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## **NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**29 May 2018**

### **Audit and Scrutiny Committee**

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**Title:** **Local Scrutiny Plan and National Scrutiny Plan 2018/19**

**Purpose:** To advise the Audit and Scrutiny Committee of the Local Scrutiny Plan (LSP) for North Ayrshire for 2018/19 and the National Scrutiny Plan (NSP).

**Recommendation:** That the Committee notes the Local and National Scrutiny Plans.

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### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 An annual Shared Risk Assessment is carried out by the Local area Network (LAN) of the Council's external scrutiny bodies to determine any scrutiny risks for the Council.
- 1.2 For the sixth successive year, the LAN has concluded that no specific scrutiny is required in North Ayrshire. This is an extremely positive position for the Council.
- 1.3 To ensure the positive assurance from the LSP is sustained, it is essential that the Council continues to monitor the key scrutiny risks and sustains good performance in relation to its strategic objectives in order to meet the standards expected by the external scrutiny bodies.
- 1.4 Planned scrutiny activity across all Scottish Councils informs the National Scrutiny Plan, with all planned activity in North Ayrshire forming part of nationally driven scrutiny plans.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 An annual Shared Risk Assessment (SRA) approach is in place to ensure a well-coordinated, proportionate and risk-based approach to external scrutiny plans.
- 2.2 The shared assessment is undertaken by a Local Area Network (LAN) of external scrutiny bodies, including Audit Scotland, Education Scotland, the Care Inspectorate and the Scottish Housing Regulator. The LAN for North Ayrshire is led by Deloitte LLP, the Council's external auditors.

## Local Scrutiny Plan

- 2.3 The Local Scrutiny Plan (LSP) for 2018/19 was published in April 2018 and can be found at the following link:

[http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/uploads/docs/report/2018/lsp\\_180404\\_north\\_ayrshire.pdf](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/uploads/docs/report/2018/lsp_180404_north_ayrshire.pdf)

- 2.4 The plan sets out the scrutiny risks identified by the LAN, proposed scrutiny responses and expected scrutiny activity for the Council during 2018/19. The scrutiny risks noted are:

- Financial sustainability – the report notes that financial management is strong but that the Council continues to face significant financial challenges in the future and that fundamental service redesign will be required to minimise the impact on key frontline services.
- Health and social care integration – it is noted that the Health and Social Care Partnership continues to progress significant transformational service redesign to maximise the potential of integrated working but that long-term financial sustainability remains a risk for the Partnership.
- Social Care services – a joint inspection of adult support and protection services was carried out in late 2017 and the detailed findings are awaited.
- Education services – the report notes that North Ayrshire Council has appropriate governance in place to ensure that educational provision is well-organised and well-led and that there are no specific concerns. The planned cycle of local inspections and reviews will continue.
- Housing – The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) has assessed the performance of all social landlords and concluded that no additional scrutiny work is required in North Ayrshire.

- 2.5 The appendix to the LSP details a range of national driven scrutiny to which the Council may be subject during 2018/19. For much of this activity, the scrutiny bodies have still to determine their work programmes and which specific Council areas will be reviewed. Planned work includes:

- Best Value audit work, which will focus on improvement and the arrangements for demonstrating Best Value in financial governance and resource management.
- Performance audits by Audit Scotland which will cover Health and Social Care integration and young people's mental health services.
- Work by the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland to assess the effectiveness of integration authorities' strategic plans.
- A programme of thematic inquiries by the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) and a review of Scottish Social Housing Charter data submitted by landlords.

- 2.6 It should be noted that the LSP only covers high-level scrutiny; the external scrutiny bodies will continue to carry out reviews within schools and care establishments which are outwith the scope of this plan.

## National Scrutiny Plan

- 2.7 Planned scrutiny activity across all Scottish Councils informs the National Scrutiny Plan (NSP) which can be found at the following link:

[http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/uploads/docs/report/2018/sp\\_180404\\_scrutiny\\_plan.pdf](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/uploads/docs/report/2018/sp_180404_scrutiny_plan.pdf)

- 2.8 The NSP summarises the planned scrutiny activity across Councils. Where this may impact on North Ayrshire, this has been noted in the Local Scrutiny Plan report above.
- 2.9 It is also noted in the NSP that North Ayrshire Council does not feature in the rolling five-year programme of Best Value Assurance Reports for either 2018/19 or 2019/2020, although some specific Best Value work will be undertaken locally by the external auditor as noted at 2.5 above.
- 2.10 The NSP notes other external scrutiny which may be of interest to local authorities. This includes a review by the Inspectorate of Prosecution in Scotland (IPS) into the prosecution of young people in Sheriff Courts; this will assess the availability and use of diversion schemes provided by local authorities.

## **3. Proposals**

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Audit and Scrutiny Committee notes the Local Scrutiny Plan and National Scrutiny Plan for 2017/18.

#### 4. Implications

<b>Financial:</b>	None.
<b>Human Resources:</b>	None.
<b>Legal:</b>	None.
<b>Equality:</b>	None.
<b>Children and Young People:</b>	None.
<b>Environmental &amp; Sustainability:</b>	None.
<b>Key Priorities:</b>	Effective external scrutiny helps to ensure that good governance arrangements are in place, underpinning delivery of the Council's key priorities.
<b>Community Benefits:</b>	None.

#### 5. Consultation

- 5.1 The LAN consulted with the Executive Leadership Team during the preparation of the Local Scrutiny Plan.



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#### Background Papers

N/A