to seek the assurances it required. Although the council's performance in gas safety has improved this year, it remains in the bottom quartile for all social landlords.
23. The council has recognised the need for improvement action in relation to its response repair service and has re-assessed and re-categorised its repairs to assist with this. It is now reporting improvements in performance across the categories and will review these this year.
24. In relation to the council's homelessness service, the SHR continues to identify risks in relation to how people get access to its services and the number of homeless applications that the council makes. There are a significant number of rough sleepers and a high number of people with whom the council loses contact across its homeless services. The council has decreased the number of allocations it makes to homeless people and the number of people waiting for an outcome has increased significantly this year.
25. The council has recently undertaken a number of actions to help address the homelessness issues. It has introduced a central location for crisis applications, begun work to improve its lost contacts, is working with partners to contact rough sleepers in the city and has revisited its homelessness allocations targets.
26. The SHR will monitor the council's progress in addressing the gas safety, response repairs and homelessness service weaknesses identified in this plan. It will review the council's quarterly performance management reports and meet council officials as necessary.
27. 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.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICS)

28. HMICS reported on the local policing inspection in Tayside Division in November 2017. HMICS found many positive developments:
 - there is effective and increasingly visible leadership within the division, and officers report feeling more empowered to identify local solutions to local problems. This is a
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positive development and may stem from the increased focus on localism by the chief constable and in the strategic police priorities

- in early 2017, the division introduced a locality policing model which has been well received by officers and staff within the division and by stakeholders. However, there is more work to be done by the division and Police Scotland to ensure that they understand service demand and distribute resources accordingly
- partner organisations report good working relationships with the division.

29. HMICS highlighted that:

- the division is aware of many areas for development and a wide ranging improvement plan has been established. Much of the division's improvement activity is at an early stage of development and some intended outcomes have yet to be delivered
- if the division sustains its current approach and its focus on improvement, then it should achieve positive outcomes for its communities and its own officers and staff
- the division would benefit from taking a more evaluative approach to its work, to ensure it can demonstrate that such outcomes are being delivered.

General

- 30.** For some scrutiny activity in 2018/19, scrutiny bodies are still to determine their work programmes and which specific council areas will be covered. Where a council is to be involved, the relevant scrutiny body will confirm this with the council and the appropriate LAN lead.
- 31.** 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 1: Scrutiny activity

Scrutiny body	Scrutiny activity	Date
Audit Scotland (local audit team)	Best Value audit work will focus on the council's arrangements for demonstrating Best Value in performance, outcomes and improvement. This will be reported in the Annual Audit Report.	Ongoing as part of 2017/18 annual audit and will be reported in September 2018.
Audit Scotland (national)	Audit Scotland plans to undertake performance audit work on City Deals, Health and Social Care Integration and Children and Young People's Mental Health Services.	Audit Scotland to be onsite for Health and Social Care Integration work between 16 and 19 April 2018. For other work the dates and locations of 2018/19 fieldwork have yet to be determined.
Scottish Housing Regulator	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. 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.

Dundee City 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 

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