

Midlothian Profile



Cost of living - UK

Electricity prices in the UK rose by **66.7%** and gas prices by **129.4%** in the 12 months to February 2023.

Petrol prices increased from **147.6** in Feb 22 to **148.0** in Feb 23 (pence per litre).

Diesel prices increased from **151.7** in Feb 22 to **169.5** in Feb 23 (pence per litre).

Inflation rate went up to **10.4%** in February 2023.

Total population 94,700 Males **45,600** and females **49,100** (2021)

Between **2018** and **2028**, the population of Midlothian is projected to increase by **13.8%** to **103,945** compared to **1.8%** for Scotland as a whole. (Latest update 2020)



Economy

Employment levels are above Scottish average with **48,500** people in employment (Sept 2022)

Midlothian's unemployment rate (model based) between Oct 21 to Sep 22 stands at **2.2%** and is below the Scottish average (3.4%) (2022)

Midlothian has **3,050** Local Unit Businesses. **96.5%** micro/small employers, **3.0%** medium and **0.5%** large. (2022)

Job density is **0.64** (this means that there are 64 jobs for every 100 people aged 16-64) (2021)



Earnings

Full time average gross weekly pay is **£622.90** of people living in Midlothian (2022)

Full time average gross weekly pay is **£615.30** of people working in Midlothian (2022)

There are **1,350** people claiming out of work benefits, **60.4%** of people are aged between 25 to 49 (2023)



Health and wellbeing

24.2% of adults had a limiting long term condition in Midlothian (2019)

In 2021 the leading cause of death for males was ischemic heart diseases (**12.0%**)

In 2021 the leading cause of death for females was dementia and Alzheimer's (**11.8%**)



Households

40,876 households in Midlothian. This is a 1.8% increase from 40,137 households in 2020. (2021)

The number of **workless** Households in Midlothian was **2,900** (10.8%) in 2021. (2021)



Inequality

20% of children are living in poverty in Midlothian (2021)

Midlothian has lower than Scottish average levels of social exclusion. However, geographic pockets of multiple deprivation remain, particularly within the **Central Dalkeith/ Woodburn, Mayfield & Easthouses, and Gorebridge** areas. Two areas within **Bonnyrigg and Loanhead** also now emerging as areas of concern. (Latest update 2020)



Climate emergency:

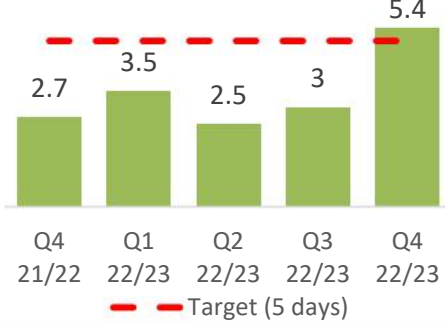
While industry and commerce account for **21.2%** of carbon emissions in Midlothian, the biggest sources of carbon emissions are still **domestic heating (36.9%)** and **transport (36.6%)**

Corporate Solutions 22/23 performance report

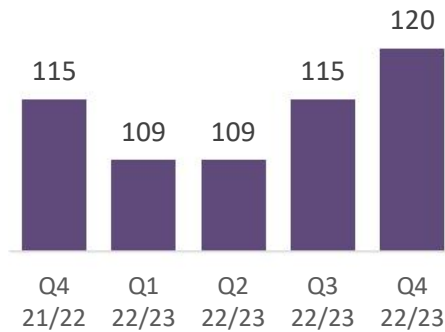
Trend Data

A full review of quarterly performance data is available via Pentana (Browser login link - <https://midlothian.pentanarpm.uk/login>)

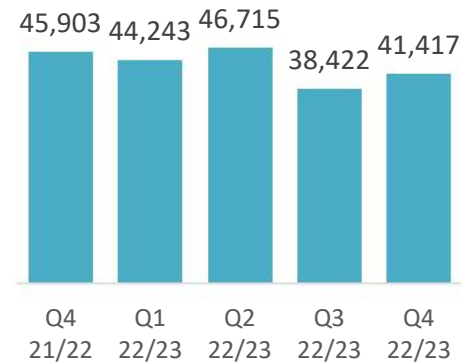
Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 1 (Corporate Solutions)



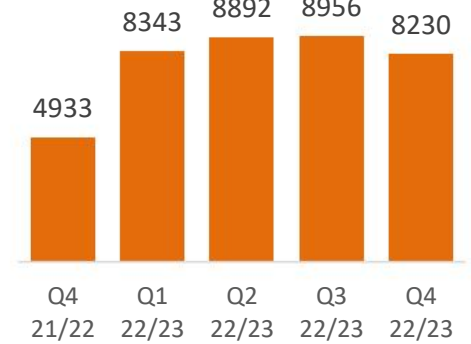
Total number of female employees in top 5%



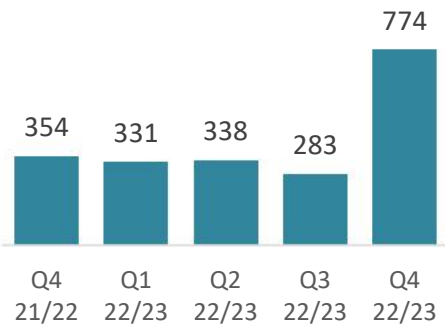
Number of virtual library visits



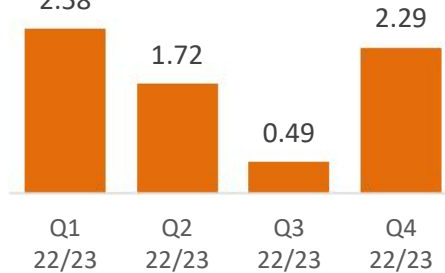
Number of Council Tax transactions received online



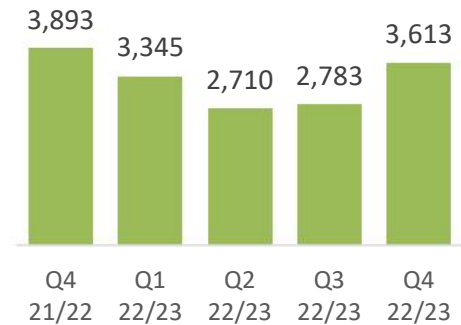
Number of social media contacts via Contact Centre



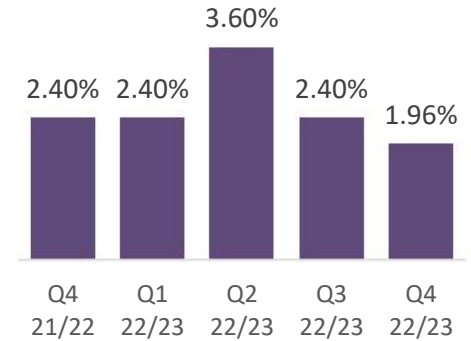
Corporate Solutions - Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence (quarterly)



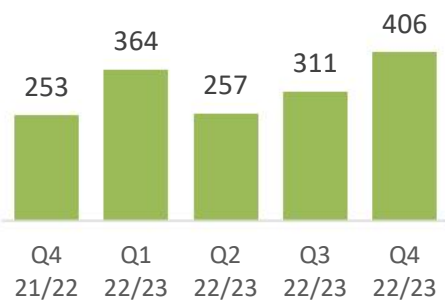
Number of webforms received via Contact Centre



Percentage of staff turnover (including teachers)



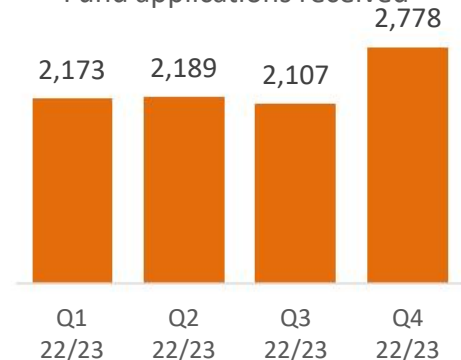
Number of Freedom of Information requests received (Council wide)



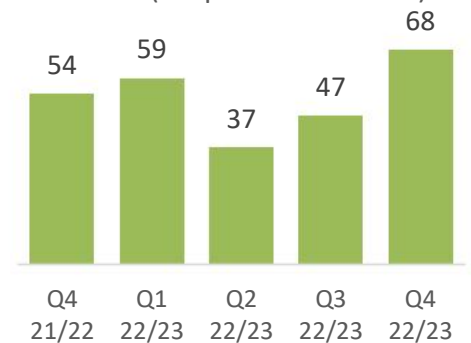
Total amount granted from Scottish Welfare Fund for crisis grants and community care grants (£) (cumulative)



Number of Scottish Welfare Fund applications received



Number of complaints received (Corporate Solutions)



Our Customers

Our customers have choice in the way Council services are accessed and provided
 Channel-shift has increased by the adoption of new digital tools and automated practices
 Delivery of customer service excellence to our communities

Key highlights

Work continues on implementing the Customer Services Platform (CSP) for Midlothian Council. This year saw the launch of the FOI/EIR module which introduced a new public FOI disclosure log, in addition to the Council's Publication scheme, making more information easily accessible to members of the public. The Registrars module launched in Q3 allowing customers to request and pay for replacement birth, death and marriage certificates online, at a time that is more convenient to them; and has reduced the demand on the team through introducing this self-service functionality. The customer feedback module is complete and will be launched in Q1 2023/24. Other modules in progress are missed refuse bins, assisted collections, additional recycling containers, bulky uplifts and Subject Access Requests. These are all in either design, configuration, build or test phases prior to launch. The work programme CSP was reviewed last quarter, with a further 20 modules identified for implementation in the first half of 2023. These include civic licence applications and environmental health service requests. CSP is crucial to the way the Council transforms the customer experience through redesigning key services that will improve the end to end customer journey.

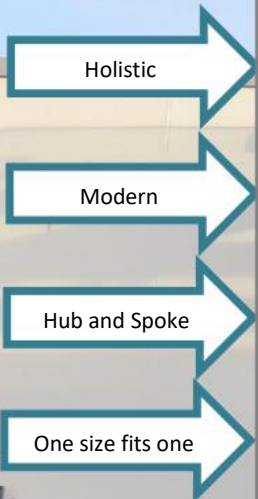
In support of the cost of living crisis, this year, the Council established four 'Warm and Well' hubs in the Lasswade, Newbattle, Danderhall and Loanhead libraries, as safe and warm spaces that all Midlothian citizens can access. The hubs provide free hot food and drinks, the opportunity to socialise with others and access free wifi to work, study, as well as enjoy books, jigsaws and games.

Library Services remain busy with the majority of activities and events, which had been suspended due to the pandemic having resumed. Various activities have taken place across the year including, Book Week Scotland 2022 saw 51 events take place across libraries with almost 2000 people attending. Gorebridge Library has been selected as one of the first in Scotland to host a 'Lend and Mend Hub'. Physical Library visits have increased significantly this year with 383,702 visits for this year compared to 156,250 for 21/22. Overall, total library visits has increased by 45% this year compared to last.

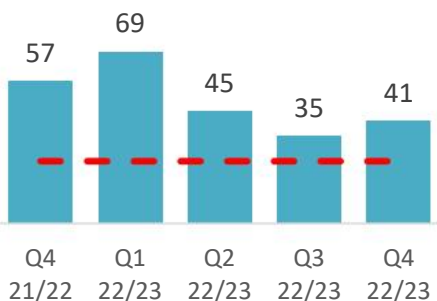
Areas of improvement

Our Contact Centre received 163,113 calls during 22/23 compared to 168,692 for 21/22. As well as webforms and social media, the contact centre have dealt with 13,000 emails in Q4, an increase from 9,000 during Q3. Call handling performance during quarter 4 has reduced to 56% of calls answered within 60 seconds compared to 64% in Q3. The decrease in call handling performance is due to seasonal impacts of severe weather and service activity such as Council Tax billing and garden waste service. As a result of high call volumes, Q4 saw an increase in call abandonment rate to 9% from 6% in Q3.

Resources continue to be prioritised to process Scottish Welfare Fund applications as soon as these are received. This has meant that processing times for change in circumstances for benefit applications etc have experienced some delays throughout this year. This year £815,042 was awarded from the Scottish Welfare Fund. 7,790 applications were assessed for crisis grants of which 4,083 met the criteria and resulted in payments.

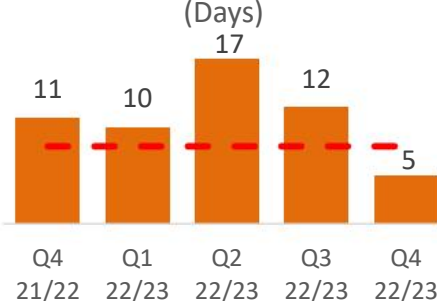


Average processing time for new benefit claims (Days)



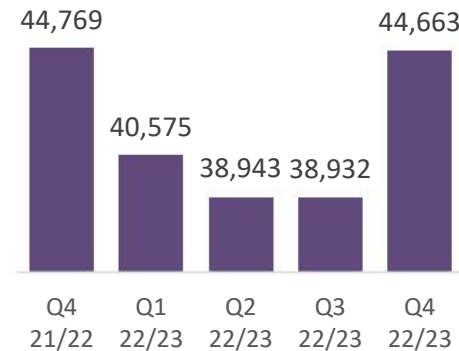
--- Target (25 days)

Average processing time for change of circumstances (Days)



--- Target (8 days)

Number of Contact Centre calls



Digital by default

We pledge to optimise the ways in which the Council does digital, data and technology to work effectively, collaborate, make decisions, adapt and innovate

We pledge to create better relationships between the Council and its communities by providing modern digital services that communities wants to use

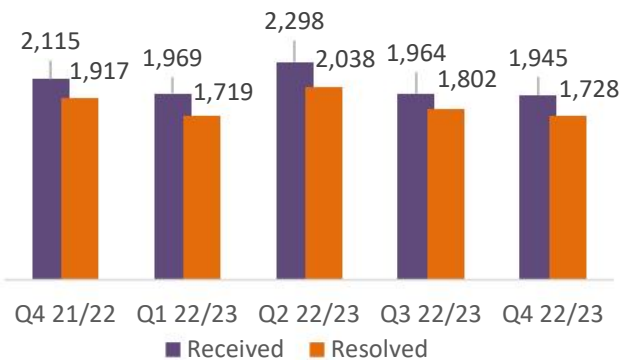
We pledge to maximize opportunities for digital, data and technology to enhance quality of life, the economy, sustainability and individual opportunity in Midlothian

Key highlights

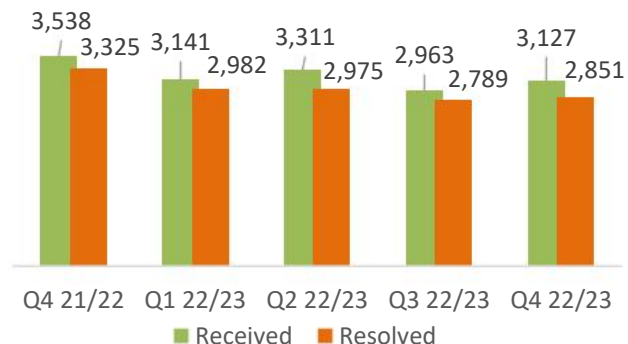
- Continued progression of the Digital Services Strategy ensuring the Council has the capacity and skills to take forward the associated investment and delivery of plans.
- Hybrid Working project:** Over the year, workspaces have been upgraded across Midlothian and Fairfield House. Over 1000 corporate laptops have been migrated to Global Protect and upgraded to Windows 10 version. In addition, approximately 1,000 mobile phones have been migrated to new platforms to allow better integration with Microsoft Office 365. A new desktop booking application has been launched to enable staff to easily find and book a workspace.
- Target Operating Model:** A new structure was agreed to strengthen the core staffing of Digital Services and Phase 1 is almost complete.
- Education strategy:** New Web Filtering software has been successfully piloted in schools. A new Wi-Fi network for Chromebooks and iPads has been introduced. A 3rd party Wi-Fi audit for schools has taken place and the actions are being implemented to improve coverage and capacity. Significant planning for phase 2 and phase 3 of the strategy has been completed.
- Digital enabled projects:** a number of business applications have been upgraded throughout the year and those continue to improve customer and staff experience including ITRENT, ManageEngine systems, Nutanix, Mosaic, TotalMobile, OpenRevenues, Civicapay, Civica Automation and Committee Management System.
- This quarter, Business Services successfully rolled out a **Print and Post service** across our Revenues team which ensures that customer correspondence in relation to the Revenues and Benefits service are sent out timeously, whilst reducing internal resource, postage and stationary costs required to do so.
- Cyber Security resilience:** A Cyber Incident Response partner was established to provide incident management and forensic support. A number of phishing exercises for staff have been conducted this year. The team deployed a Meta Learn to MS Teams to provide cyber security training to all staff. This was supported by Cyber Scotland Awareness week with an information publicity campaign.
- M365:** A Project Board has been established to deliver M365 and security and compliance assessment has been completed by Insight to help manage the data protection risks of compliance.



Number of service requests



Number of service incidents



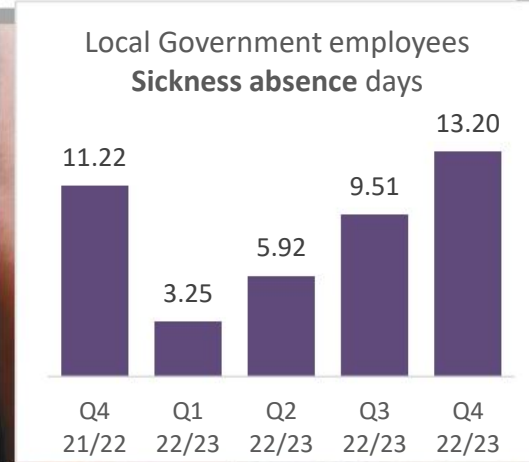
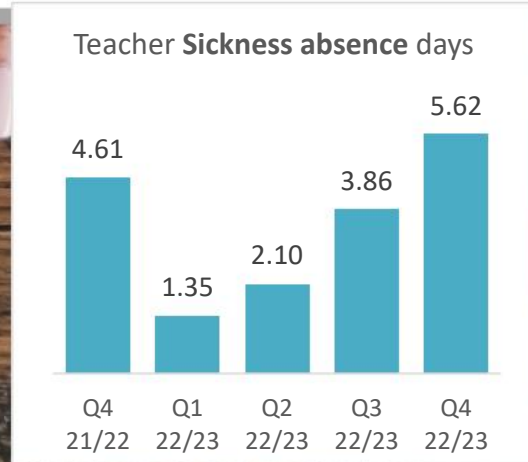
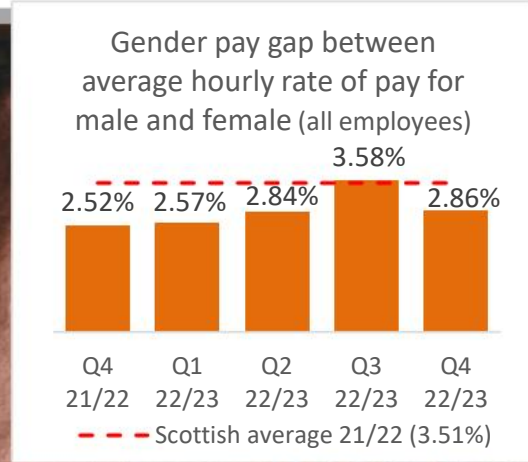
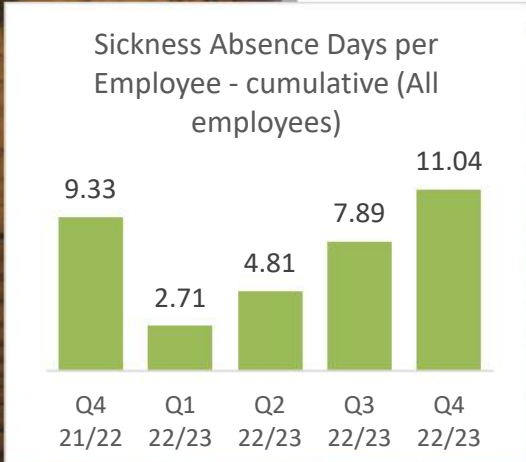
Our Workforce

Our people deliver high performing services
 We build an entrepreneurial council for future
 We demonstrate strong and consistent leadership
 We Promote Equality, diversity and fairness



Key highlights

- Policy and Strategy:** A review of our People Policies is currently underway. The Council agreed to 10 days of miscarriage leave to be incorporated into our suite of family leave policies and committed to the Miscarriage Association’s pledge. In addition, IVF treatment leave has also been added to our suite of family leave offerings. Revisions are underway on the Whistleblowing Policy and Overpayments Policy. A Hybrid working policy has been drafted for consultation and implementation. Work has commenced on the development of our Wellbeing Strategy which will focus on the financial, physical and psychological wellbeing of our workforce. A new Recruitment strategy is also in development which will set out our objectives in attracting, recruiting and on-boarding talent to the organisation. Alongside this the HR service has worked with the Communications Service to develop recruitment documentation for Local Government Worker job adverts, designed to promote Midlothian’s offer as an employer of choice.
- This year we launched the Corporate Workforce Plan and roll out of workforce planning templates across all services. Succession planning is ongoing to further understand the organisation and its current environment, analyse the current and potential workforce, determine future workforce needs and identify gaps against future needs.
- Continuation of a rolling programme of Wellness@Midlothian initiatives to ensure we continue to support the positive health and wellbeing of our staff. A coaching programme is planned in for roll out later in 2023.
- First phase of hybrid working staff survey was conducted where 1,000 staff members took part which provided valuable insights into staff wellbeing whilst working from home/in the community or other work settings. Feedback from the survey is now being considered and actions put in place as a result of the findings. In addition, a Hybrid working news channel was launched in April as well as various staff sessions providing an overview of the projects visions, current workstreams and events.
- As part of transformational activities, the Human Resources Business Partners continue to contribute a significant amount of resource working with services supporting various service reviews. Work also continues with services on various employee relations cases across the council supporting managers and providing guidance in relation to a variety of People Policies.
- Our Employment and Reward and Business Applications teams successfully implemented the Local Government Worker pay award and associated backdated payments.



The grant settlement for 2022/23 means a further real terms reduction in core funding. The reliance on one off funding sources to balance the 2022/23 budget combined with the challenging outlook for local government funding adversely impacts on the Council's financial sustainability and will result in the need to cut services in 2023/24 and beyond.

The Council has robust and effective financial management arrangements

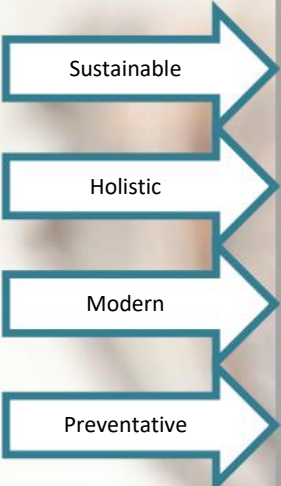
Key highlights

- Presentation to Council of a full suite of financial monitoring reports for Quarter 3 to promote sound financial governance.
- Development of a detailed Medium Term Financial Strategy with particular focus on 23/24 base budget and Local Government Finance Settlement.
- The finance team continue to provide in-depth financial input to key revenue and capital projects embedded in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

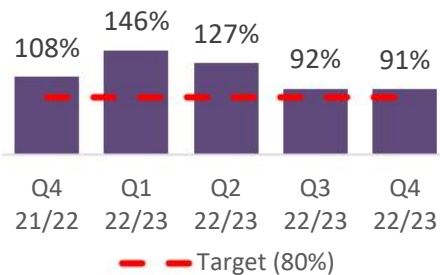
Areas for improvement: Council approved the 2023/24 budget at its meeting on 21 February 2023. Delivery is reliant on a combination of savings and service reductions and includes the use of retrospective service concession savings and earmarked covid recovery reserves. Whilst the 2023/24 budget is agreed, the challenge remains to reach ongoing financial sustainability. Cost and income projections for future years will be embedded in the Council's Strategic Blueprint which contains a range of transformation themes to drive towards a position of financial sustainability. Close working continues with the Business Transformation Steering Group to respond to the challenge.

Inflation, as well as rising energy costs, are affecting the construction industry in Scotland. The UK is currently experiencing unprecedented adverse market conditions, leading to significant rises in tender prices for a wide range of materials. There is evidence that inflation of between 10% and 15% beyond BCIS predictions is affecting projects. The pandemic has also accelerated financial challenges, and the growth from being the fastest growing local authority in Scotland places significant pressure on Midlothian to be able to deliver services to its citizens.

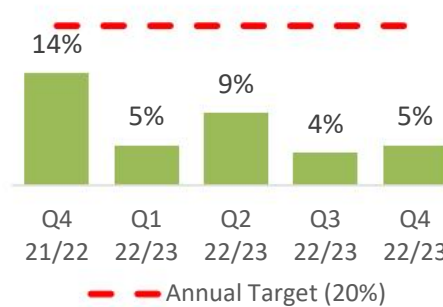
In response to all of these pressures, a range of reprioritisation activity is taking place, with a revised Capital Plan being considered by the cross party Business Transformation Steering Group, and options to review what and how services are delivered as part of the savings measures to reduce the funding gap.



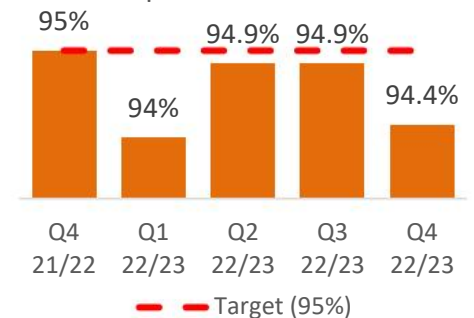
In year recovery of overpayments- % of all Housing benefit overpayments identified



All recovery overpayments- as a % of all HB overpayment debt



% of invoices sampled and paid within 30 days - Corporate Solutions



Key highlights

- Work continues on the development of the SME/Procurement strategy. The team have reviewed and streamlined the non-competitive action process, the request for procurement and developed a non-regulated procurement process and new contract database. The team are working to implement a review of the procurement arrangement across the Council including continuing to explore options for joint working with neighbouring councils, populating and maintenance of the new contract database.
- The team continues to utilise framework agreements with Scotland Excel and Procurement for Housing (amongst others) which not only provides an easier route to market but also delivers value for money.
- A range of high value/complex contracts continue to be awarded and key activities include overhaul of Contract Database and City Deal participation. A follow up review of upcoming expiring contracts within Health and Social Care began in Q2 and is in early stages. The review will look for opportunities to extend services, and consolidate opportunities for efficiency.
- Progress being made for consultation on a new procurement structure, designed to increase the capacity and capability in this area.
- The Annual Procurement Report 2021/22 was presented to Council in December 2022.

Areas of improvement

Work will continue to progress on the Procurement priorities: Review and reshape the procurement service, implement learning from the Scotland excel review and in partnership with Economic Development and stakeholders continue to ensure business community benefits in the supply chain to maximise opportunities for local people.

% of procurement spent on local enterprises (LGBF)

