

REPORT TO: Audit and Governance Committee

MEETING DATE: 17 September June 2013

BY: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To present the 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan to the Audit and Governance Committee for comment and noting.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Committee notes the 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan (Appendix 2) that was approved by Council, 25th June 2013.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Council, 25th June 2013 approved the 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan.
- 3.2 The diagram in Appendix 1 illustrates the sources used to determine the 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan. The action points in the Plan are primarily drawn from the results of the How Good is Our Council? (HGIOC) self-evaluation carried out by all services and the Corporate Governance self-evaluation (reported to Audit & Governance Committee, 11th June 2013). All of the improvement points raised in the self-evaluations have been reviewed to ascertain which actions should be addressed corporately. The results of the 2013 Employee Engagement Survey have also been taken into account.
- 3.3 The Council Improvement Plan also contains relevant improvement points and actions from Audit Scotland's Overview of Local Government in Scotland, Audit Scotland's Annual Report to Members and the Shared Risk Assessment prepared by the Local Area Network. A small number of action points from the 2012/13 Council Improvement Plan that have not been completed have also been carried forward into the latest Plan.
- 3.4 In accordance with the principles of Best Value the Council strives to pursue 'continuous improvement' and seeks to deliver services in as effective and efficient way as possible. The recommendations arising from all of the self-evaluation, review and inspection work identified above help to inform the Council's pursuit of 'continuous improvement through the adoption and implementation of the 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan.

- 3.5 The 2013/14 Plan outlines the actions that the Council as a whole will be undertaking at a council-wide level. This year's Plan includes 21 action points, which is a similar number of action points as were included in previous years' plans. Improvement points from HGIOC and other sources relating to specific Council services are not contained within the Council Improvement Plan as they are dealt with in Service and Business Plans.
- 3.6 One of the four areas of focus of the Council Plan 2012-2017 is *Growing the Capacity of Our Council* which has one specific outcome: *We deliver excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible*. All the improvement points in the 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan will contribute to growing the capacity of the Council to meet this outcome.
- 3.7 The Council Plan established five core principles that underpin or influence the Plan. The 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan supports four of these principles:
- Services built around people and communities
 - Effective, efficient and excellent services
 - Working together to achieve outcomes
 - Prioritising prevention and promoting equality
- 3.8 Implementation of the Plan will be assured via ongoing internal monitoring of progress on key actions points by the relevant lead officers and Executive Directors. Monitoring reports on progress with implementing the Plan will be made to the Council Management Team and the Audit and Governance Committee.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan will assist the Council in demonstrating that it is achieving Best Value. It will provide the necessary focus to improve key areas of the Council at a corporate level, thus aiding delivery of the Council Plan. Moreover, it will support East Lothian Council in its constant striving for continuous improvement, to continue improving the quality and delivery of its services and to meet the Council Plan outcome: *'We deliver excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible.'*

5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 This report is not applicable to the well being of equalities groups and an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial – none.
- 6.2 Personnel – none directly, although certain actions within the Plan are likely to require the commitment of staff resources.

6.3 Other – none.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Overview of Local Government in Scotland; report to Audit & Governance Committee, 11th June 2013

7.2 Corporate Governance Self-Evaluation and Annual Governance Statement 2013; report to Audit & Governance Committee, 11th June 2012

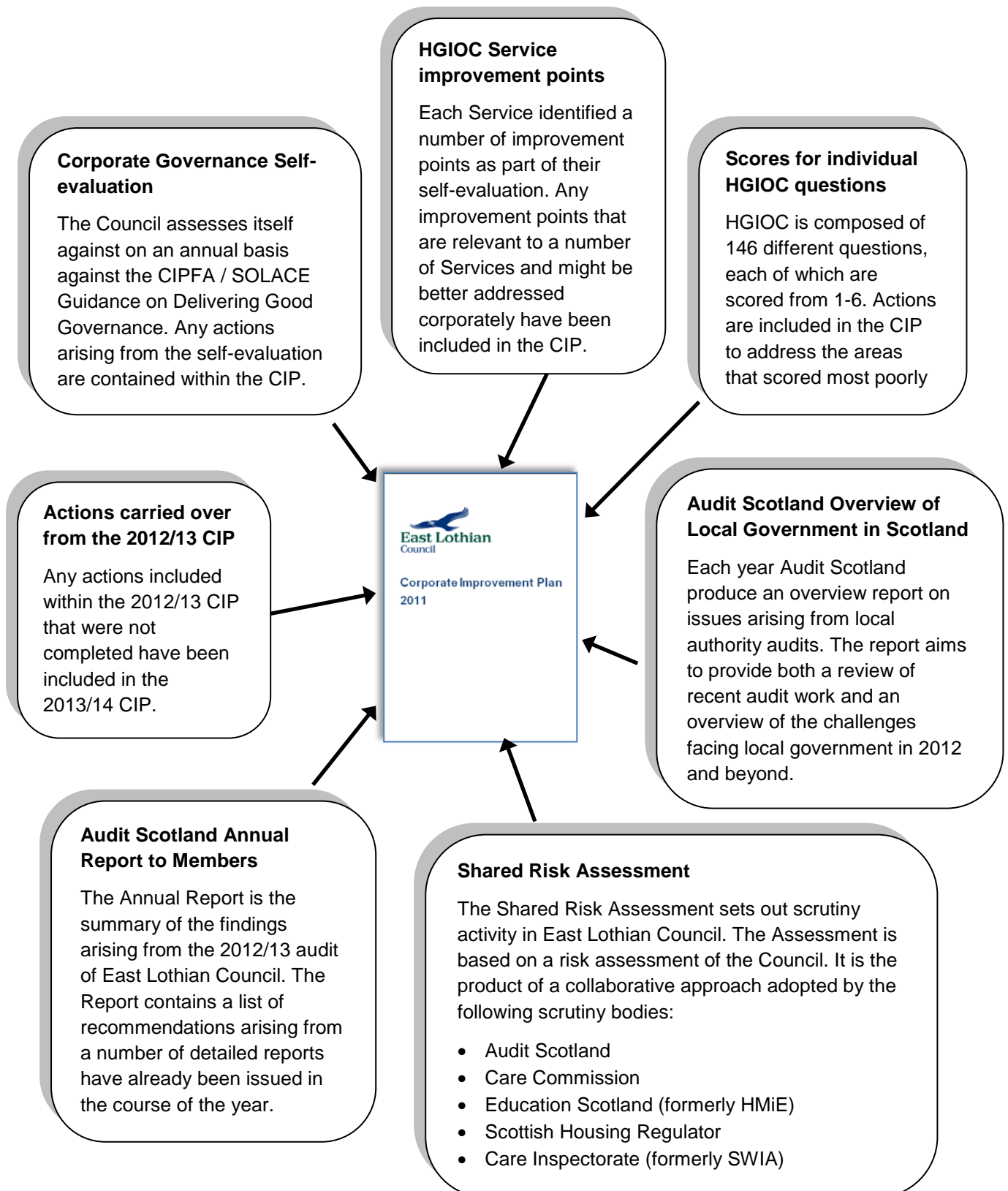
7.3 Appendix 1: Sources of the Content of the Council Improvement Plan

7.4 Appendix 2: 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan

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DATE	16 August 2013

Appendix 1: Sources of the Contents of the Council Improvement Plan

Actions contained within the Corporate Improvement Plan have arisen from several different sources.



Appendix 2: 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan

2013/14 Council Improvement Plan

We deliver excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible

	ACTION	LEAD SERVICE	TIMESCALE	SOURCE (see glossary)
1	Develop toolkit for self-evaluation of strategic partnerships	Policy and Partnerships	Dec 2013	CGSE / HGIOC
2	Review consultation strategy with view to ensuring that service users' views about quality of services is measured and used effectively	Policy and Partnerships	Nov 2013	CGSE
3	Roll out CPD for elected members and continue to support elected member and senior management development	Council Resources	Sept 2013 / Mar 2014	CGSE/ Outstanding from 2012/13 Plan
4	Hold training session for elected members on new Standing Orders including session on Members Conduct delivered by the Standards Commission	Council Resources	Oct 2013	CGSE
5	Training for Audit & Governance Co and PPR Co members	Council Resources	Oct 2013	CGSE
6	Induction programme for all members of new Community Planning Partnerships, including elected members	Policy and Partnerships	Oct 2013	CGSE
7	Review and revise the Improvement Framework and make more effective use of benchmarking, develop guidance and training on the use of benchmarking, Best Value reviews and options appraisal	Policy and Partnerships	Nov 2013/ Mar 2014	CGSE / HGIOC Outstanding from 2012/13 Plan
8	Focused work with Local Area Network on an agreed programme of self-evaluation for improvement	Policy and Partnerships	Mar 2014	CGSE / AIP

9	Implement programme of action to respond to the results of the Employee Engagement Survey	Policy and Partnerships	Nov 2013	CGSE / HGIOC
10	Review Whistleblowing Policy and publicise to all staff	Internal Audit	Oct 2013	CGSE
11	Introduce Combined Impact Assessment and process for monitoring the needs of minority and vulnerable groups	Policy and Partnerships	Aug 2013/ Mar 2014	CGSE
12	Review People Strategy including the how the values from the East Lothian Way are disseminated to staff	Policy and Partnerships	Oct 2013	CGSE / HGIOC
13	Develop Workforce Development Plan (including supporting internal jobs market, management of change, leadership development and succession planning)	Policy and Partnerships	Nov 2013	HGIOC / OLG
14	Review and further develop HGIOC self-evaluation, including involvement of stakeholders	Policy and Partnerships	Jan 2014	HGIOC / AIP
15	Review service planning guidance and develop 3-year service plans	Policy and Partnerships	Dec 2013	HGIOC
16	Review staff communications	Policy and Partnerships	Oct 2013	HGIOC
17	Prepare and implement Records Management Plan setting out arrangements for management and retention of records in line with requirements of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011	Council Resources	Dec 2013	Legislative requirement
18	Complete review of Standing Orders and Schemes of Administration and Delegation	Council Resources	June 2013	Outstanding from 2012/13 Plan
19	Develop a methodology for systematically reviewing and updating corporate policies	Council Resources	Nov 2013	Auditor
20	Review and further strengthen the Council's financial management process	Council Resources	Dec 2013	Auditor
21	Focused work with the Local Area Network and external auditors as part of an agreed programme of external audit to meet the financial challenges faced by the Council	Council Resources	Mar 2014	AIP

Glossary of sources:

CGSE = Corporate Governance Self-evaluation (May 2013)

HGIOC = How Good is Our Council? (March 2013)

AIP = Assurance and Improvement Plan Update 2013-2016 (April 2013)

Auditor = Auditor's Interim Management Report (April 2013)

OLG = Overview of Local Government, Audit Scotland (March 2013)