

**Police Scotland- Midlothian Community Action Team (MCAT) and
Midlothian Council Funding 2025- 2026****Report by Kevin Anderson, Executive Director - Place****Report for Decision****1 Recommendations**

Council is recommended to consider:

- i. whether to realise a full financial saving of £0. 557.00 with the allocated funding in 2025/26 for the former Police Scotland Midlothian Community Action Team (MCAT), or
- ii. realise a partial saving in the allocated funding in 2025/26 for the former Police Scotland Midlothian Community Action Team (MCAT); with the potential to redesign an alternative delivery model; such as an in-house Protective Services/ Antisocial Behaviour response model, and this option to be scoped for final costings and further consideration.

2 Purpose of Report/Executive Summary

Following the previous report to Council on 1 April, 2025, on expiry of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Police Scotland and Midlothian Council in funding the Midlothian Community Action Team (MCAT), a subsequent funding offer from the council to Police Scotland has not been accepted.

This report is to consider options as to whether to realise the full financial saving; or a partial saving and the opportunity for service redesign of an alternative delivery model being funded instead. Also to note the £0.557m will only part-contribute to the efficiency target already agreed and reflected in the 2025/26 budget.

Date 10/07/2025

Report Contact: Kevin Anderson, Executive Director - Place

kevin.anderson@midlothian.gov.uk

3 Background

3.1 The most recent contract between Midlothian Council and Police Scotland, which cost circa £0. 557.00 annually ended on 31 March 2025. This contribution was for 1 FTE Police Scotland Sergeant and 10 FTE Police Scotland Constables.

3.2 Police Scotland provided the Community Action Team Police officers funded by the Council, which were tasked and deployed on a range of issues throughout Midlothian. The team of 11 officers worked jointly with the Council and key partners, to sustain performance in dealing with anti-social behaviour, reducing crime, improving the quality of life and promotion of safer communities within Midlothian

3.3 Prior to SLA expiry it was clear through consultation conversations with Police Scotland that, due to resource and policy factors; such as the 4.75% police pay award and the employer National Insurance increase; the respective parties to the SLA were reviewing the existing model as, if it was to continue at a flat rate, it would only fund a reduced Police Scotland staffing provision.

3.4 In consideration of the report on 1 April, elected members decided that the real terms funded offering was to be made to Police Scotland in acknowledgement that would resource only a reduced MCAT team.

3.5 This offer has not been accepted as Police Scotland has subsequently introduced an enhanced Community Policing Model adopted throughout its 13 Divisions, focused upon preventing and addressing Crimes of Violence, Violence Against Women and Girls, Acquisitive Crime, Road Safety and Tackling Serious and Organised Crime.

3.6 There is now an opportunity to review the Community Safety/Antisocial Behaviour response, to support local communities to better understand, share and align their efforts with a focus on operational activity with the prospective introduction of a core team. This will consider how we can continue to facilitate partnership working on ASB cases and other offending activity, coordinating of Community Police and potential CCTV expansion with costed options which elected members can consider.

3.7 The Council's statutory responsibilities of developing and implementing an Antisocial Behaviour Strategy and also our own housing landlord responsibilities would require, as a minimum, alternative resources provided within our Protective Services and/or Housing Services to fulfil those.

4 Antisocial Behaviour

4.1 The introduction of the Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004 placed a legal requirement upon local authorities and police forces to work in partnership to develop strategies specifically to tackle antisocial behaviour.

4.2 The interpretation of antisocial behaviour set out in the legislation is defined as: acting in a manner that causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress and pursuing a course of conduct that causes alarm or distress to at least one person not of the same household. Antisocial behaviour has the potential to impact any community, adversely affecting peoples' quality of life. It is recognised that no single agency can necessarily manage this in isolation.

4.3 Different communities and different social groups often have differing views of what constitutes antisocial behaviour. Antisocial behaviour can be wrongly perceived as a problem caused only by young people. Distress can be caused by people of all ages whose behaviour may not amount to criminal conduct though it is clearly likely to cause annoyance and be detrimental to quality of community life. Antisocial behaviour has far reaching consequences and can affect how people value their life and neighbourhood.

4.4 Housing Services ASB policy aims to reduce antisocial behaviour through working in partnership to deliver preventative approaches, early intervention that focuses on sustaining tenancies. The majority of this is carried out through an integrated approach to make our areas a safe and pleasant place to live, grow up in, work and visit.

5 Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)

5.1 Resource

Note the £0.557m value will only part-contribute to the efficiency target already agreed and reflected in the 2025/26 budget.

In consideration of a reduced team offering or in-house Protective Services/ASB provision; the former in-house community safety team cost in excess of £300k. If a team is established there will be additional court fees and legal time for prosecutions, which will require additional legal service resource to the establishment also to support this.

Potential Savings	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
One off saving (if applicable)					
Option 1					
Annual recurring savings (cumulative)	0.557	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.557
Total Savings	0.557	0.557	0.557	0.557	0.557
Option 2					
Annual recurring savings	0.237	0.237	0.237	0.237	0.237
Total Savings	0.237	0.237	0.237	0.237	0.237
FTE staff impact	0	0	0	0	0

5.2 Digital

There are no digital implications of this report.

5.3 Risk

There is risk of a negative impact on community safety and anti-social behaviour from a decrease in Police Scotland support and directed activity as a result of this proposal.

5.4 Ensuring Equalities (if required a separate IIA must be completed)

Not applicable

5.5 Additional Report Implications (See Appendix A)

See Appendix A

Appendices**Appendix A – Additional Report Implications**

APPENDIX A – Report Implications

A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Everyone has the right to feel safe in their community and it is unacceptable for people to be afraid or intimidated when going about their day to day business. Tackling antisocial behaviour and promoting community safety are key priorities for Midlothian Council.

A.2 Key Drivers for Change

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- Holistic Working
- Hub and Spoke
- Modern
- Sustainable
- Transformational**
- Preventative**
- Asset-based
- Continuous Improvement
- One size fits one
- None of the above

A.3 Key Delivery Streams

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- One Council Working with you, for you
- Preventative and Sustainable**
- Efficient and Modern**
- Innovative and Ambitious
- None of the above

A.4 Delivering Best Value

Not applicable

A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Previous Midlothian Council budget savings implemented in February 2018 resulted in significant changes to community safety arrangements in Midlothian with the deletion of the Community Safety Team, which placed a greater reliance on partnership working in order to respond to community safety issues.

A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

Wherever possible, intervention to challenge and help the individual change behaviours will be taken. Services will work together to ensure that individuals are supported to act responsibly in their own interests and for the good of their

communities. We recognise that good quality housing needs to be coupled with a good quality neighbourhood, to make our areas desirable and sustainable long term.

A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach

There has been a notable change in the relationship with communities locally with a move away from solely safety or justice strategies to a focus on the holistic needs of people having strong networks of support, building connections across and between communities, and empowering those in communities to support each other and to take collective action.

A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

We recognise that good quality housing needs to be coupled with a good quality neighbourhood, to make our areas desirable and sustainable long term