Inverclyde council

Report To: Policy and Resources Committee	**Date: 12 August 2014**
Report By: Chief Executive	**Report No: PR/114/14/JM/LF**
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Subject: Inverclyde Council Assurance and Improvement Plan 2014-17

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the final Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP) for 2014-17.

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 The AIP sets out the planned scrutiny activity in Inverclyde Council between April 2014 and March 2017. The AIP is based on a shared risk assessment undertaken by a local area network (LAN). The aim of the shared risk assessment process is to focus scrutiny activity where it is most needed and to determine the most proportionate scrutiny response over a three year period.

2.2 This is the fifth AIP for Inverclyde Council since the introduction of the shared risk assessment process. It is the result of a shared risk assessment which began in October 2013.

2.3 The shared risk assessment undertaken for this year's AIP has concluded that the Council has continued to build on the good work established over the last few years and therefore no risk based scrutiny has been identified for 2014/15.

2.4 The AIP is structured around four areas: local priorities and public service reform, corporate assessment, service performance and improving and transforming public services / public performance reporting. The LAN has assessed all four areas and it has been concluded that no scrutiny is required beyond the scheduled annual audit and inspection work.

2.5 This is a good news story for the Council. The fact that no risk based scrutiny has been identified for 2014/15 is a testament to the progress and achievements made by the Council in the last few years.

2.6 A copy of the AIP for 2014-17 is contained within Appendix 1.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of the AIP for 2014-17.

John W Mundell
Chief Executive

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 This is the fifth AIP for Inverclyde Council since the introduction of the shared risk assessment process. It is the result of a shared risk assessment which began in October 2013. The process drew on evidence from a number of sources, including:

- The annual report to the Controller of Audit and elected members for 2012/13 from the Council's appointed external auditors

- Evidence gathered from Audit Scotland, Education Scotland, the Care Inspectorate, the Scottish Housing Regulator and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICS), including published inspection reports and other supporting evidence

- The Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) and associated development plan for the Council area

- The Council's performance data and self-evaluation evidence

- Analysis of data from the SOLACE / COSLA / Improvement Service Local Government Benchmarking Framework.

4.2 The AIP for 2014-17 covers four areas:

- Local priorities and public service reform
- Corporate assessment
- Service performance
- Improving and transforming public services / public performance reporting

4.3 In each of the four areas outlined in paragraph 4.2, the Council was assessed for scrutiny risk against the following criteria:

- No scrutiny required - there are no significant concerns, so no scrutiny work is necessary.

- Scrutiny required - there are concerns about performance, services or outcomes, resulting in the need for scrutiny work.

- Further information required - there is insufficient information to reach a judgement about performance

5.0 FINDINGS

5.1 The shared risk assessment concluded that the Council has continued to make progress in its corporate arrangements and has a clear awareness of where improvement could be made. Therefore no risk scrutiny has been identified for 2014/15. This is extremely positive and a testament to the progress and achievements made by the Council in the last few years.

5.2 The AIP for 2014-17 has highlighted the Council's achievements in the following areas:

Local Priorities and Public Service Reform

- Single Outcome Agreement - Current performance against the outcomes shows that for a number of indicators good progress is being made.

- Health and Social Care Integration - A recent pilot joint inspection of services for older people by the Care Inspectorate and Health Improvement Scotland found that the CHCP was well prepared for health and social care integration, with an integrated structure and senior management team, aligned budgets and evidence of joint budget planning.

Corporate Assessment

- Leadership - The council currently shows effective leadership. The CHCP has strong leadership through the committee and senior management team, and also has valuable clinical leadership provided by doctors and other health professionals.

- Governance and accountability - The Council has sound governance arrangements in place and is moving towards establishing an Annual Governance Statement that is supported by evidence.

- Community engagement and empowerment - The Council has a range of activities to involve local communities in Council services and to give communities a say in decision making.

- Financial management - The Council has generated and held significant useable reserves over the last four years. This is part of a long-term strategy within a three-year budget cycle, and the reserves will be used to allow the Council to fund specific projects.

- Asset management - The council has strategies in place to improve major groups of assets, including roads and schools. The PPP scheme for schools and the continuing upgrade of campuses are resulting in improved estates and facilities, considered an important part of education policy.

- Procurement - The work completed on the Strategic Procurement Framework (SPF) has contributed to a further improvement in the annual Procurement Capability Assessment from Scotland Excel, with a score of 54 per cent being achieved in the most recent assessment in October 2013 compared to 47 per cent in December 2012. This means that the Council is now in the 'improved' performance criteria.

- Risk management - Overall risk management is good and there has been good progress on risk management in a number of areas.

- Efficiency - The Council has made good progress in delivering savings through efficiency work streams. Efficiencies and cost reductions have been made early. The three year budgeting cycle has allowed the Council to think medium-term about its savings strategies and goals.

Service Performance

- Education - Inverclyde performs well overall as an education authority. Over the past year there have been inspections of early years, primary and secondary establishments, which have all been positive.

- Social Care Services - The joint inspection considered that the CHCP had very good capacity for improvement. It delivered good outcomes for many older people and their carers, had a range of competent, energetic and effective leaders throughout the organisation, and had shown that it could improve performance, when this was required.

- Waste Management - The Council is in the top performing quartile for both the cost of collection and disposal of waste.

Improving and Transforming Public Services / Public Performance Reporting

- Improving and Transforming Public Services - The Council has a modernisation

programme to coordinate improvement activity in a number of areas including office rationalisation, records management, customer service and mobile working.

- Public Performance Reporting- The Council has good arrangements in place to collect and review performance data, and to report it publicly.

5.3 A copy of the AIP for 2014-17 is contained within Appendix 1.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 **Finance**
N/A

6.2 **Personnel**
N/A

6.3 **Legal**
N/A

6.4 **Equalities**

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES (see attached appendix)
√	NO - This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

6.5 **Repopulation**
N/A

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 N/A

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 N/A

Inverclyde Council

Assurance and Improvement Plan

2014–17

May 2014

Contents

Introduction

1. This Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP) sets out the planned scrutiny activity in Inverclyde Council between April 2014 and March 2017. The AIP is based on a shared risk assessment undertaken by a local area network (LAN). There is a LAN for each council, comprising representatives of all the scrutiny bodies who engage with the council. The aim of the shared risk assessment process is to focus scrutiny activity where it is most needed and to determine the most proportionate scrutiny response over a three year period.

2. This is the fifth AIP for Inverclyde Council since the introduction of the shared risk assessment process.[1] It is the result of the shared risk assessment which began in October 2013. The process drew on evidence from a number of sources, including:

    -   the annual report to the Controller of Audit and elected members for 2012/13 from the council's appointed external auditors

    -   evidence gathered from Audit Scotland, Education Scotland, the Care Inspectorate, the Scottish Housing Regulator and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICS), including published inspection reports and other supporting evidence

    -   the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) and associated development plan for the council area

    -   the council's own performance data and self-evaluation evidence

    -   analysis of data from the SOLACE/COSLA/Improvement Service Local Government Benchmarking Framework.[2]

3. The shared risk assessment process was reviewed in 2013, in the context of a significantly changed scrutiny landscape and the evolving public service reform agenda.[3] Based on the findings of the review, this year's shared risk assessment focused on identifying the council's current position in implementing the Scottish Government's reform agenda. It also placed more emphasis on scrutiny risk in relation to the council's improvement and transformation agenda. This change in approach is reflected in the structure of the AIP for 2014-17, which covers four areas:

    -   local priorities and public service reform

    -   corporate assessment

    -   service performance

    -   improving and transforming public services/public performance reporting.

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[1] Assurance and Improvement Plans for each council since 2010 are available on the Audit Scotland website: http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/work/scrutiny/aip.php

[2] The indicators used in the framework can be found on the Improvement Service website: http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/

[3] The review of the shared risk assessment process was one of four work streams taken forward by the Strategic Group for Local Government Scrutiny Co-ordination during 2013.

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4. Scrutiny risk is assessed against the following criteria:

    *   No scrutiny required - there are no significant concerns, so no scrutiny work is necessary.

    *   Scrutiny required - there are concerns about performance, services or outcomes, resulting in the need for scrutiny work.

    *   Further information required - there is insufficient information to reach a judgement about performance.

5. The National Scrutiny Plan for 2014/15 is available on the Audit Scotland website. It provides a summary of planned scrutiny activity across all councils in Scotland, based on the AIPs for each council.

Summary

6. In our previous AIP, issued in April 2013, we reported that the council had continued to build on the good work established over the past few years. It had made progress in its corporate arrangements and had a good awareness of where it needed to improve. The majority of the risk assessments remained unchanged from previous years and therefore no specific scrutiny activity was identified in the AIP.

7. The shared risk assessment undertaken for this year's AIP indicates that the council has continued with this positive direction of travel. Therefore, we have identified no risk-based scrutiny for 2014/15.

8. We highlighted in the 2013/14 AIP the Scottish Housing Regulator's (SHR) significant concerns around some aspects of the council's services to the homeless. This was due to a drop in the proportion of lets secured for homeless households from local Registered Social Landlords (RSL), with the council's performance among the poorest in Scotland. SHR planned to monitor the council's and local RSL's performance in this area over the year, as there had been some late improvement in the number of offers of housing received.

9. In 2012/13 the Care Inspectorate, together with partners Healthcare Improvement Scotland, carried out a pilot joint inspection of services for older people, as delivered by the Inverclyde Community Health and Care Partnership. Overall the findings of the joint inspection were positive, with the service delivering good outcomes for many older people, and with the partnership showing that it could improve performance when required.

10. The Care Inspectorate, in partnership with the Association of Directors of Social Work and the Risk Management Authority, has been undertaking supported self-evaluation activity to assess the initial impact of the introduction of the assessment and case planning instrument LS/CMI across Scotland's criminal justice social work services. This activity started in June 2013 and will conclude with the publication of a national report by May 2014. Action plans arising from this activity will be implemented in 2014.

11. As set out in the introduction to this report, the 2014-17 AIP is structured around four areas; local priorities and public service reform, corporate assessment, service performance and improving and transforming public services/public performance reporting. The LAN has assessed all local priorities and public service reform areas as 'no scrutiny required'.

12. The SOA sets out eight strategic local outcomes. These are:

    - Inverclyde's population is stable with a good balance of socio-economic groups.

    - Communities are stronger, responsible and more able to identify, articulate and take action on their needs and aspirations to bring about an improvement in the quality of community life.

- The area's economic regeneration is secured, economic activity in Inverclyde is increased, and skills development enables both those in work and those furthest from the labour market to realise their full potential.

- The health of local people is improved, combating health inequality and promoting healthy lifestyles.

- A positive culture change will have taken place in Inverclyde in attitudes to alcohol, resulting in fewer associated health problems, social problems and reduced crime rates.

- A nurturing Inverclyde gives all our children and young people the best possible start in life.

- All children, citizens and communities in Inverclyde play an active role in nurturing the environment to make the area a sustainable and desirable place to live and visit

- Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

13. As part of the process of developing the new SOA, a new quality assurance process was put in place. The quality panels comprised officials from bodies involved in community planning across Scotland. These included councils, the NHS, the police and fire and rescue services, the Improvement Service, civil servants, Scottish Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland and other government agencies.

14. The quality assurance panel provided support and help to partnerships by providing an outside perspective on strengths and areas that could be further developed. The CPP agreed four key improvement actions following the quality assurance process:

- to better reflect an asset based approach in the SOA

- to set out more examples of joint planning, tasking and coordinating, and integrating service provision at neighbourhood levels in the SOA

- to develop a process of identifying how partners are shifting planning and resources to early intervention and measuring success of reducing demand, costs and releasing savings

- to reflect more practical examples in the SOA of partners working together to engage communities.

15. In terms of the corporate assessment, service performance and improving and transforming public services/public performance reporting we have also concluded that no scrutiny is required beyond the scheduled annual audit and inspection work.

Planned scrutiny activity

16. Through the SRA process we have concluded that no additional risk-based scrutiny is required for Inverclyde council.

17. The Care Inspectorate, in partnership with the Association of Directors of Social Work and the Risk Management Authority, has been undertaking supported self-evaluation activity to assess the initial impact of the introduction of the assessment and case planning instrument LS/CMI

across Scotland's criminal justice social work services. This activity started in June 2013 and will conclude with the publication of a national report by May 2014. Action plans arising from this activity will be implemented in 2014.

18. There is some non-risk based scrutiny activity planned across councils in 2014/15, but where scrutiny bodies are yet to determine which specific council areas will be included. This includes the following:

- The SHR recently carried out a thematic inquiry into the outcomes that councils are achieving by delivering housing options and prevention of homelessness services. A sample of councils were selected to take part in this as case studies. The findings from this work could potentially lead to further engagement with some councils. The SHR will carry out further thematic inquiries between 2014/15 and 2015/16. If a council is to be involved in a thematic inquiry the SHR will confirm this with the council and the appropriate LAN lead.

- HMICS will be inspecting local policing across Scotland over the next three years. This will examine, amongst other things, local scrutiny and engagement between Police Scotland and councils. The geographic areas to be inspected during 2014/15 have yet to be determined.

- Education Scotland will be working in partnership with councils to carry out self-evaluation of education psychology services over a two year period beginning in 2014/15.

- Education Scotland will be reviewing the quality of Careers Information Advice and Guidance services delivered by Skills Development Scotland across all council areas over the next three years.

- Education Scotland will continue to engage with councils for the purpose of validated self-evaluation (VSE). The scheduling of VSEs will be arranged by negotiation between Education Scotland and individual councils.

19. During 2014, Audit Scotland will carry out a targeted follow-up of two national performance audits - *Arm's-length external organisations (ALEOs): are you getting it right?* (June 2011) and *Major capital investment in councils* (March 2013). Audit Scotland will also carry out a programme of performance audits during the period of this AIP that will involve work with councils. The performance audit programme for 2014/15 is available at http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/work/forwardwork.php?year=2014.

20. Scheduled audit and inspection work will take place through the annual audit process. The ongoing inspection of school and care establishments by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate respectively will continue as planned. Individual audit and inspection agencies will continue to monitor developments in key areas of council activity and will provide support and challenge as appropriate. This will help to inform future assessment of scrutiny risk.

21. A timetable for the planned audit and inspection activity in Inverclyde Council between April 2014 and March 2017 is at Appendix 1.

Local priorities and public service reform

22. Local councils are operating within a context of significant change as a result of the challenging financial environment and the public service reform agenda. The Scottish Government's reform agenda emphasises the importance of place, people, partnership, prevention and performance in public services. This year's shared risk assessment identified the council's current position in implementing the Scottish Government's reform agenda, specifically in relation to:

    • community planning and new Single Outcome Agreements

    • police and fire oversight arrangements (following the introduction of new national police and fire services)

    • health and social care integration

    • welfare reform.

Community planning and Single Outcome Agreements

23. The Community Planning Partnership (CPP) vision for Inverclyde is 'getting it right for every child, citizen and community'. As part of the vision, the CPP has developed seven wellbeing outcomes it wants to achieve: Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected and Responsible, and Included. The partnership has agreed a number of strategic local outcomes to deliver the vision and wellbeing outcomes (see page 5).

24. The SOA identifies a number of targets for each purpose. Performance is measured each year against a progress target for 2012-17 and an overall end target. Current performance against the outcomes shows that for a number of indicators good progress is being made, but that further improvements are needed in some areas. One of the main priorities for the area is economic growth. In 2006, the council established Riverside Inverclyde as a joint venture organisation with Scottish Enterprise to help regenerate economically depressed parts of Inverclyde. The council and Scottish Enterprise commissioned a mid-term review in 2013 and this highlighted that the organisation had not met a number of its original targets. The council proposed a review of the management structure, and currently a member of the council corporate management team is leading the organisation on a temporary basis, and the leader of the council is also on the board on Riverside Inverclyde. The board appointed a new chair in March 2014.

25. In 2012 the council implemented a new strategic planning and performance management framework. As part of this framework the council has developed Corporate Directorate Improvement Plans for each Directorate which set out the agreed improvement actions. The actions are aligned to the Wellbeing Outcomes established in the SOA. Across each of the outcomes good progress is being made, with 97 per cent of actions complete or on track to be

met. As part of these actions the council has delivered projects including; tackling knife crime; youth employment action plan; rationalising the number of council buildings; and establishing three community sports hubs.

26. Inverclyde continues to face challenges with a decreasing working age population, and a significant gap between the most affluent and the most deprived areas. Targeted actions to address these challenges include a repopulation action plan, the Inverclyde Integrated Employability Programme and the Economic Regeneration/Employability outcome delivery group. Progress against these actions is monitored through the SOA, with the risks being re-assessed each year.

Police and fire

27. Local scrutiny of police and fire is carried out by the Local Police and Fire Subcommittee. To date there have been two meetings of the subcommittee, which received the Interim Local Police Plan and Interim Local Fire and Rescue Plan.

28. HMICS conducted a thematic inspection of the new arrangements for local scrutiny in 2013 and believes that the new arrangements for local scrutiny and engagement require more time to bed in and that it is therefore too early to assess the effectiveness of these arrangements.

29. In relation to the wider issue of the delivery of community safety, HMICS has seen no significant changes to partnership arrangements since the creation of a single police service model for Scotland. HMICS is considering community safety as a possible area of focus within its 2014-17 work plan.

30. Fire reform is also still at an early stage and HM Fire Service Inspectorate (HMFSI) has not as yet undertaken any detailed examination of the way in which community safety and engagement activities are delivered across local authority areas in Scotland. HMFSI published *An Overview of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)* in 2013. In its report, HMFSI highlighted that local senior officers (LSOs), who have responsibility for overseeing partnership working with local authorities in the delivery of community safety and engagement, are clearly sighted on their responsibilities and are keen to make local partnerships work in an effort to optimise community outcomes.

31. The SFRS is consulting on a suite of local fire and rescue plans. HMFSI is not currently proposing any specific scrutiny on local planning and consultation processes, but may consider this in its future inspection plans.

Health and social care integration

32. The purpose of health and social care integration is to provide the framework which will support improvement of the quality and consistency of health and social care services through the establishment of new statutory health and social care partnerships. All services for adults (including older people) are included as a minimum, but local areas have the flexibility to include other services as they feel relevant and appropriate.

33. The Inverclyde Community Health and Care Partnership(CHCP) commenced in 2010. All social work services and most primary health care services are included within the CHCP. The Inverclyde CHCP will be the baseline structure for the body that will implement the provisions of the forthcoming legislation on health and social care integration. A transition working group is developing a plan to transition the current CHCP to a shadow Health and Social Care Partnership by April 2014. A recent pilot joint inspection of services for older people by the Care Inspectorate and Health Improvement Scotland found that the CHCP was well prepared for health and social care integration, with an integrated structure and senior management team, aligned budgets and evidence of joint budget planning.

Welfare reform

34. The council regularly reports to the Policy and Resources Committee on the significant impacts of, and its response to, the welfare reform agenda. The council has established a Welfare Reform Group which has representation from across the council and also partners, including the Department for Work and Pensions. Inverclyde has also developed a Financial Inclusion Partnership, chaired by the CHCP, which brings together a range of partners. It has developed a strategy and action plan to tackle financial exclusion, with welfare reform a key agenda for the partners.

35. In 2013-14, the SHR surveyed social landlords and published findings on the early impact of welfare reform on rent arrears. It will continue to gather information on rent and arrears through the annual return on the Scottish Social Housing Charter in order to monitor the impact of welfare reform on social landlords and their tenants..

Corporate assessment

36. The following table provides an assessment of scrutiny risk relating to the council's management arrangements (including how it is meeting its Best Value obligations).[4]

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
Leadership and direction How the council's vision is designed around its knowledge of its local communities and how this is translated throughout all the council's plans and strategies.	No scrutiny required	The council currently shows effective leadership, but there is a risk of a lack of capacity at senior management given the interim management arrangements for Riverside Inverclyde (see page 8). The council has recognised this risk and has implemented revised management arrangements in the team, and the director remains part of the council management team. A new Chair was appointed at the start of March 2014 and recruitment for a permanent chief executive for Riverside Inverclyde is continuing. However, an appointment has not yet been made and the current interim arrangements are being extended until the end of October 2014. The CHCP has strong leadership through the committee and senior management team, and also has valuable clinical leadership provided by doctors and other health professionals. The new strategic performance management arrangements ensure that all directorate plans are aligned to council priorities and progress is regularly reported to members.	No specific scrutiny activity

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[4] The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. Best Value Guidance, Scottish Executive, 2004.

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
Governance and accountability Whether governance arrangements are working effectively and whether good governance underpins council decisions and supports performance improvement.	No scrutiny required	The council has sound governance arrangements in place and is moving towards establishing an Annual Governance Statement that is supported by evidence. This statement will record the council's governance arrangements and assurances around the achievement of the vision and strategic objectives. A key area of focus for the council is the governance of Arms Length External Organisations (ALEOs). The council had created Riverside Inverclyde as a joint venture with Scottish Enterprise to meet its economic development objectives. During the year, the council and Scottish Enterprise commissioned a scheduled independent mid-term review of Riverside Inverclyde against its objectives and of its effectiveness. The mid-term review showed that not all of these objectives had been met or were on target. Since this review, the council and Scottish Enterprise have taken action to address the concerns raised. A new board is being put in place, and it is developing an implementing an improvement plan. The council has also implemented a framework for monitoring other arms length bodies, including those that provide commissioned services. This allows the council to proportionately monitor these bodies, and can provide early warning signs of any potential problems.	No specific scrutiny activity
Community engagement and empowerment Whether the council is	No scrutiny required	The council has a range of activities to involve the local communities in council services and to give communities a say in decision-making. The council makes use of the citizens' panel, and has existing arrangements with communities resulting from	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
giving local people a greater say in local budget decisions and giving communities a right to challenge local public service delivery.		land and community facilities transfers. The council is also developing an asset transfer strategy. In the light of the tight financial environment, the council is looking at how best they can conduct budget consultation activities over the next year. The CHCP includes service user representatives, and gives the opportunity for input into budget decisions.	
Financial management How effectively the council is planning and managing its budgets.	No scrutiny required	The council has generated and held significant useable reserves over the last four years. This is part of a long-term strategy within a three-year budget cycle, and the reserves will be used in 2013/14 to allow the council to continue funding its activities. The council has agreed a balanced 2013-16 budget, with a planned surplus of £4.7 million in 2013/14 and £1.8 million in 2014/15. The council outperformed its budget in 2012/13. The council experienced difficulty managing its capital budget in 2011/12, with significant slippage. However, there was a significant improvement in 2012/13, with works progressing on time and the backlog being addressed. In 2013/14 the level of slippage has increased again but levels are less than half those experienced in 2011/12.	No specific scrutiny activity
People management The effectiveness of the council's workforce planning and	No scrutiny required	The council has developed a refreshed Organisational Development Strategy for 2013-16, based on the previous Corporate Workforce and Development Strategy. The council undertook a staff survey in August 2012 and	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
management arrangements.		developed an action plan to deliver the necessary improvements. The council is currently considering next steps and is to provide an update in 2014.	
Asset management The council's arrangements for managing assets and how this key resource is used to support effective service delivery.	No scrutiny required	The council has strategies in place to improve major groups of assets, including roads and schools. The PPP scheme for schools and the continuing upgrade of campuses is resulting in improved estates and facilities, considered an important part of education policy. The council also has implemented renovation schemes using private finance which are leading to enhancements in office buildings that were identified as in need of regeneration. Improving access has been an important part of the ongoing works, and the number of accessible council buildings has increased and is now above the national average.	No specific scrutiny activity
Procurement How effectively corporate procurement contributes to the council maximising value for money in the goods and services it uses to deliver its services.	No scrutiny required	The work completed on the Strategic Procurement Framework (SPF) has contributed to a further improvement in the annual Procurement Capability Assessment from Scotland Excel, with a score of 54 per cent being achieved in the most recent assessment in October 2013 compared to 47 per cent in December 2012. This means that the council is now in the 'improved' performance criteria.	No specific scrutiny activity
Risk management	No scrutiny	Overall risk management is good and there has been good	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
The effectiveness of the council's arrangements for identifying, managing and mitigating risks and how its management of risk contributes to the successful delivery of public services.	required	progress on risk management in a number of areas: • Ongoing review and update of strategic and operational risk registers. • Ongoing training of members in Corporate Governance arrangements, including risk management. • Maintaining a risk register for the Financial Strategy. • Implementing risk management as a key aspect of the Strategic Planning and Performance Management Framework. • Continuing the advancement of emergency planning, crisis management and business continuity within the council. • Recruiting a Corporate Risk Advisor to support the ongoing development of risk management.	
Information management The effectiveness of the council's arrangements for managing information as a key resource in delivering services.	No scrutiny required	The council, ICT Services and internal audit all play a role in managing and safeguarding information. There have been no information or data protection breaches reported to auditors. The 'Inverclyde Performs' system is working well to provide better and more timely access to performance information across the council. Financial and budget information is comprehensive but goes through several different iterations and takes some time before final budget and performance information is produced.	No specific scrutiny activity
Joint working Progress with any significant shared services initiatives, in	No scrutiny required	The council has been willing to actively consider shared services, but has not gone ahead with schemes that have not got sufficient evidence of Best Value. The council was participating in a shared street lighting maintenance scheme which is delivering good	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
particular in relation to governance or pace of implementation.		outcomes and the council is now examining the possibility of shared street lighting procurement with neighbouring councils for the future. The council works closely with the NHS and CHCP, and was considering a shared ICT services process with two other councils and following assessment of the options the council has now formally withdrawn from the arrangement. The council's chief executive is the designated lead for developing proposals for collaboration in roads and transportation services with two other councils and a report on the options is scheduled to be completed by June 2014.	
Efficiency How effectively the council is improving its efficiency in response to the budget challenges being faced.	No scrutiny required	The council has made good progress in delivering savings through efficiency work streams. Efficiencies and cost reductions have been made early, allowing the council to build up reserves to smooth the future impact of further cuts in income. The three year budgeting cycle has allowed the council to think medium-term about its savings strategies and goals. Limiting recruitment and offering early retirements early in the budget cycle allowed the council to plan efficiency savings around restructuring. Performance indicator information suggests that outcomes are not currently suffering as a result of the efficiencies.	No specific scrutiny activity
Equalities Whether the council is	No scrutiny required	In April 2011, the Equality act 2010 introduced a new public sector 'General Duty' which encourages equality to be mainstreamed into	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
providing effective leadership of equalities and is meeting its statutory obligations.		public bodies' core work so that it is not a marginal activity but part and parcel of how public bodies operate. The council has reconvened the Corporate Equalities Group and its remit is to understand the legislative duties outlined in the 2010 Equality Act, and what these mean for Inverclyde Council. The Corporate Equalities Group delivered a series of Equality Act 2010 awareness-raising sessions for directors, heads of service, service managers, elected members, head teachers and heads of early years establishments to ensure the council was addressing the requirements of the Act. In addition, Directorates were supported with the production of Equality Outcomes through advice being built into directorate planning guidance, a workshop for staff directly involved in directorate planning, and a series of drop-in clinics on directorate planning.	

Service performance

37. The following table provides an assessment of scrutiny risk relating to the performance of the council's main inspected public services (education, social care services and housing) and non-inspected services (eg corporate services, culture and leisure services, environmental services).

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
Education The quality of local education services and the resulting outcomes (including early years).	No scrutiny required	Inverclyde performs well overall as an education authority. Over the past year there have been inspections of early years, primary and secondary establishments, which have all been positive. The authority continues to know its establishments well overall and work with them on action plans for improvement after inspections. The council has again worked well over the past year at building increasing coherence across learning, and cross-sectoral heads of establishments meetings encourage this and help develop relationships. The current curriculum structure in S3/S4 continues to present a challenge because specialisation by subject choice takes place with all learners at the end of S2. The challenge for subject departments has been to ensure that necessary experiences and outcomes which form part of the broad general education from all curricular areas are covered by the end of S3. An authority-wide interim plan for the structure of the senior phase is in place. SQA results are good overall, and better than comparators across most key measures. There are particular issues for a few departments and levels and these are being targeted for additional support by	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		central staff. There continue to be concerns in relation to attainment for looked after children but the council has investigated its own data and are confident that it is improving and uses the virtual school methodology to target support to individual learners. Inverclyde Council was awarded with Best Public-Public Partnership Initiative Award 2013 for its 'Positive School Leaver Destination' Programme. The authority is engaging well with the new regional college as it develops and ensuring that local needs continue to be understood.	
Social care services The quality of local social work and care services and the resulting outcomes (including adult care, older people's services, learning disability services, criminal justice services, mental health services, children and families).	No scrutiny required	Inverclyde CHCP provides a range of high-quality services to older people and carers who care for older people. Health and social work services staff work well together to deliver these services. The joint inspection considered that the CHCP had very good capacity for improvement. It delivered good outcomes for many older people and their carers, had a range of competent, energetic and effective leaders throughout the organisation, and had shown that it could improve performance, when this was required. The Care Inspectorate's inspection of the council's home care service assigned very good inspection grades to the service. The CHCP has met the current Scottish Government target of no delayed discharges over four week's duration. The council continues to report low average educational tariff scores for looked after children, but has improvement plans in place to try and address this.	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
Housing and homelessness The quality of housing and homeless services and the resulting outcomes.	No scrutiny required	Overall, there is no risk associated with the homelessness service. Applications for homelessness services have decreased by 41 per cent since 2010/11, and repeat applications are increasing and are significantly above the national figure. In 2012/13 the council significantly reduced its use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation. The percentage of Registered Social Landlords lets has decreased by 14.8 per cent to 20.6 per cent, which is below the national figure. The SHR is currently engaging with Inverclyde Council and will be following up the council's progress in implementing improvements in late 2014, as part of its ongoing engagement.	No specific scrutiny activity
Non-regulated services Particular strengths and challenges in the range of non-regulated services provided by the council, and any significant changes to performance.	No scrutiny required	Performance in non-regulated service areas, as with all councils, varies across service areas. There are some areas of high performance and some areas for improvement. A summary of these, evidenced by performance indicator data, are provided below. However, there are no areas where we feel performance levels are of sufficient concern to require specific scrutiny activity. **Cultural and (Community) Leisure Services** Attendance at sports and leisure facilities is improving and better than average. The council has agreed to transfer outdoor leisure facilities to Inverclyde Leisure. Museum attendance is worse than the previous year but is better than the national average. The council is working in collaboration with the National Museum of Scotland on a number of exhibitions and events. The council has submitted a Stage 1 application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to refurbish and upgrade the Mclean Museum and Watt	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		Library. This will enhance the visitor experience, improve access, extend the use of the archive and collections and increase attendance.	
		Visits to libraries have worsened but are better than the national average. During 2012/13 two branch libraries were temporarily closed for a total of nine months. The council has a number of actions underway to improve both library facilities, digital access and stock for young adults.	
		Development, Environmental and Protective Services	
		The council is improving performance in reducing time elapsed between the complaint and attendance on site, but this is still below the national average. There is also scope to improve responses to customer complaints and business advice.	
		Roads and Lighting	
		The percentage of the road network that should be considered for maintenance treatment increased slightly in 2012/13 but remains below the national average. As part of the 2013/16 budget £17million was allocated to investment in Roads, Footways and Lighting and over time this will result in increased performance.	
		Waste Management	
		The council is in the top performing quartile for both the cost of collection and disposal of waste. These figures reflect the recent renewal of the fleet and implementation of the collection of food waste. The council has shown a significant improvement in recycling performance moving from the bottom quartile to the top quartile in the space of two years. Overall street cleanliness is just below the	

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
		Scottish average. The council has an improvement plan to address this. The council monitors performance through the relevant committees. We are satisfied that the appropriate measures are in place to identify performance issues and prioritise corrective action.	

Improving and transforming public services/public performance reporting

38. The following table provides an assessment of scrutiny risk relating to how the council is improving and/or transforming public services, and the extent to which it is meeting its public performance reporting obligations under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
Improving and transforming public services The council's arrangements for continuing to deliver services with reducing resources and growing demand, and what impact this is having on service outcomes.	No scrutiny required	The council has a modernisation programme to coordinate improvement activity in a number of areas including office rationalisation, records management, customer service, mobile working and ICT collaboration. The Modernisation Corporate Improvement Group's remit is to identify suitable modernisation proposals, monitor progress with the projects, and ensure that interdependencies between projects are managed. The council has introduced a strategic performance management framework and each Directorate develops its own improvement plan which aligns to the SOA wellbeing outcomes. Performance is monitored regularly with an annual corporate performance report presented to the Policy and Resources Committee in February. The CHCP committee also receives regular performance updates.	No specific scrutiny activity
Public performance reporting (PPR) The progress that is being made by councils	No scrutiny required	The council has good arrangements in place to collect and review performance data, and to report it publicly. The corporate performance report is an annual publication. In June 2013 Audit Scotland published a report on Public Performance	No specific scrutiny activity

Area	Risk assessment	Current position	What we plan to do
in meeting their PPR obligations.		Reporting. The report presented the findings of an assessment of all 32 councils' PPR arrangements for the 2011/12 financial year in accordance with the Accounts Commission SPI Direction for 2013/14 (December 2012). The review assessed whether each council fully, partially or does not meet the corporate assessment themes and service areas set out in the Direction. The assessment of Inverclyde's Council's PPR showed that performance was maintained or improved for the majority of the specified indicators.	

Appendix 1: Scrutiny plan

INVERCLYDE COUNCIL	2014/15											
Scrutiny activity year 1	**Apr**	**May**	**June**	**July**	**Aug**	**Sept**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**
No risk-based scrutiny proposed for 2014/15.												
National or supported self-evaluation work year 1												
Targeted follow-up of *Arm's-length external organisations (ALEOs): are you getting it right?* report	X											
Targeted follow-up of *Major capital investment in councils* report.			X					X				

INVERCLYDE COUNCIL	2015/16											
Scrutiny activity year 2	**Apr**	**May**	**June**	**July**	**Aug**	**Sept**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**
No risk-based scrutiny proposed for year 2.												

INVERCLYDE COUNCIL	2016/17
Indicative scrutiny activity for third year	**Potential scrutiny bodies involved**
No risk-based scrutiny proposed for year 3.	

Note: The focus of the AIP is strategic scrutiny activity - that is, scrutiny activity which is focused at a corporate or whole-service level. However, there will also be baseline scrutiny activity ongoing at a unit level throughout the period of the AIP, for example, school and residential home inspections. Scrutiny bodies also reserve the right to make unannounced scrutiny visits. These will generally be made in relation to care services for vulnerable client groups. The annual audit of local government also comprises part of the baseline activity for all councils and this includes work necessary to complete the audit of housing benefit and council tax benefit arrangements. Education Scotland, through the Area Lead Officer, will continue to support and challenge education services regularly and as appropriate. The Care Inspectorate will continue to regulate care services and inspect social work services in accordance their responsibilities under the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010.