

Notice of Meeting and Agenda



Cabinet

Venue: Council Chambers/Hybrid,
Midlothian House, Dalkeith, EH22 1DN

Date: Tuesday, 28 November 2023

Time: 10:00

Executive Director : Place

Contact:

Clerk Name: Democratic Services
Clerk Telephone:
Clerk Email: democratic.services@midlothian.gov.uk

Further Information:

This is a meeting which is open to members of the public.

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1 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

2 Order of Business

Including notice of new business submitted as urgent for consideration at the end of the meeting.

3 Declaration of Interest

Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.

4 Minute of Previous Meeting

4.1 Minute of Cabinet 24 October 2023 - submitted for approval 5 - 12

4.2 Action Log 13 - 14

5 Public Reports

5.1 Adult Health and Social Care Performance Report Quarter Two 2023/24, report by Head of Adult Services 15 - 20

5.2 Children Services, Partnerships and Communities Performance Report Quarter Two 2023/24, report by Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships 21 - 28

5.3 Corporate Solutions Performance Report Quarter Two 2023/24, report by Chief Officer Corporate Solutions 29 - 62

5.4 Education Performance Report Quarter Two 2023/24, report by Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships 63 - 72

5.5 Place Performance Report Quarter Two 2023/24, report by Chief Officer Place 73 - 100

5.6 Midlothian Council Report Quarter Two 2023/24 and Balanced Scorecard, report by Chief Executive 101 - 122

5.7 Rosewell to Auchendinny NCN 196 Pathway Upgrade, report by Executive Director Place 123 - 132

6 Private Reports

No items for discussion

7 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 23 January 2023 at 11am.

Minute of Meeting

Cabinet
Tuesday, 28 November 2023
Item No: 4.1



Cabinet

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday 24 October 2023	11.00 am	Council Chambers and Hybrid

Present:

Councillor Parry (Chair)	Councillor Alexander
Councillor Cassidy	Councillor McManus
Councillor Scott	

Religious Representatives:

Ms Elizabeth Morton	
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In attendance:

Councillor Pottinger (virtual)
Councillor Virgo (virtual)
Councillor Winchester (virtual)
Kevin Anderson, Executive Director Place
Fiona Robertson, Executive Director Children, Young People & Partnerships
Nick Clater, Head of Adult Services
Derek Oliver, Chief Officer Place
Saty Kaur, Chief Officer Corporate Solutions
Michelle Strong, Education Chief Operating Officer
Gary Leadbetter, Democratic Services Officer
Hannah Forbes, Assistant Democratic Services Officer

1 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Councillor Parry welcomed those in attendance to the meeting of Cabinet.

Apologies were then noted on behalf Anne-Theresa Lawrie, Religious Representative.

2 Order of Business

The Order of Business was as detailed within the agenda.

3 Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were received.

4 Minutes of Previous Meetings

4.1 The Minute of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 5 September 2023 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

4.2 The Action Log of Cabinet was submitted and noted.

5. Reports

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.1	Inspection of Midlothian Community Access Team	Head of Adult Services
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
<p>Nick Clater, Head of Adult Services, presented the report. The report advises of 1. The outcome of the inspection of Midlothian Community Access Team and 2. The actions that are being progressed a result of the inspection.</p> <p>Cabinet is requested to note the outcome of the inspection of Midlothian Community Access Team by the Care Inspectorate.</p> <p>Councillor Parry, the Chair, thanked Mr Clater for the report and opened it up to questions from the Members.</p> <p>Cabinet commended the Midlothian Community Access Team. Councillor McManus noted a desire to visit and engage with them.</p>		
Decision		
<p>The Cabinet noted the content of the report and progress made and agreed to forward the report to the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee.</p>		
Action		
<p>Democratic Services</p>		

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
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5.2	Inspection of St Andrews RC Primary School and Nursery Class	Education Chief Operating Officer
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
<p>Michelle Strong, Chief Operating Officer Education, presented the report. The report outlines the outcome of the above inspection as carried out by Education Scotland which was communicated in their report of 19 September 2023.</p> <p>Cabinet is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Note the content of the inspection report. (ii) Pass this report to the Performance, Review and Scrutiny Committee for its consideration (iii) Congratulate the pupils, parents and staff connected with St Andrew's Primary School and Nursery class on the key strengths highlighted in the report. <p>Councillor Parry, the Chair, thanked Ms Strong for the report and opened it up to questions from the Members.</p> <p>Cabinet commended St Andrews RC Primary School and Nursery Class.</p>		
Decision		
The Cabinet noted the content of the report and progress made and agreed to forward the report to the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee		
Action		
Democratic Services		

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.3	Inspection of Saltersgate School	Education Chief Operating Officer
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
<p>Michelle Strong, Chief Operating Officer Education, presented the report. The report outlines the outcome of the above inspection as carried out by Education Scotland which was communicated in their report of 26 September 2023.</p> <p>Cabinet is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Note the content of the inspection report. (ii) Pass this report to the Performance, Review and Scrutiny Committee for its consideration (iii) Congratulate the pupils, parents and staff connected with St Andrew's Primary School and Nursery class on the key strengths highlighted in the report. <p>Councillor Parry, the Chair, thanked Ms Strong for the report and opened it up to questions from the Members.</p> <p>Cabinet commended the report and gave their congratulations.</p>		

Decision

The Cabinet noted the content of the report and progress made and agreed to forward the report to the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee.

Action

Democratic Services

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.4	Midlothian Policy on Positive Approaches to Attendance	Education Chief Operating Officer

Outline of report and summary of discussion

Michelle Strong, Chief Operating Officer Education, presented the report. The report provides Cabinet with the context which informed the revised version of the attendance policy.

Midlothian's attendance strategy and policy aims to develop and strengthen a whole-system partnership approach that enables children to realise their right to an education and leads to increased and sustained attendance and engagement in education for all children and young people.

The refreshed policy maps out a staged approach to promoting and protecting attendance and a consistent approach to tracking and monitoring.

Cabinet is requested to note and approve the revised policy 'Positive Approaches to Attendance' that details the council strategic approach and the procedures that schools and settings must follow to protect and promote attendance.

Councillor Parry, the Chair, thanked Ms Strong for the report and opened it up to questions from the Members.

Councillor Scott commended the report. Councillor Scott noted the importance of closing the attendance gap which can help tackle poverty. Councillor Scott spoke to the cost-of-living crisis that is affecting families across Midlothian, particularly families with a low household income. Councillor Scott further highlighted the effects and lasting impact of Covid-19 on the education of young people.

The Chair spoke to conversations that happen in school and in the background, over and above letters being sent to parents, that happening in school when attendance does drop.

Councillor Scott moved the report. Councillor Cassidy seconded.

Decision

The Cabinet noted the content of the report and approved the revised policy.

Action

Education Chief Operating Officer

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.5	Religious Observance Policy	Executive Director

		Children, Young People and Partnerships
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
<p>Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships, Fiona Robertson, presented the report. Following a review of the council's Religious Observance Policy and the available guidance, it is proposed to replace it with two new policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious Observance in Schools (Part I) • Religious and Moral Education in Non-Denominational Schools and Religious Education in Roman Catholic Schools (Part II) <p>This report seeks Cabinet approval to introduce two separate policies: Religious Observance in Schools; Religious and Moral Education in Non-Denominational Schools and Religious Education in Roman Catholic Schools, replacing the policy on Religious Observance in Schools.</p> <p>Councillor Parry, the Chair, thanked Ms Robertson for the report and opened it up to questions from the Members.</p>		
Decision		
The Cabinet noted the content of the report and approved the recommendation.		
Action		
Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships		

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.6	Midlothian Council Statutory Report to Scottish Ministers on Public Bodies Climate Change Duties 2022/23	Chief Officer Place
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
<p>Chief Officer Place, Derek Oliver, presented the report. The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the Council's statement of compliance with its statutory climate change reporting duties for 2022/23, a copy of which is available in the CMIS Member's Library, and to recommend its submission to Scottish Government by the due date of 30 November 2023.</p> <p>It is recommended that Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> approves the Council's Report on Compliance with the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties for 2022/23; and agrees to the submission of the report to Scottish Ministers by 30th November 2023. <p>Councillor Parry, the Chair, thanked Mr Oliver for the report and opened it up to questions from the Members.</p> <p>Councillor Cassidy commended the report. They then spoke to using local businesses in Midlothian to reduce the carbon footprint, highlighting that a building currently being built within Dalkeith does not seem to have used local businesses for supplies. Councillor Cassidy stated that local businesses should be prioritised,</p>		

whilst recognising fair tendering processes. Mr Oliver noted that this is in being worked on in terms of advancing community wealth building and a local procurement strategy, explaining reports will be brought on this. Mr Oliver explained that, in terms of large construction projects, they do go through tendering processes for best value and sub-contractors, etc. may be appointed by the contractor. Mr Oliver further explained a percentage score is allocated to climate change in respect of the tendering process.

Councillor Alexander noted that there is quite a long way to go in achieving net-zero targets. Councillor Alexander highlighted that the Council is doing well in the way in which it builds houses, noting the addition of cycle sheds with a need to further explore how these methods of transportation are improved. Councillor Alexander also noted that there is a need in relation to Planning to explore how citizens are allowed to retrofit their homes, and ensure we are more energy efficient and more energy conscious when allowing people to put new windows into their home, and in respect of allowing solar panels. This will ensure we go forward in climate emergency strategy.

Councillor Cassidy moved the report. Councillor Alexander seconded.

The Chair asked that the Scottish Government is written to, to highlight what Midlothian Council is doing in relation to climate change.

Councillor McKenzie queried what the role of the new officers will be. Mr Oliver noted that the fixed-term climate change officer's primary function is to research and bring forward papers & recommendations for elected members, which will coincide with the development of the Climate Action Plan that is being brought forward.

Councillor Cassidy stated that we need to insist that companies keep money in the local economy, highlighting previous instances where money has not been kept local.

Decision

The Cabinet noted the content of the report and approved the recommendations. Council to write to Scottish Government to highlight what Midlothian Council is doing in relation to climate change.

Action

Chief Officer Place

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.7	Croft Street, Penicuik Introduction of All Day Waiting Restrictions	Chief Officer Place

Outline of report and summary of discussion

Chief Officer Place, Derek Oliver, presented the report. This report describes the significant pressure from local residents to introduce measures to improve vehicular access for larger vehicles through Croft Street, Penicuik.

The report lays out a Council draft order proposing the prohibition and restriction on waiting, loading and unloading by way of introduction of double yellow lines on

certain designations part of the carriageway at Croft Street, Penicuik.

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- i. Note the significant pressure from local residents to introduce measures to improve access through Croft Street, Penicuik;
- ii. Note that some objections were received regarding the location of double yellow lines outside certain properties which may impact on some parking spaces;
- iii. Approves on balance the introduction of the relevant traffic and legal orders to bring into effect the prescribed double yellow line scheme in Croft Street, Penicuik shown on the amended drawing at paragraph 3.10 in the report.

Councillor Parry, the Chair, thanked Mr Oliver for the report and opened it up to questions from the Members.

Councillor McManus noted that this issue has been ongoing for quite some time and it is right that action is taken.

Councillor McManus moved the report. Councillor Alexander seconded.

Decision

The Cabinet noted the content of the report and approved the recommendations.

Action

Chief Officer Place

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.8	Lothian Street, Bonnyrigg Introduction of All Day Waiting Restrictions	Chief Officer Place
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
<p>Chief Officer Place, Derek Oliver, presented the report. This report describes the challenges for movement of buses and other large vehicles along Lothian Street Bonnyrigg and the safety of pedestrians crossing the road due to restricted vision caused by parked cars at various pinch points along the route.</p> <p>The report notes an informal public consultation took place in November 2022 with local residents of Lothian Street, Bonnyrigg. It also reports on the output from the formal public consultation of a proposal informed by the earlier local consultation and discussions with local elected members. The proposal laid out a Council draft order (appendix B2) for further prohibition and restriction on waiting, loading and unloading by way of extension of double yellow lines on certain designated parts of the carriageway at Lothian Street, Bonnyrigg.</p> <p>It is recommended that Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">i. Note the challenges for movement of buses and other large vehicles along Lothian Street, Bonnyrigg and the safety of pedestrians crossing the road		

due to parked cars;

- ii. Note that significant objections were received to the formal public consultation proposing to extend double yellow lines on Lothian Street, Bonnyrigg;
- iii. Approves on the grounds of pedestrian road safety and traffic flow improvement the introduction of the relevant traffic and legal orders to bring into effect the proposed double yellow line scheme in Lothian Street, Bonnyrigg shown on the drawing at paragraph 3.9 and the draft order at appendix B2.

Councillor Parry, the Chair, thanked Mr Oliver for the report and opened it up to questions from the Members.

Councillor Alexander spoke to the difficulties on this road and the importance of ensuring buses are able to use this road with ease. Councillor Alexander also spoke to the safety issues on the road.

Councillor Alexander moved the report. Councillor McManus seconded.

Councillor McKenzie queried whether the measures are to be reviewed after a set period of time, or whether other hard engineering is being considered. Mr Oliver noted that there was a speed survey being undertaken and further highlighted that this is an iterative process.

Decision

The Cabinet noted the content of the report and approved the recommendations.

Action

Chief Officer Place

6 Private Reports

No Items for discussion

7 Date of the Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was noted as Tuesday, 28 November 2023 at 11 am.

The meeting terminated at 11:45am.

Action Log



No	Subject	Date	Action	Action Owner	Expected completion date	Comments
1	Place Annual Performance Report 2022/23	30/05/2023	Mr Oliver will provide feedback to Councillor McKenzie on the planting of Bamboo in schools	Derek Oliver		
2	Corporate Solutions Q1 Performance Report 2023/24	05/09/2023	Further work on reaching out to small businesses	Derek Oliver		
3	Lawfield Primary School Inspection Report	05/09/2023	That a further report would be presented to Cabinet within 6 months on the progress made	Michelle Strong	March 2024	
4	Midlothian Council Statutory Report to Scottish Ministers on Public Bodies Climate Change Duties 202223	24/10/2023	To write to Scottish Government to highlight what Midlothian Council is doing in relation to climate change.	Derek Oliver		

Adult Health and Social Care Performance Report 2023/24 – Quarter 2



01. Progress in delivery of strategic outcomes

Q2 23/24: (Jul/Aug/Sept)

Progress in delivery of strategic outcomes

The Midlothian Integration Joint Board (IJB) plan and direct delegated health and social care services for the people of Midlothian. Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) oversees the delivery of all the services delegated to Midlothian IJB. The aim of integrated health and social care is for the people to experience more joined up treatment and care.

This report brings together the priority actions of the seven main areas that plan and deliver integrated care and support:

- Adult Services
- Older People
- Justice Service and Protection
- Public Health
- Mental Health and Substance Use
- Midlothian and East Lothian Drug and Alcohol Partnership (MELDAP)
- Learning and Development.

Midlothian HSCP must make progress towards the aims of Midlothian IJB Strategic Commissioning Plan, work alongside the Community Planning Partnership, and contribute to the strategic aims of both NHS Lothian and Midlothian Council.

This quarterly update is provided in alignment with the four key themes of Service Actions & Indicators:

- . Prevention
- . Understanding Changing Needs
- . Effective, efficient and quality (Best Value)
- . Improving Outcomes - socioeconomic, health and wellbeing, personal outcomes.

Prevention

Prevention is a key role of services within the HSCP. Social Work services in particular work with our most vulnerable populations and are crucial to ensuring people remain safe and well. Public protection is prominent and is key to what social workers do.

Duty Social Work aim to provide unpaid carers with timely support and interventions and continue to complete Adult Carer Support plans, which play a vital role in reducing the risk or associated impact of crisis.

We operate an assertive outreach model within Substance Use Services to reduce harm and drug and alcohol related deaths. The service offers a multi-disciplinary working model blending social workers and nurses. Practically, the model involves engagements at No.11, our recovery hub, as well as home visits and appointments elsewhere. Whilst drug-related deaths are a complex issue, the model adopted in Midlothian did have some impact in reducing numbers in 2022 to 4 (from 23 in 2021).

Midlothian has a successful mental health model that ensures the use of mental health beds is below the rest of Lothian. To illustrate, Midlothian has an allocation of 8 acute mental health beds at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital and we have consistently underused these in 2022 and 2023 – averaging approximately 6 beds (75% occupancy). This is testament to the strong community model that aims to ensure mentally unwell people are maintained at home for as long as possible and, for those who are admitted, discharged home with strong support as early as is deemed safe. To put into context, the Royal Edinburgh Hospital generally operates at a capacity in excess of 95% most days.

We have a range of supports for people with dementia most notably Post-Diagnostic Support Workers who link in with people and their families in their first 12 months following diagnosis and they provide both practical and emotional support.

Justice services risk manage a range of cases on a daily basis. This dynamic risk management approach prevents further harm occurring.

Understanding Changing Needs

All services are working towards the establishment of feedback mechanisms to ensure that service planning and delivery meet the needs of people and communities.

A local feedback questionnaire has been developed, and is now in place, and ready to use with Highbank respite users. The Care Opinion independent feedback website will be promoted for people using and/or affected by the Highbank respite service.

Occupational Therapy and Physical Disabilities service has introduced a paper and electronic feedback form for people to undertake when their involvement with the Service is complete. Through the use of Outnav, responses from service users to our feedback form and collation of emails from people we have supported we are gathering more information to evidence that people engaging with our Service feel listened to and are treated with dignity and respect. People are letting us know that when we are able to work together, that even a small piece of equipment or change to their home environment can make a huge difference to the quality of their life.

This summer MELDAP carried out a consultation process with people with lived and living experience, carers/families, members of the public, services and partners. This included noting their priorities in relation to prevention / children / families services, treatment service and recovery orientated provision.

Duty Social Work Team introduced a paper and electronic feedback form that is initially sent out to those identified as Unpaid Carers. This commenced on 1/9/23.

Whilst most of these initiatives have positive aspirations, it is too early to evaluate the majority of them for positive impact.

Effective, efficient and quality (Best Value)

Q2 saw a significant focus on Financial Recovery Planning, and the August meeting of the Midlothian HSCP Finance and Performance Group was dedicated to the presentation and discussion of Financial Recovery templates. Services were required to present their Recovery Templates to set out the financial position, key pressures, recovery plan and further mitigation actions.

Staffing and recruitment pressures remain in high volume services such as Care at Home and Newbyers Care Village. Sickness rates have remained high in both services and mitigating actions continue to be progressed with the support of HR.

Learning Disability Day Services continue to be impacted following Covid and plans have been put in place to increase capacity.

Work is needed regarding Old Age Days Services to ensure both best value and that need is fully met. A full review of the contractual arrangements is being planned.

Pressures remain on the Learning Disability Resource Panel budget and work is underway to both analyse this and take recovery actions. The challenge is that need and acuity remains high. As an illustration, 20 people account for 25% of the overall expenditure.

We are looking to identify how we quality assure our internal services more effectively and there are aspirations to create a Quality Assurance Team to do this. This would align quality assurance and quality improvement work with Care Inspectorate criteria so would also have the benefit of assisting with the preparation for inspection. It is acknowledged that this area for development and a gap currently.

Waiting times for Social Work and Occupational Therapy assessments remained off target in Q2. Remedial action has continued to reduce these but some staffing challenges are impacting on this. A review of Social Work and Occupational Therapy is planned with a view to reducing the number of small teams and therefore waiting lists and, medium term, there needs to be a more effective way of managing front door activity which should reduce waiting times.

The newly established Social Work Assurance Group (SWAG) has established a layer of governance for Social Work and Social Care services across Adults and Childrens' Services and is Chaired by the Chief Social Work Officer. It considers all inspection reports and other work and monitors and evaluates action plans. Whilst only recently established, SWAG has already provided a degree of governance that did not exist previously in a systematic form.

We have a range of action plans currently in place, most notably for Newbyers and Care at Home but we are also developing one for Adult Support and Protection in anticipation of an inspection and there will be an action plan required on the back of the Physical Disabilities inspection by the Care Inspectorate,

Improving Outcomes - socioeconomic, health and wellbeing, personal outcomes

The HSCP is currently developing its approach to outcomes and has purchased the OutNav tool from Matter of Focus. It is currently too early to ascertain the effectiveness of this but there is a strong commitment from the HSCP to having a more systemic approach to outcomes as it is acknowledged that this has been a gap.

The Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan (CJOIP) has been approved and we are working on the actions agreed in the plan. During Q2 the Community Justice Service was onboarded to OutNav, the digital platform used to capture contributions and report on progress towards improved outcomes at personal, service and strategic levels.

Funding has been received and various projects predominately in the third sector will be funded (this is currently awaiting procurement sign-off). These projects will help the people of Mayfield and Easthouses to have more access to healthy food options, keep physically active.

Work continues to support the development and implementation of the Self Directed Support agenda and this agenda has particular traction historically in the areas of learning disabilities and physical disabilities.

Research continues to show that community based sentences are more effective in reducing offending than short prison sentences; they enable those convicted of offences to retain connections with local supports and family relationships. Community Payback Orders (CPO) have a number of requirements but Supervision and/or an Unpaid Work or Other Activity Requirement are those most often used by the Courts.

Impact of being on CPO with a Supervision Requirement: Research indicates that a strong therapeutic alliance between a person and their practitioner is a key factor in the success of an intervention. We collate feedback from the individuals that we work with as this enables us to work collaboratively and to improve service delivery. The feedback from service users reflects this; even when the actions of the service user required the practitioner to return the order to court in breach.

How unpaid work benefits communities and those on a CPO with Unpaid Work or Other Activity: In the reporting year the Unpaid Work team completed 278 projects which benefited 221 people. We collated feedback from beneficiaries at the end of a project and 100% of respondents reported that the quality of the work was good (3%) or excellent (97%). From the feedback provided by individuals on an order, 100% of those who completed unpaid work or other activity advised that they learnt new skills and had been able to make reparation for their offending behaviour.

Whilst we are looking to capture outcomes data more effectively using OutNav, as highlighted elsewhere, there is some clear evidence that our work in the areas of Mental Health and Substance Use have clear positive outcomes. For example, the "under use" of allocated Mental Health beds indicates positive outcomes for people.

Areas of focus

The joint inspection of adult services with a focus on people with physical disabilities, long term conditions and their unpaid carers is progressing. In July, the partnership submitted our 'Position Statement' which sought to benchmark our activity against the five quality indicators outlined by the Care Inspectorate and Health Improvement Scotland. Narrative and evidential documents were provided to support statements relating to how the partnership is evidencing outcomes, commissioning services and developing key processes to support people accessing our services to have positive experiences. In parallel with the partnership's written contribution, the Care Inspectorate and Health Improvement Scotland have completed their initial stage of engagement with people and their carers and have subsequently identified a number of initial themes and lines of enquiry. These findings alongside the evidence within the Position Statement and the recently completed record reading formed the basis for the staff scrutiny focus groups and the discussions with individuals who access our physical disability services. This second phase of engagement activity took place during September, the findings of which will form the bases of the formal inspection report due for publication at the end of November 2023.

In August of this year, the Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport, Maree Todd MSP wrote to update on the Adult Support and Protection Joint Inspection Programme. The Care Inspectorate will be revisiting the six adult protection partnership who were subject to ASP inspection activity in 2017/18. This means that Midlothian H&SCP will be subject to an ASP inspection, most likely in the second quarter of 2024. Preparation for this strategic inspection will include commencing a Board involving all relevant partners (Police Scotland, NHS Lothian and Midlothian H&SCP) and reviewing our benchmarking activity against the recommendations from the 2017/18 inspection report. A communication strategy around the activity will be issued in due course.

A review of the Adult Community Care Team was carried out in 2017, when a generic fieldwork team was disbanded in favour of specialist teams. It was proposed that the arrangements would be reviewed in a timely manner. Unfortunately, this work was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This review now requires to be actioned. Further, there is recognition from senior managers of the need to provide governance and assurance around social work services (children and adults) which led to the establishment of Social Work Assurance and Governance Group (SWAG) in June 2023. This group is chaired by the Chief Social Work Officer and will provide the structure and guidance for a review of social work services. We know that Social Work services are under significant pressure meeting growing demand and increased complexity, meaning it is imperative that the HSCP prepares itself strategically and operationally for the future. The National Care Service Bill and recent strategic inspection activity (currently Physical Disabilities and pending Adult Support and Protection) will result in the need to devise and execute improvement plans that will not sit in isolation of other services areas. There is therefore a need to coordinate recommendations across adult social work services whilst ensuring an ongoing self-evaluation programme. A methodology, consultation and communication plan is currently being devised that will clearly outline the programme of work underpinning this scoping exercise.

02. Challenges and Risks

Q2 23/24:

Challenges and Risks

We continue to invest in the wellbeing, training, and development of our workforce, including our third sector partners and unpaid carers. We also have ongoing challenges in rolling out our trauma-informed approaches to all aspects of the HSCP. There are some areas of very proactive practice but there are other areas who have had less exposure to trauma-informed approaches.

Whilst our digital agenda is gaining prominence, we must continue to improve the coordination of care and find ways to share information between services. We will have to make better use of existing technologies and provide people with access to accurate information and services.

There remains a degree of uncertainty in relation to the National Care Service, but services continue to prepare and as highlighted above, there are plans to review our Social Work services.

There remains a risk in relation to some areas with regards vacancies and also sickness absence as previously highlighted. Whilst managers are working hard to ensure processes are robustly followed, it remains the case that some areas have stubbornly high sickness absence rates. We continue to look at supporting staff with our Wellbeing offer and we also continue to roll out our communication and engagement work.

Our workforce

We are undertaking a full review and evaluation of the functionality, effectiveness and uptake of Health and Social Care specific LearnPro modules. The aim is for all Health and Social Care specific LearnPro modules to:

- . include up to date content that relates to registered professional practice,
- . be fully working and accessible.

Continued pressures of vacancies and difficulties in recruitment and retention has resulted in an existing workforce with increased sickness absence. Managers are continuing to work hard to support staff to access the range of wellbeing initiatives being offered across the Partnership. This includes emotional, physical, financial and learning support services as highlighted within the Midlothian Health & Wellbeing Directory.

The impact of these workforce challenges can be seen across a number of service areas. Due to staff shortages the Physical Disability Service is also absorbing Learning Disability Occupational Therapy referrals as well, with a resulting negative impact on waiting lists.

Annual Leave throughout the summer period and unexpected sickness absence resulted in the Social Work workforce being reduced by 40% for one month of this quarter.

Our communities

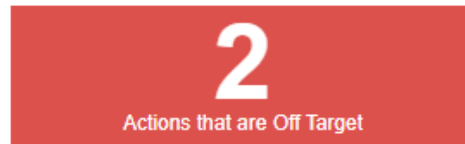
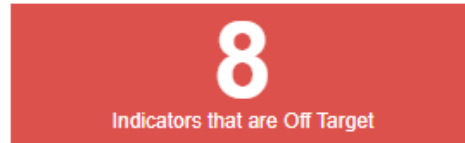
In early 2023, the Midlothian Council Planning Team contacted some service areas within Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) to request evidence for inclusion in the Midlothian Local Development Plan 2 (MLDP2) Evidence Report. This report must provide evidence in relation to growth arising from requirements placed on Midlothian Council by Midlothian Local Development Plan (2017) and Scottish Government National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). This includes an approximate minimum of 12,500 new homes are expected and required in Midlothian between 2022 and 2036.

In June 2023, the Planning Team contacted the Chair of the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) to request support in gathering a comprehensive range of evidence across all delegated services. The planning team were invited to the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) to discuss the scale of growth and evidence required from the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) to ensure consideration was given to planning for appropriate service and infrastructure growth. This meeting was held on 7th July 2023 and included an extended invitation to all Integration Joint Board Members to attend.

As a result of the meeting, the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) agreed to convene a Planning and Transformation session and Short Life Working Group (SLWG) to plan and retrieve relevant information and data evidence to describe the likely impact of 12,500 houses in Midlothian by 2036. This session was held on 9th August 2023 where the Planning, Performance and Programme Team presented initial thoughts on a consistent approach to discussion capacity and projected demand, Heads of Service and Professional Leads committed to collate and share an agreed set of service capacity and workforce metrics, alongside the Business Team reviewing the building and infrastructure projections.

This data was collated and reviewed by the SLWG on 31st August with further review at the Midlothian HSCP Senior Management Team on 11th September. Specialist input from the Business team was requested on 1st September and will be added to this return when received, for submission to the Midlothian Council Planning Team.

Quarter 2 - Adult Health and Social Care-



Adult Health and Social Care INDICATORS Off Target						
Code & Title	Gauge	Value	Target	Last Update	History	
23/24.AHSC3.2a Maintain or improve median wait time for OT waiting lists since pre...		20%	60%	Q2 2023/24		
ASC.SPSO.05.2 Percentage of complaints at stage 2 complete within 20 working days		50%	95%	Q2 2023/24		
23/24.AHSC3.3a Maintain or improve median wait time for Social Work waiting lists ...		40%	60%	Q2 2023/24		
AHSC.MPI.02 Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence (cumul...		13.19	10.53	Q2 2023/24		
23/24.AHSC1.3b Number of completed Adult Carer Support plans by VOCAL (accu...		257	300	Q2 2023/24		
AHSC.MPI.05 % of Service PIs that are on target/ have reached their target. (does n...		85%	90%	Q2 2023/24		
ASC.SPSO.05.3 Percentage of complaints escalated and complete within 20 workin...		90%	95%	Q2 2023/24		
AHSC.MPI.03 % of service priority Actions on target / completed, of the total number		87.5%	90%	Q2 2023/24		

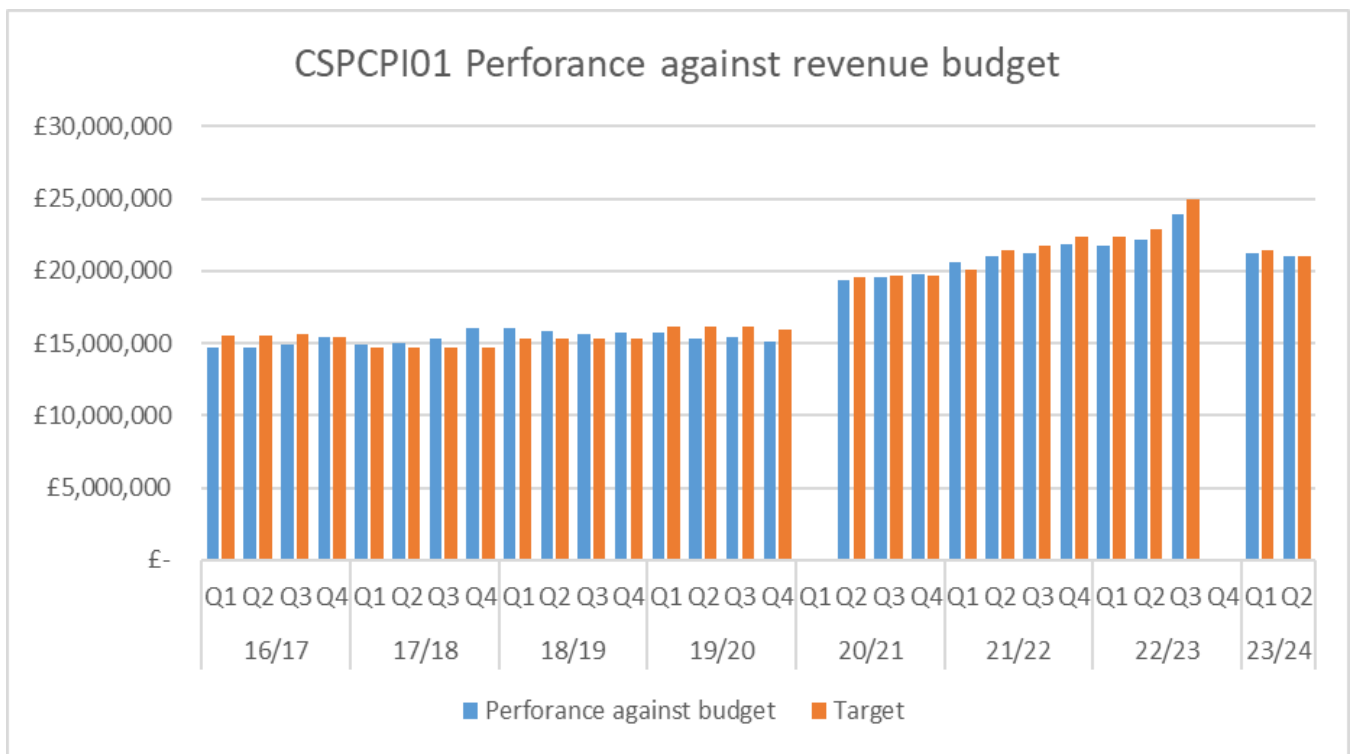
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Children's Services, Partnership and Communities Performance Report 2023/24 Quarter 2

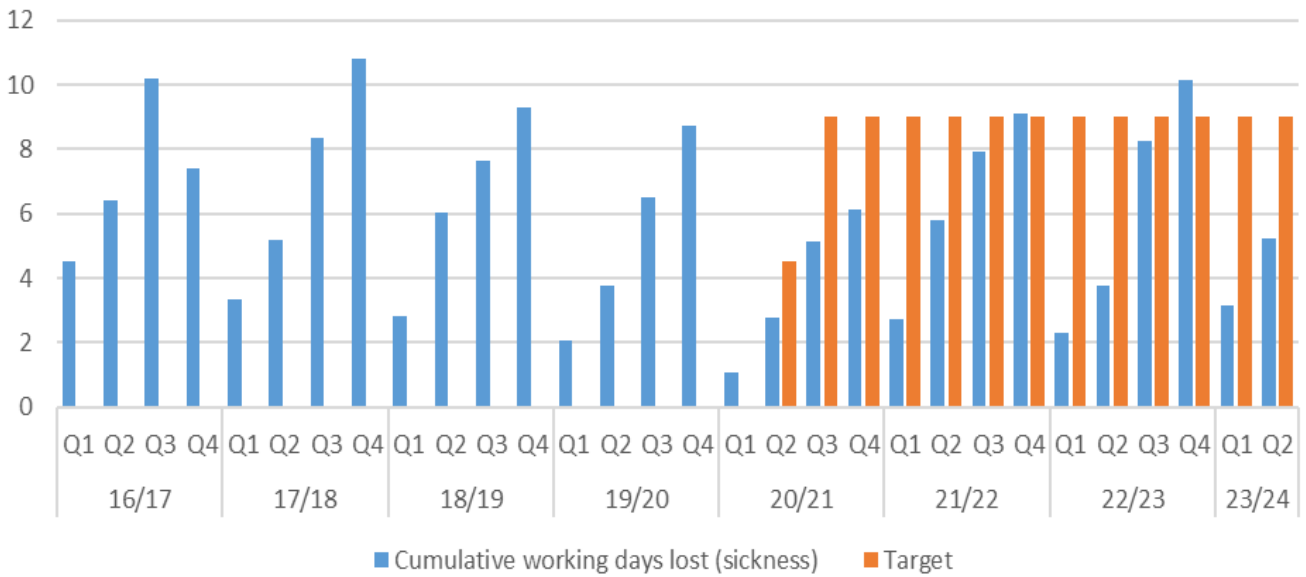


01. Progress in delivery of strategic outcomes

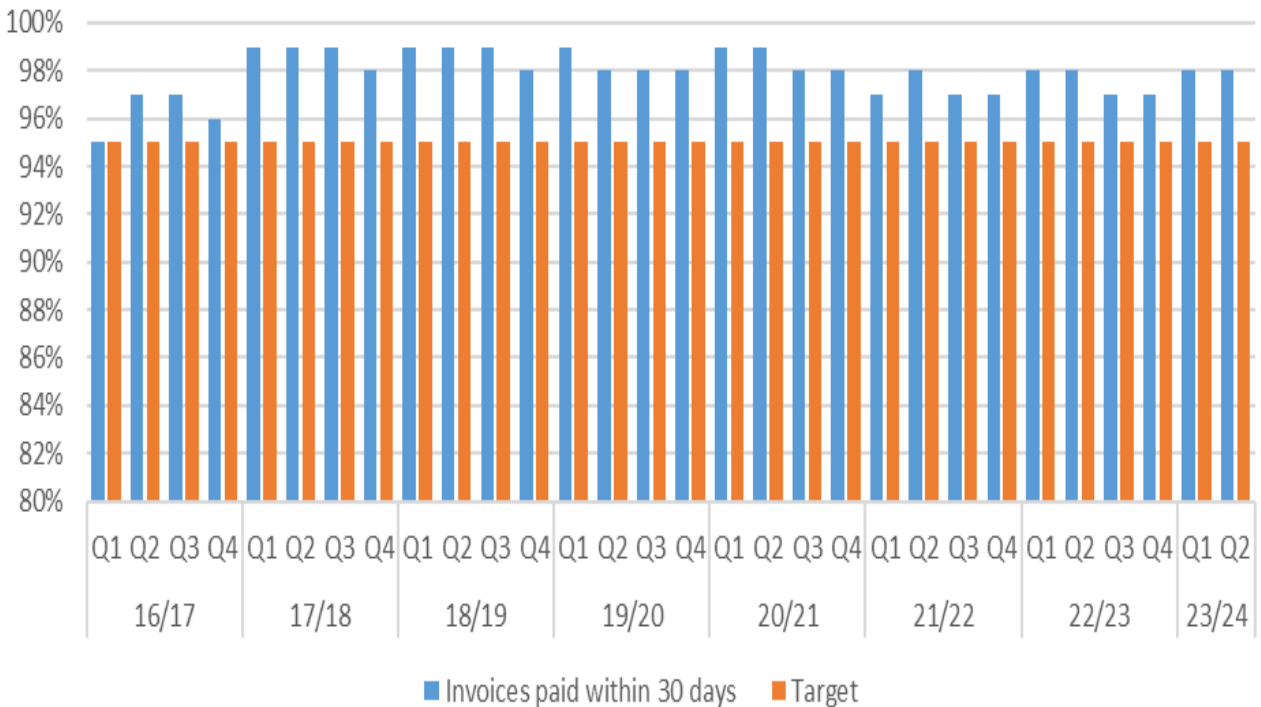
Q2 23/24: Progress in delivery of strategic outcomes



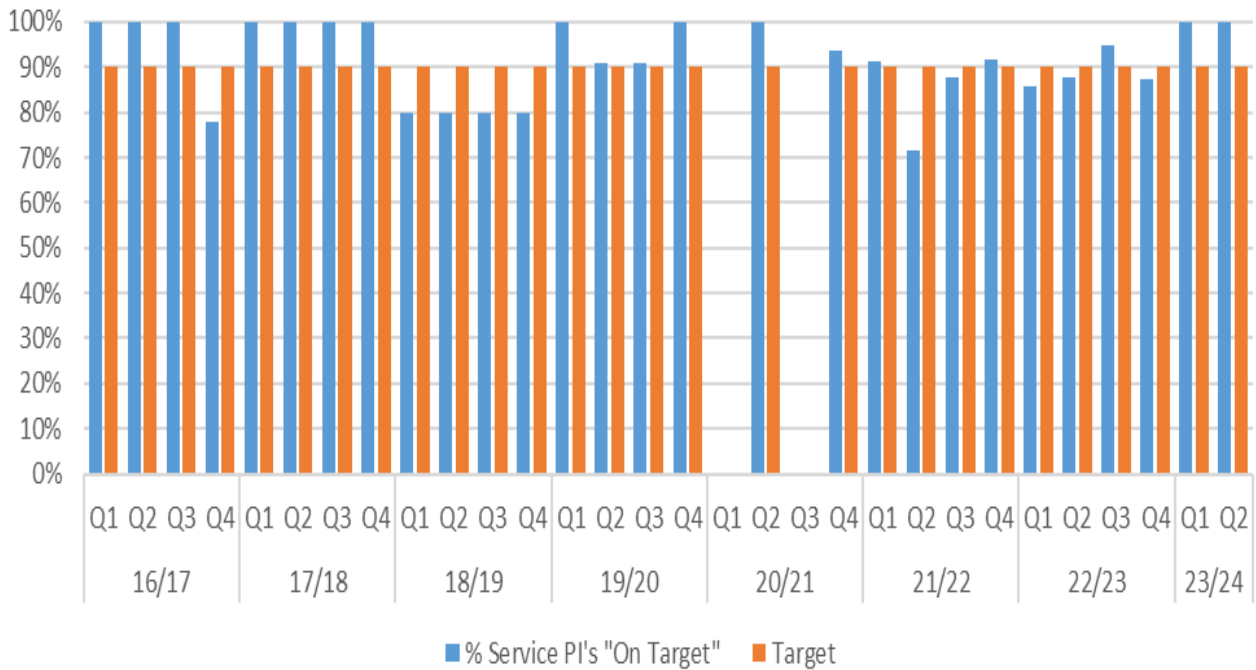
CSPC.MPI.02 Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence (cumulative)



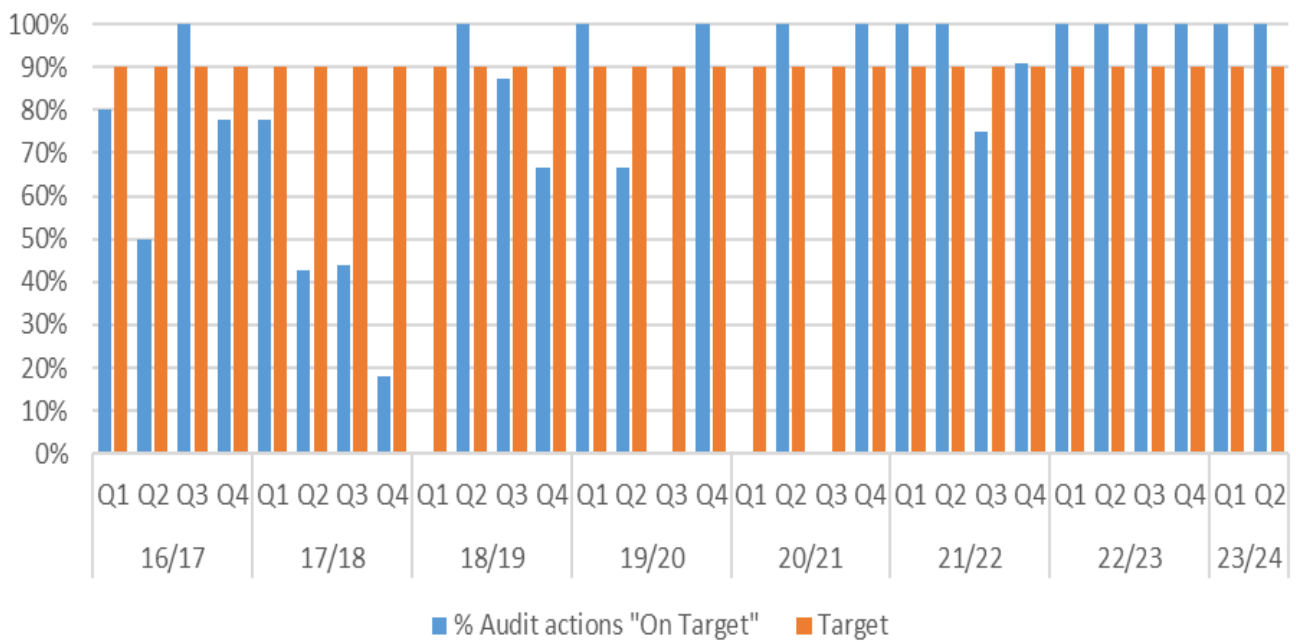
CSPC.MPI.04 % of invoices paid within 30 days of invoice receipt (cumulative)



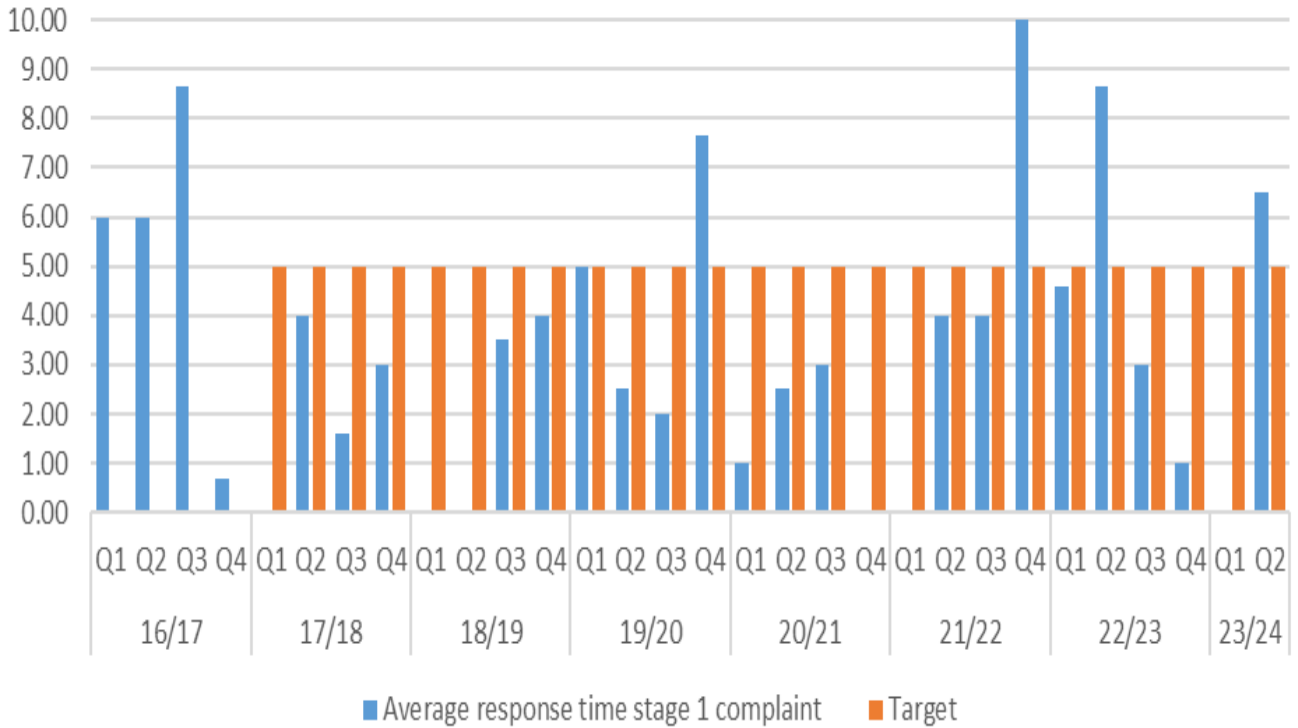
CSPC.MPI.05 % of Service PIs that are on target/have reached their target. (does not include Corporate PIs)



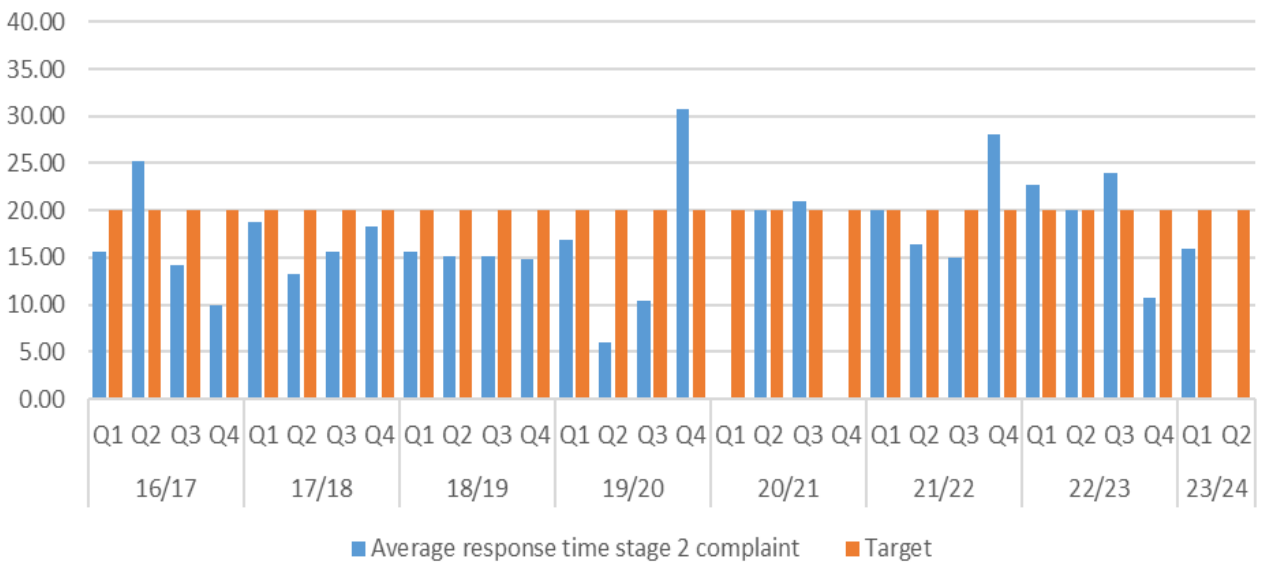
CSPC.MPI.07 % of internal/external audit actions progressing on target or complete this quarter.



CS.SPSO.04.1 Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 1



CS.SPSO.04.2 Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 2



The Promise

The Promise work continues to drive forward our children's service improvements.
Plan 21-24: Priority Areas

19 A Good Childhood
23 Whole Family Support
26 Supporting the Workforce
29 Planning
32 Building Capacity

Our Family wellbeing service which offers holistic family support is established and whilst there is still work to do we are on track to offering services to families that will ensure they do not escalate into social work services. An area for noting is around the workforce. There is a local and national workforce issue within social work and social care. Difficulties around recruitment and retention are very live issues across all services. Whilst we are doing everything possible to ensure the workforce is supported through this difficult time there needs to be recognition that there is no quick solution to this problem and having sufficient staff who are experienced to undertake their statutory duties is becoming more difficult. We are linked in with national groups to ensure we are learning from others and making those that need to be aware are mindful of this predicament.

Referrals:

Work is being progressed and is almost complete around gaining a clearer understanding on how all referrals come into the service.

This has been a significant piece of work involving many stakeholders. Within Q2 there is a 7% decrease compared to last year at this time and a 12% decrease in referrals from Q1. The impact of this piece of work is already evidencing positive results. This said the complexity of the referrals coming into the service remains high however it is hoped that we shall offer a much improved service

Family Wellbeing Service

The service has had a significant amount of training on offer to the new workforce to ensure they have a good understanding of their role going forward. They are already working with over 100 children and young people. We have an independent person undertaking a review of what voluntary support we can buy-in to support this service. It is hoped this shall be concluded by the end of October. Arrival of Ukrainian Families and Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC). We continue to welcome Ukrainian families into Midlothian adopting a holistic approach to the support on offer. We are confident that our steady and thorough approach to this work has ensured that we are robust in the work we are undertaking.

Looked After away from home population

The data evidences that our looked after population is fairly static bearing in mind data changes on a daily basis. These stats are testament to the workforce ensuring that they support families to remain together, where safe to do so. The introduction of

Family Group decision making, supports families to devise a plan which promotes families staying together with support from extended family, it is too early to advise if this is reason for this consistent decline in numbers. Child Protection has reduced from last quarter however domestic abuse remains the main reason children's names are on the CP Register.

Self-Directed Support

We continue to work tirelessly to ensure that families had access to funding if assessed as in need . The summer period is often a challenge for families trying to identify sufficient resources for children with additional support needs. Our aim is to start planning for next year so that families are aware of what is available and have choice where their child(ren) can attend.

Trauma Informed Training

We remain committed to ensure all our staff are trauma informed this includes our foster carers. A rolling programme of training is being rolled out across the directorate and Council.

02. Challenges and Risks

Q2 23/24: Challenges and Risks

National Care Service:

The 'Bill' which is currently in Stage 1 of the process is delayed and being considered with an expectation that the lead committee will provide a report at the start of 2024. CELCIS have been commissioned to undertake research around the inclusion of children's services within the NCS. This work should be concluded by the end of the summer 2023.

Poverty

As families continue to be impacted by the cost-of-living crisis this is expected to lead to an increase in the number of families experiencing poverty. This also applies to workers on low incomes. We are assessing all claims that come into children and families from the Scottish Welfare Fund for early identification of families who may need additional support.

Workforce:

Midlothian continues to experience the same staffing issues encountered by other Councils. There is a general lack of experienced and skilled staff across the sector, and we are having to increasingly rely on locum workers. As reported in other quarters, this is a national issues and discussions have started around A National Social Work Agency which would offer the same terms and conditions across Scotland, similar to that of Police Scotland and Education staff. This would benefit Midlothian if this approach were adopted.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

To date we have 15 unaccompanied asylum seeking children/ young people within the local authority. We have been able to meet the mandated request for UASC. However we are now at a point where we have no local resources if asked to accommodate any more UASC under the age of 16. This is a similar picture across Scotland and not unique to Midlothian.

Increased numbers of children impacted by the delay in neurodevelopmental waiting times:

There is a significant delay in families waiting for an appointment with CAMHS regarding neurodevelopment concerns. Not all cases will require clinical input from CAMHS however we are looking at how we can work together to consider how we best support families whilst on the waiting list. We continue to work with partners to explore how best to meet the current demands and pressure whilst making sure we future proof our services to deliver sustainable options locally for children and young people with ASN and Complex and Enduring Needs.

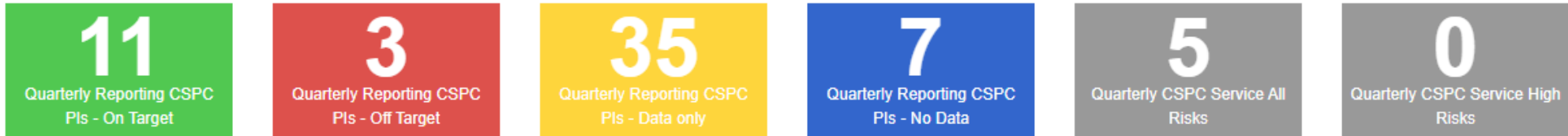
Foster Care

Given the local and national foster care crisis we are about to commence a new advertising campaign to hopefully generate prospective carers for teenagers and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people. We are in the midst of recruiting permanent staff to take this piece of work forward. Given that we already offer training to prospective foster carers with other local authorities, we are about to commence discussions around a joined up approach to recruitment.

Financial Pressures

Finance is an ongoing challenge and whilst Q1 reporting looks positive, the request for one placement within secure care or an additional external placement could potentially change our financial position going forward.

Quarter 2 - Children's Services Partnership and Communities-



Quarterly Reporting PIs - Off Target

Code & Title	Gauge	Value	Target	Next Update Due	Last Update	History
CSPC.MPI.07 % of internal/external audit actions progressing on target or complete t...		69.23%	95%	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	
CS.SPSO.04.1 Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 1		6.5	5	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	
CS.SPSO.05.1 Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working days		0%	95%	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	

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Corporate Solutions Performance Report Q2 23/24

Corporate Solutions will “deliver forward looking services fit for a modern 21st Century organisation and put the citizen at the centre of Service Redesign”.

Corporate Solutions encompasses Human Resources, Digital, Customer & Communication, Legal & Governance, Corporate Resources, Transformation PMO and Continuous Improvement.

Corporate Solutions supports the whole Council delivering services to internal and external stakeholders; playing a key role in the delivery of the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy and ensuring organisational compliance, developing the workforce, and advancing transformation.

Transformation and opportunities

Transformation Blueprint (2023-2028)

We are committed to building on the learning and new ways of working that were adopted during the pandemic and renewing our focus on delivering our key priorities at the most local level possible. Rooted in the creation of a wellbeing economy, the vision of our new 5-year strategy focuses on reducing inequalities at the same time as looking after the health of our planet. Specifically, we have three main aims:

- Individuals and communities have improved health and learning outcomes.
- No child or household live in poverty.
- Significant progress is made towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

The pandemic has accelerated the financial challenges that we are facing. Reprioritisation and redesign is crucial to balancing the financial position, as well as preparing for further challenges, continued growth and unknown changes that we will face.

The Blueprint sets out key areas of concern that need to be addressed over the next five years. We will continue to work to address the inequalities that our communities face, respond to the demands of being the fastest growing local authority in mainland Scotland, and delivering our vision of being a great, green place to grow.

Transformation Blueprint Objectives

1. Support the Council to address the 5-year funding gap outlined in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
2. Follow the Money to ensure that the services we commission, contracts we manage and digital solutions we use deliver value for money.
3. Develop an organisational workforce that is flexible ensuring that all staff have the necessary skills to work effectively supported by digital technologies that fit for a 21st century workforce.
4. Design a workplace for the future delivering services in a holistic and integrated

way.

5. Drive forward multi-agency transformation to deliver systems-level change resulting in joined-up service delivery which improve outcomes.

The Council's transformation blueprint provides the framework for opportunities to change the way services are improved and delivered to be more efficient. Corporate Solutions has a particular focus on the delivery and acceleration of the Capital Programme, delivering digital first approaches, embedding automation to improve customer access to services and hybrid working.

Challenges

Financial position

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 challenges.

Financial Services continues to ensure the Council has robust financial management arrangements in place with a full suite of financial monitoring reports for quarter two 23/24, presented to Council in November 2023. The team continue to provide in-depth financial input to key revenues and capital projects embedded into the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Growing Council

In recent Census results, Midlothian is projected to have the highest percentage change in population size of all mainland council areas in Scotland with an increase of 16%. In addition, Midlothian has 10 zones which fall into the most deprived areas giving a local share of 8.7% living in the most deprived areas in Scotland.

This growth creates the opportunity to meet housing need with 25% of new homes being built in the affordable housing provision, in addition to the expansion in our Council house building. This construction directly supports employment and will see a steady increase in the value of Council Tax income received over time.

To ensure Midlothian is 'building back better', this investment is also creating new jobs, apprenticeship opportunities, opportunities for businesses and communities and families hard-hit by the impact of the pandemic. These new opportunities help lead the way towards a better future for Midlothian.

Midlothian's approved Capital Strategy sets out the infrastructure required to meet those demographic pressures and includes the financial contributions Midlothian will make to the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal. Encompassing five main themes the City Region Deal will bring significant investment across the regions with total investment of circa £1.3 billion across:

- Data Driven Innovation: £751 million
- Integrated Regional Employability and Skills: £25 million
- Transport: £156 million
- Culture: £45 million
- Housing: £313 million

Through the Data Driven Innovation strand the Deal will leverage existing world-class research institutes and commercialisation facilities in order that Easter Bush becomes a global location of Agritech excellence. The Easter Bush project includes significant investment in transport infrastructure along the A701/2 transport corridor. In addition, by improving on-site infrastructure at Easter Bush and transport infrastructure, The University of Edinburgh expects commercial partners will be able to co-locate at scale to commercialise Agritech breakthroughs.

The Capital Investment Strategy sits centrally within the Council's future planning activities and in doing so has to reflect the demands of Council services to ensure positive outcomes are achieved in the right place, at the right time for the maximum benefit to Midlothian. The extensive capital programme delivers new schools, a record investment in council housing, improved community infrastructure, investment in the local transport network and in innovative developments such as the new low carbon heat network in Shawfair.

Economic pressures

Inflation, as well as rising energy costs, are affecting the construction industry in Scotland. The UK is 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 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.

Cost of Living Crisis

Midlothian's citizens are facing significant financial challenges. The impact on households is already being noted across the UK with 93% of adults reporting an increase in their cost of living in March 2023 ([Office for National Statistics; Francis-Devine et al, 2022](#)). The UK is currently facing an unprecedented wave of increasing prices, bills and tax challenges. The 41 year high inflation rate of 10.4% is the main driver of the cost of living crisis which has outstripped wage and benefit increases. The price rises will impact low-income households hardest as a larger proportion of their costs are on energy and food. The Resolution Foundation estimates that absolute poverty is set to rise in the short-run, from 17.2% in 2021-22 to 18.3% in 2023/24 (or an additional 800,000 people in poverty).

As our citizens feel the impact of the Cost of Living Crisis, they will seek additional support from public services; in particular local authorities. To respond to this emerging crisis, the Council established a Cost of Living Task Force last year, which is chaired by the Council Leader and meets regularly to coordinate mitigating activities.

National Care Service

The estimated funding gap for the next three financial years does not include the associated costs of the Scottish Government's National Care Services (Scotland) Bill. If enacted, the bill would have fundamental implications for the community and for Local Government itself. The wide reaching changes in the bill aim to deliver a National Care Service by the end of the parliamentary term, which will impact on all aspects of the work of the Corporate Solutions team, including financial implications, in both revenue and capital, our asset base, our workforce, governance and legal arrangements and our digital infrastructure and platforms. It will require an immediate focus for the foreseeable future, and this will inevitably have implications for other priority work at a time of continued resource constraint.

Risk

The Council's Strategic Risk Profile is presented retrospectively to Audit Committee quarterly. The most critical risks to the Council are Financial Sustainability, Climate Change and the Change Programme. Corporate Solutions is key to the delivery of mitigating actions to these risks; through strategic planning and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and driving forward the Council's transformation programme to derive change and redesign services.

Customer Engagement

Aligned to the Transformation Blueprint, priorities for 2023/24, key work streams below:

Short term:

- Continued rollout and implementation of Customer Service Platform
- Reviewing service delivery across all Contact Centre teams
- Increased use of eBooks
- Active promotion of library space for Council and partner services, and enable out of hours access for communities

Medium term:

- Rollout of the Hub & Spoke model with libraries providing and facilitating increased local service provision
- Customer Engagement Strategy development including revised communications and engagement plan

Long term:

- Increase income within Registrars through alternative ceremony offer
- Community and school library redesign; including the mobile library service

Key achievements this quarter:

Summer Reading Challenge

This quarter was a hugely successful year for the Summer Reading Challenge. The theme was Ready, Set, Read! based around the power of play, sport and games. Over 1,000 children signed up for the challenge (a 15% increase on last year) with 55% of those completing the challenge (a 4% increase on the numbers finishing last year). Nearly 130 events were attended by over 4,000 children and their families and over 21,000 items of junior stock were issued over July and August. Libraries saw 668 new child memberships which reflects the positive engagement of the Summer Reading Challenge.

"Thank you for a lovely afternoon at the Summer Reading Challenge presentation. What an incredible turnout and a wonderful way to celebrate the children's reading achievements. It is so heartening to see Dalkeith Library being a central hub for the community; long may that continue. Well done to the team and thank you again."

"The Summer Reading Challenge is a family tradition now! We love it!"

"Was great coming to the library cause I get bored during the holidays, and loved collecting the stickers, and I won a prize for the most basketballs in the net"

"They (children) love seeing their name on the chart"

Lend and Mend Hub

August saw the official launch of Gorebridge Library's Lend and Mend Hub with 30 people attending the opening event. The Hub provides free access to sewing machines and other equipment to allow communities to repair, re-use and upcycle their own items. Gorebridge is one of nine library partners across Scotland in a project funded by the John Lewis Partnership's Circular Future Fund and managed through SLIC (the Scottish Library and Information Council).

Taking a co-design approach, the hubs have been developed with insight and expertise from local teams and library members to ensure services are tailored to community needs. Funding granted from The John Lewis Partnership's £1m Circular Future Fund has been used for the equipment, training and space upgrades needed to deliver the projects. Following their launch, each library hub will also introduce an education programme to support new skills development, helping to reduce inequality through equitable access to resources. The first focus will be on 'mending', and several workshops and sessions have already been held with groups such as the SHRUB Cooperative, to teach people the first steps of repairing and re-making.

This is an example of how the library service is transforming and thriving, responding to community needs and giving people access to resources that they may not otherwise have. In line with the Council's commitment to Net Zero by 2030 and the Climate Change Strategy, the promotion of circular economy activities can change the way we use and consume to make the way we live greener, as well as upskill residents and foster new social connections. It is anticipated that this pilot will help develop a long-term model for libraries to be a hub of circular economy activities and work is ongoing to identify external funding to roll out Lend and Mend in other locations within the county.

Channel shift

Channel shift work continues with the introduction of the 'Contact Us' module and grit bin service request application. Several other service requests are in test phase and due to go live in the coming weeks focused around waste services. Data shows a slight decrease in telephone calls and a small increase in customer contact received digitally. Overall, customer contact volumes remain consistent compared to those figures for the same period last year. Call abandonment rate has improved to 5% this quarter from 9% in Q4. This abandonment rate calculates the total number of calls that come into the call queue and then leave the queue. There is no ability to ask why calls are abandoned - callers may choose to hang up because they would rather not wait, or they have called at an inopportune time. Front-end messages are updated on contact centre lines to provide information to the customer waiting, for example, if a whole street of bins had been missed, this would be reflected in the front-end message. Lines also have messages directing people online to carry out transactional activity.

Communications and promotion

Our communication and marketing team continue to support services across the Council by promoting key initiatives on our social media platforms, news releases, website and community radio channel. Successes this quarter include:

Encouraging eligible families to apply for free school meals and clothing grants through a dedicated communications campaign. Short videos were created with school children and the Council's food

nutritionist and posted across all social media platforms. Facebook and Twitter posts featured key messages pointing people back to the Free School Meals/Clothing Grant webpages to apply. As a result, in terms of the webforms being received, the majority of those were applications for these supports. The best performing Facebook post reached 8,077 views and 5,635 views via Twitter.

Maximising participation of the annual summer reading challenge in libraries. The best performing Facebook post reached 15,621 news feeds with 589 people engaging, and this year had a 15% increase in participation in the challenge as noted above.

Increasing application rates for short term lets through clear communication on our website and social media platform. The best performing Facebook post reached 7,719 news feed and 1,480 views via Twitter.

Promotion of customer consultations and surveys including:

- Fostering campaign (led externally and supported by the Council's communications service)
- Auchendinny to Rosewell stretch of Core Path (best performing social media post reached 80,468 news feeds with 7,824 engagements)
- Newtongrange former pool site (a series of scheduled Facebook posts publicising an in-person consultation event and signposting to an online questionnaire had a total reach of 112,814)
- Midlothian Local Development Plan engagement actions (Facebook posts for the development plan, with a total reach of 22,066, engagement rate 2825 (12%) and Facebook posts for open space strategy, with a total reach of 16,722, total engagement was 759 (4.5%)).

Human Resources

To achieve the Council's strategic priorities, we recognise that people are our most important asset. Our workforce strategy highlights that we need to attract the best talent, grow our own talent ensuring there are clear progression pathways, ensure our workforce feel engaged, valued and motivated and importantly, empower our staff to enable them to reach their full potential.

Our workforce vision is to work as **One Council** using our knowledge, experiences and sense of shared endeavour to collaborate and think creatively and innovatively so that our people can deliver life-changing impacts for our communities. Our new ways of working mark a clear desire for cultural change and a shift towards a more agile and modern operating model.

Our workforce are key to the delivery of the Transformation Blueprint. In order to ensure a thriving workforce areas of focus for 2023/24 will be:

- Investment in Organisational Development through a focused programme of work
- Completion of workforce plans in all services, with a particular focus in at risk areas
- Rollout of the Wellbeing Strategy
- Delivery of the Recruitment and Retention Strategy

Key achievements this quarter:

Wellbeing

Work continues on the development of our Wellbeing Strategy which will focus on the financial, physical, and psychological wellbeing of our workforce and ensure employees have access to advice, guidance and initiatives which support their health and wellbeing.

The rolling programme of Wellness@Midlothian initiatives continues this quarter to ensure we are supporting the positive health and wellbeing of our staff. Wellbeing events and initiatives including on-site visits, webinars, e-learning and training have been organised for the remainder of 2023. The coaching programme rolled out this quarter was well received and resource is being explored to build on this programme and provide additional support to managers.

During July to September 2023, 16 wellbeing events were held internally and externally covering cost of living supports, wellbeing and mental health awareness, health checks and coaching. 110 staff attended various events organised in house. Events included on site visits by Capital Credit Union, webinars from Money Advice Scotland, drop in sessions from Citizen Advice in Midlothian, Trauma Level 1 & 2 courses, SQA Coping Strategies Course, a Mindfulness course delivered by Health and Social Care Partnership, health checks from Sport & Leisure and the first tranche of our Edinburgh College Coaching Course.

The HR team have been working with procurement to renew the contracts for physiotherapy provision for staff and the non-financial benefits platform. Non-financial benefits will be relaunched during Q3 to enable savings for the Christmas period.

21st century workforce - workforce strategy, recruitment and retention

Activity is ongoing to develop and implement the work streams under our workforce strategy, and progress Blueprint theme 2 '21st century workforce'. A consultation has taken place with the Trade Unions on what potential changes needs to take place to disciplinary, resolution, maximising attendance at work, performance improvement policies and these will be included in the transformation workstream plan.

The introduction of shared cost additional voluntary contributions has been approved and work is now underway with procurement and Employment and Reward for implementation. When finalised, a communications plan will support the roll out to all staff to encourage take up to the scheme.

A new programme for welcome, induction, long service recognition and leavers has been developed. This includes a refreshed face to face induction programme for all new staff and existing staff in changed roles; and will be supported by a range of online resources provided at onboarding. 2024 will also see the introduction of long service recognition and a revised approach to learning from employees exiting the organisation, enabling us to learn from employee experiences, understand the reasons for leaving and promote Midlothian as an employer of choice.

Digital Services

Digital solutions underpin the Transformation Blueprint. Key work streams for 23/24 include:

- Review and refresh of the Council's Digital Strategy, including reprioritisation of projects to enable change and transformation
- Development of a Data Strategy and pilot projects such as the secure sharing and analysis of collective, operational level NHS & Council data
- Continued rollout of compliance and cyber security protective measures, including attainment of PSN and Cyber Essentials certification, and actioning any related recommendations
- Implementation of Microsoft O365 capabilities and applications to enable organisational efficiencies, collaboration and data driven decision making
- Delivering service improvements in frontline teams through projects such as digital transformation of Neighbourhood Services

- Continue the roll-out of the Customer Services Platform to promote channel shift
- Equipped for Learning: upgrade classroom Audio Visual estate with interactive smart screens and support the pilot of Virtual Class delivery
- Upgrading Call Centre digital infrastructure elements
- Refreshing / improving quality and coverage of corporate WiFi network
- Ensure all digital aspects of Council operations are well supported and operational

Key achievements this quarter:

The Office 365 rollout programme continues this quarter with core applications deployed to 50% of all council users after the delivery of multiple cross Council employee training sessions. The launch of the expanded MS teams functionality creates department and project channels for collaboration and file sharing. Efficiency tools have been launched including planner and whiteboard. Linkage (federation) of Microsoft account with NHS and other local authorities enabling chat, video-calling, and efficient calendar appointment scheduling (free/busy status visibility).

As part of the equipped for learning project, 182 panels (interactive smart boards) were upgraded across 12 schools this quarter.

Cyber Security resilience: Qualys scanning completed to identify and reduce vulnerabilities across the network.

Core Infrastructure improvements this quarter:

- Education access and utilisation of the internet is now more secure via the *LightSpeed* roll-out which blocks inappropriate websites, and alerts staff to any potentially concerning internet searches/usage from pupils. As of Q2, 96% of devices across Education are now running Lightspeed.
- CITRIX environment fully upgraded to provide enhanced performance and security.
- Replacement of ageing air con units in the Fairfield and Midlothian comms rooms now significantly reduces the risk of critical outage due to over-heating server equipment.
- Replacement of the ageing and out of support WiFi hardware giving improved coverage and performance across Midlothian House and Fairfield House.
- Successful upgrade to new hyperconverged hardware (Corporate Nutanix) and migration of 130 servers.
- New switching technologies successfully installed to support the upcoming upgrade and hardware replacement for Commvault backup system.
- New modular units have been cabled for networking and telephony in Kings Park, Rosewell, Roslin and LWHSC.

Corporate Resources

Key priorities for the service in 2023/24

- Redesign of business processes to achieve efficiencies across all of Corporate Resources
- Making more use of current applications to enable self-service e.g., viewing Council Tax and rent accounts online
- Continued upgrade of applications

Key achievements this quarter:

As part of the UK government's support to consumers with their energy costs this winter via the Energy Bills Support Scheme (EBSS) and Alternative Fuel Payments (AFP), Business Services successfully administered these schemes this quarter through verification of applications against the criteria set by UK government, approval/rejection of application and payments to successful applicants. Over 7300 direct payments were made for Free School Meals during holidays, Energy Bill Support Scheme, Ukrainian Host Payments and Business Covid Recovery Grants.

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The percentage of current housing rent arrears sits at 11.77%, a slight increase from this period last year of 10.45%. In year Council tax collected year to date is 52.4% showing a decrease from collection rates this time last year of 54.8%.

Legal and Governance

Key priorities for the service in 2023/24:

- Delivery of the 2024 UK Government elections including voter Identity implementation
- Review of the Council's governance framework with revised Standing Orders and Associated Scheme(s)
- Implementation of the new Subject Access Request portal
- Development of the new Procurement Strategy, with a focus on social value, the introduction of a Council wide approach to Community Benefits, and an increased focus on local procurement
- Aligned to the Transformation Blueprint, undertake a review of Contract and Grant Management

Key achievements this quarter:

Legal: This quarter, legal services negotiated and concluded 3 settlement agreements via ACAS in respect of 3 Employment Tribunal complaints. Section 75 agreements were settled for Newbyres, Gorebridge for 96 homes and a small-scale housing development at Roberston Bank, Gorebridge with in house legal fee received. In addition, 3 land sales for garden sales were completed, 1 minute of waiver, 1 tree preservation order, 1 charging order and the completion of 4 house purchases on the open market to support the Council's social housing programme.

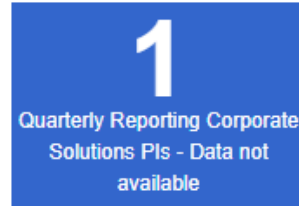
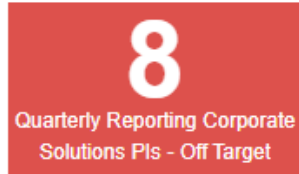
Attendance in court to protect Council's interests and to deliver suitable outcomes for children and vulnerable adults and input was provided to the Mental Health Law Review consultation.

Procurement: The Procurement Service welcomed a new Interim Procurement Manager to lead the team this quarter after almost a 12-month vacancy in this role. Significant work has been undertaken since this appointment was made including:

- An overhaul of the Contract Database
- Procurement have researched and investigated the use of a Concession contract, identifying and benchmarked a suitable tender and prepared all necessary tender documentation including suitable Terms and Conditions with support from legal services.
- The Council's standard Terms and Conditions for all other contracts have been updated with support from legal services.
- The procurement strategy peer review process has been streamlined to ensure audit trail and accountability.
- The Non-Competitive forms and templates have been reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with Regulations and Standing Orders.

A short life working group has been established to review contracts within Health and Social Care including the appointment of a dedicated Procurement Officer. A programme of work is being developed to bring all off-contract spend onto relevant frameworks. A key piece of work that has commenced with HSCP and Procurement is involvement in the development of the Scotland Excel (SXL) Care and Support Contract which SXL are retendering with a go live date of April 2024. This approach provides a route to compliant commissioning for almost £16.5m of social care expenditure. It is anticipated that this would reduce the resource that would need to be invested in commissioning and avoid costs associated with a recommissioning / tendering process and could potentially mitigate some of the inflationary budget risks associated with a recommissioning exercise. Programmes of work like this are part of the Transformation Blueprint 'Follow the Money' theme, looking at commissioning, contracting and identifying savings and efficiencies that can be made across the organisation.

Quarter 2 - Corporate Solutions-



Quarterly Reporting Corporate Solutions PIs - Off Target						
Code & Title	Gauge	Value	Target	Last Update	History	
CORP.DIGITAL.11 % of IT helpdesk incidents complete within 48 hours		49%	60%	Q2 2023/24		
CSE.LPI.03 Average processing time for new claims (internally calculated) (quarterly)		46 days	25 days	Q2 2023/24		
CSE.LPI.04 Average processing time for change of circumstances (internally calculated)		17 days	8 days	Q2 2023/24		
CORPS.MPI.01 Performance against revenue budget		£25.671m	£25.062m	Q2 2023/24		
RHM.r.01.1 % of in-year Council Tax collected ytd (cumulative)		52.4%	95.2%	Q2 2023/24		
RHM.r.02.1 % of current Housing Rent arrears (total)		11.77%	7.5%	September 2023		
CORPS.SPSO.05.1 Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working days		88.89%	95%	Q2 2023/24		
CORPS.SPSO.05.3 Percentage of complaints escalated and complete within 20 working days		66.67%	95%	Q2 2023/24		

← 1 of 1 →

Corporate Solutions Q2 23/24 Performance report

Corporate Solutions will “deliver forward looking services fit for a modern 21st Century organisation and put the citizen at the centre of service redesign”.

Corporate Solutions encompasses Human Resources, Digital, Customer & Communication, Legal & Governance, Corporate Resources, Transformation PMO and Continuous Improvement.

Corporate Solutions supports the whole Council delivering services to internal and external stakeholders; playing a key role in the delivery of the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy and ensuring organisational compliance, developing the workforce, and advancing transformation.

Transformation and opportunities

Transformation Blueprint (2023-2028)

We are committed to building on the learning and new ways of working that were adopted during the pandemic, and renew our focus on delivering our key priorities at the most local level possible. Rooted in the creation of a wellbeing economy, the vision of our new 5 year strategy focuses on reducing inequalities at the same time as looking after the health of our planet. Specifically, we have three main aims:

- Individuals and communities have improved health and learning outcomes.
- No child or household live in poverty.
- Significant progress is made towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

The pandemic has accelerated the financial challenges that we are facing. Reprioritisation and redesign is crucial to balancing the financial position, as well as preparing for further challenges and changes that we will face.

The Blueprint sets out our challenges that need to be addressed over the next five years. We will continue to work to address the inequalities that our communities face, respond to the demands of being one of the fastest growing local authorities in mainland Scotland, and delivering our vision of being a great, green place to grow.

Transformation Blueprint Objectives

1. Support the Council to address the 5-year funding gap outlined in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
2. Follow the Money to ensure that the services we commission, contracts we manage and digital solutions we use deliver value for money.
3. Develop an organisational workforce that is flexible ensuring that all staff have the necessary skills to work effectively supported by digital technologies that fit for a 21st century workforce.
4. Design a workplace for the future delivering services in a holistic and integrated way.
5. Drive forward multi-agency transformation to deliver systems-level change resulting in joined-up service delivery which improve outcomes.

The Council's transformation blueprint provides the framework for opportunities to change the way services are improved and delivered to be more efficient. Corporate Solutions has a particular focus on the delivery and acceleration of the Capital Programme, delivering digital first approaches, embedding automation to improve customer access to services and hybrid working.

Customer Engagement

Aligned to the Transformation Blueprint, priorities for 2023/24, key work streams below:

Short term:

- Continued rollout and implementation of Customer Service Platform
- Reviewing service delivery all across Contact Centre teams
- Increased use of eBooks
- Active promotion of library space, for Council and partner services, and enable out of hours access for communities

Medium term:

- Rollout of the Hub & Spoke model with libraries providing and facilitating increased local service provision
- Customer Engagement Strategy development including revised communications and engagement plan

Long term:

- Increase income within Registrars through alternative ceremony offer
- Community and school library redesign; including the mobile library service

Key achievements this quarter:

Summer Reading Challenge

This quarter was a hugely successful year for the Summer Reading Challenge. The theme was Ready, Set, Read! based around the power of play, sport and games. Over 1,000 children signed up for the challenge (a 15% increase on last year) with 55% of those completing the challenge (a 4% increase on the numbers finishing last year). Nearly 130 events were attended by over 4,000 children and their families and over 21,000 items of junior stock were issued over July and August. Libraries saw 668 new child memberships which reflects the positive engagement of the Summer Reading Challenge.

"Thank you for a lovely afternoon at the Summer Reading Challenge presentation. What an incredible turnout and a wonderful way to celebrate the children's reading achievements. It is so heartening to see Dalkeith Library being a central hub for the community; long may that continue. Well done to the team and thank you again."

"The Summer Reading Challenge is a family tradition now! We love it!"

"They (children) love seeing their name on the chart"

"Was great coming to the library cause I get bored during the holidays, and loved collecting the stickers, and I won a prize for the most basketballs in the net"

Lend and Mend Hub

August saw the official launch of Gorebridge Library's Lend and Mend Hub with 30 people attending the opening event. The Hub provides free access to sewing machines and other equipment to allow communities to repair, re-use and upcycle their own items. Gorebridge is one of nine library partners across Scotland in a project funded by the John Lewis Partnership's Circular Future Fund and managed through SLIC (the Scottish Library and Information Council).

Taking a co-design approach, the hubs have been developed with insight and expertise from local teams and library members to ensure services are tailored to community needs. Funding granted from The John Lewis Partnership's £1m Circular Future Fund has been used for the equipment, training and space upgrades needed to deliver the projects. Following their launch, each library hub will also introduce an education programme to support new skills development, helping to reduce inequality through equitable access to resources. The first focus will be on 'mending', and several workshops and sessions have already been held with groups such as the SHRUB Cooperative, to teach people the first steps of repairing and re-making.

This is an example of how the library service is transforming and thriving, responding to community needs and giving people access to resources that they may not otherwise have. In line with the Council's commitment to Net Zero by 2030 and the Climate Change Strategy, the promotion of circular economy activities can change the way we use and consume to make the way we live greener, as well as upskill residents and foster new social connections. It is anticipated that this pilot will help develop a long-term model for libraries to be a hub of circular economy activities and work is ongoing to identify external funding to roll out Lend and Mend in other locations within the county.

Channel shift

Channel shift work continues with the introduction of the 'Contact Us' module and grit bin service request application. Several other service requests are in test phase and due to go live in the coming weeks focused around waste services. Data shows a slight decrease in telephone calls and a small increase in customer contact received digitally. Overall, customer contact volumes remain consistent compared to those figures for the same period last year. Call abandonment rate has improved to 5% this quarter from 9% in Q4. This abandonment rate calculates the total number of calls that come into the call queue and then leave the queue. There is no ability to ask why calls are abandoned - callers may choose to hang up because they would rather not wait, or they have called at an inopportune time. Front-end messages are updated on contact centre lines to provide information to the customer waiting, for example, if a whole street of bins had been missed, this would be reflected in the front-end message. Lines also have messages directing people online to carry out transactional activity.

Communications and promotion

Our communication and marketing team continue to support services across the Council by promoting key initiatives on our social media platforms, news releases, website and community radio channel. Successes this quarter include:

Encouraging eligible families to apply for free school meals and clothing grants through a dedicated communications campaign. Short videos were created with school children and the Council's food nutritionist and posted across all social media platforms. Facebook and Twitter posts featured key messages pointing people back to the Free School Meals/Clothing Grant webpages to apply. As a result, in terms of the webforms being received, the majority of those were applications for these supports. The best performing Facebook post reached 8,077 views and 5,635 views via Twitter.

Maximising participation of the annual summer reading challenge in libraries. The best performing Facebook post reached 15,621 news feeds with 589 people engaging, and this year had a 15% increase in participation in the challenge as noted above.

Increasing application rates for short term lets through clear communication on our website and social media platform. The best performing Facebook post reached 7,719 news feed and 1,480 views via Twitter.

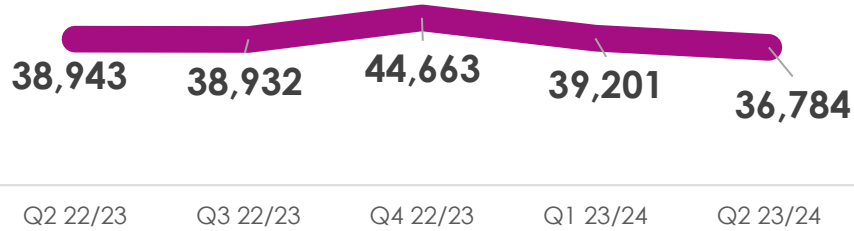
Promotion of customer consultations and surveys including:

- Fostering campaign (led externally and supported by the Council's communications service).
- Auchendinny to Rosewell stretch of Core Path (best performing social media post reached 80,468 news feeds with 7,824 engagements).
- Newtongrange former pool site (a series of scheduled Facebook posts publicising an in-person consultation event and signposting to an online questionnaire had a total reach of 112,814).
- Midlothian Local Development Plan engagement actions (Facebook posts for the development plan, with a total reach of 22,066, engagement rate 2,825 (12%) and Facebook posts for open space strategy, with a total reach of 16,722, total engagement was 759 (4.5%)).

Customer Engagement – performance measures

Customer contact

Number of Contact Centre calls



78%
of calls in Q2
answered within
120 seconds

Social Media

21.2k Midlothian
Council Facebook
followers

17.9k @midgov
twitter followers

18.5% Customer
contact received **digitally**
(webform versus telephone)
from 14.1% in Q1

12,855

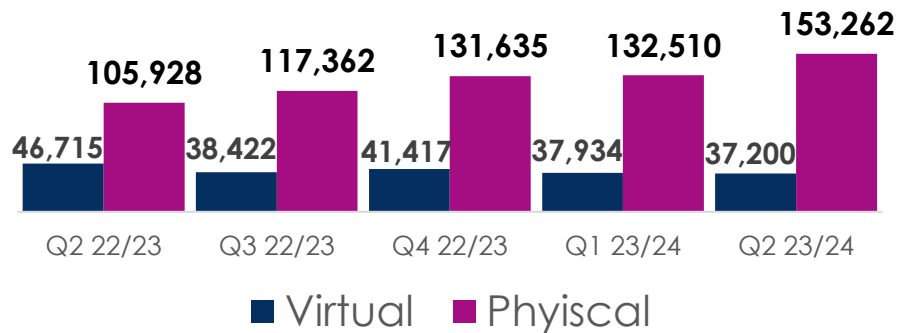
Email contact handled in
Q2 (decrease from 13,583 in Q1)

2,588

Contact Centre
Webforms received
(decrease from 3,106 in Q1)

Library services

Number of Library visits



1,447 Library events held in Q2

Number of Library memberships



961 Children's library initiatives taken place in Q2

478

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Library customers supported with digital queries in Q2

Human Resources

To achieve the Council's strategic priorities, we recognise that people are our most important asset. Our workforce strategy highlights that we need to attract the best talent, grow our own talent ensuring there are clear progression pathways, ensure our workforce feel engaged, valued and motivated and importantly, empower our staff to enable them to reach their full potential.

Our workforce vision is to work as **One Council** using our knowledge, experiences and sense of shared endeavour to collaborate and think creatively and innovatively so that our people can deliver life-changing impacts for our communities. Our new ways of working mark a clear desire for cultural change and a shift towards a more agile and modern operating model.

Our workforce are key to the delivery of the Transformation Blueprint. In order to ensure a thriving workforce areas of focus for 2023/24 will be:

- Investment in Organisational Development through a focused programme of work
- Completion of workforce plans in all services, with a particular focus in at risk areas
- Rollout of the Wellbeing Strategy
- Delivery of the Recruitment and Retention Strategy

Key achievements this quarter:

Wellbeing

Work continues on the development of our Wellbeing Strategy which will focus on the financial, physical, and psychological wellbeing of our workforce and ensure employees have access to advice, guidance and initiatives which support their health and wellbeing.

The rolling programme of Wellness@Midlothian initiatives continues this quarter to ensure we are supporting the positive health and wellbeing of our staff. Wellbeing events and initiatives including on-site visits, webinars, e-learning and training have been organised for the remainder of 2023. The coaching programme rolled out this quarter was well received and resource is being explored to build on this programme and provide additional support to managers.

During July to September 2023, 16 wellbeing events were held internally and externally covering cost of living supports, wellbeing and mental health awareness, health checks and coaching. 110 staff attended various events organised in house. Events included on site visits by Capital Credit Union,

webinars from Money Advice Scotland, drop in sessions from Citizen Advice in Midlothian, Trauma Level 1 & 2 courses, SQA Coping Strategies Course, a Mindfulness course delivered by Health and Social Care Partnership, health checks from Sport & Leisure and the first tranche of our Edinburgh College Coaching Course.

The HR team have been working with procurement to renew the contracts for physiotherapy provision for staff and the non-financial benefits platform. Non-financial benefits will be relaunched during Q3 to enable savings for the Christmas period.

21st century workforce - workforce strategy, recruitment and retention

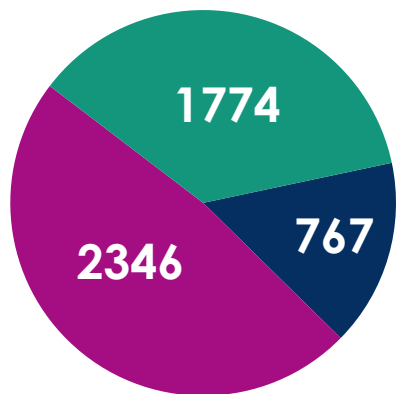
Activity is ongoing to develop and implement the work streams under our workforce strategy, and progress Blueprint theme 2 '21st century workforce'. A consultation has taken place with the Trade Unions on what potential changes needs to take place to disciplinary, resolution, maximising attendance at work, performance improvement policies and these will be included in the transformation workstream plan.

The introduction of shared cost additional voluntary contributions has been approved and work is now underway with procurement and Employment and Reward for implementation. When finalised, a communications plan will support the roll out to all staff to encourage take up to the scheme.

A new programme for welcome, induction, long service recognition and leavers has been developed. This includes a refreshed face to face induction programme for all new staff and existing staff in changed roles; and will be supported by a range of online resources provided at onboarding. 2024 will also see the introduction of long service recognition and a revised approach to learning from employees exiting the organisation, enabling us to learn from employee experiences, understand the reasons for leaving and promote Midlothian as an employer of choice.

Human Resources – performance measures

Workforce demographics



No. of staff by age group

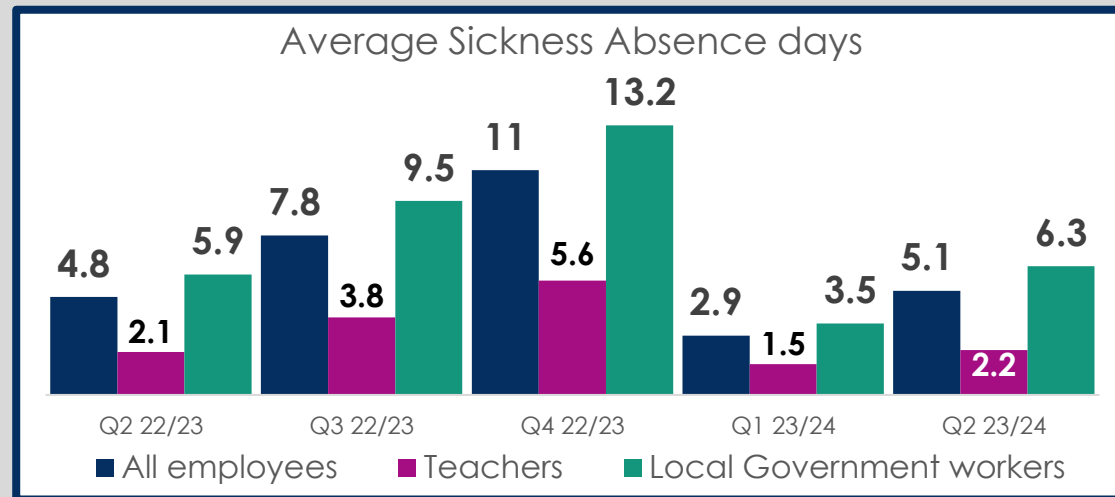
■ 16-30 ■ 31-50 ■ over 50

65%
of employees are
Midlothian Residents

1,177 (24%)
Employees with over
15 years of service

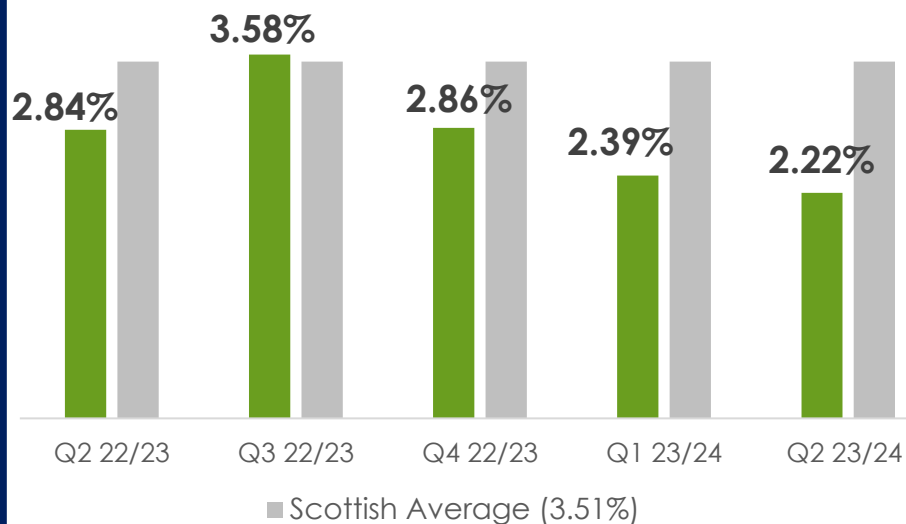
293
Leavers by Q2
(cumulative figure)

Employee Health and Wellbeing



113 female employees in top 5% (108 in Q1 23/24)

Gender pay gap between average hourly rate of pay for male and female (all employees)



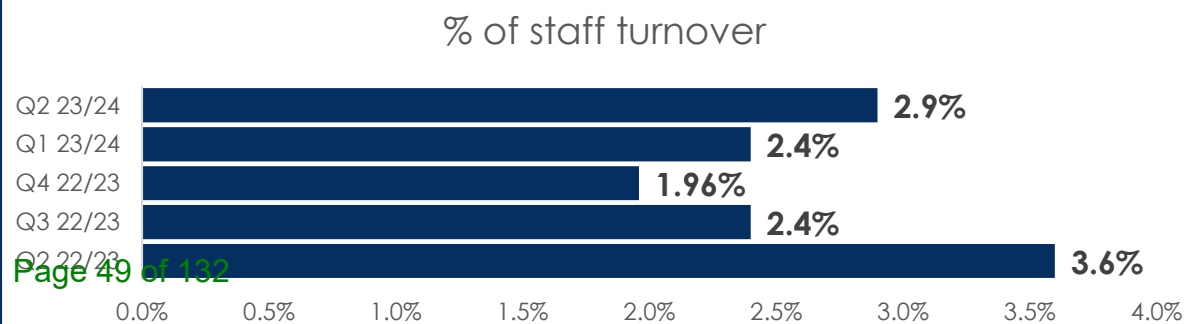
131
Long term
absence
cases
ongoing

104
Occupational
Health referrals
via OHIO
(decrease from
140 in Q1)

28
HR cases in
progress

253
Physiotherapy
referrals made
(decrease from
307 in Q1)

- **16** wellbeing events held this quarter with 110 attendees
- **660** employees accessing **mandatory ELearning courses**
- **1,588** employees accessing **non-mandatory ELearning courses**



Digital

Digital solutions underpin the Transformation Blueprint. Key work streams for 23/24 include:

- Review and refresh of the Council's Digital Strategy, including reprioritisation of projects to enable change and transformation
- Development of a Data Strategy and pilot projects such as the secure sharing and analysis of collective, operational level NHS & Council data
- Continued rollout of compliance and cyber security protective measures, including attainment of PSN and Cyber Essentials certification, and actioning any related recommendations
- Implementation of Microsoft O365 capabilities and applications to enable organisational efficiencies, collaboration and data driven decision making
- Delivering service improvements in frontline teams through projects such as digital transformation of Neighbourhood Services
- Continue the roll-out of the Customer Services Platform to promote channel shift
- Equipped for Learning: upgrade classroom Audio Visual estate with interactive smart screens and support the pilot of Virtual Class delivery
- Upgrading Call Centre digital infrastructure elements
- Refreshing / improving quality and coverage of corporate WiFi network
- Ensure all digital aspects of Council operations are well supported and operational

Key achievements this quarter:

The Office 365 rollout programme continues this quarter with core applications deployed to 50% of all council users after the delivery of multiple cross Council employee training sessions. The launch of the expanded MS teams functionality creates department and project channels for collaboration and file sharing. Efficiency tools have been launched including planner and whiteboard. Linkage (federation) of Microsoft account with NHS and other local authorities enabling chat, video-calling, and efficient calendar appointment scheduling (free/busy status visibility).

As part of the equipped for learning project, 182 panels (interactive smart boards) were upgraded across 12 schools this quarter.

Cyber Security resilience: Qualys scanning completed to identify and reduce vulnerabilities across the network.

Core Infrastructure improvements this quarter:

- Education access and utilisation of the internet is now more secure via the *LightSpeed* roll-out which blocks inappropriate websites, and alerts staff to any potentially concerning internet searches/usage from pupils. As of Q2, 96% of devices across Education are now running Lightspeed.
- CITRIX environment fully upgraded to provide enhanced performance and security.
- Replacement of ageing air con units in the Fairfield and Midlothian comms rooms now significantly reduces the risk of critical outage due to overheating server equipment.
- Replacement of the ageing and out of support WiFi hardware giving improved coverage and performance across Midlothian House and Fairfield House.
- Successful upgrade to new hyperconverged hardware (Corporate Nutanix) and migration of 130 servers.
- New switching technologies successfully installed to support the upcoming upgrade and hardware replacement for Commvault backup system.
- New modular units have been cabled for networking and telephony in Kings Park, Rosewell, Roslin and LWHSC.

Digital – performance measures

Key Digital projects

90%

of Office 365 (phase 1)
project complete

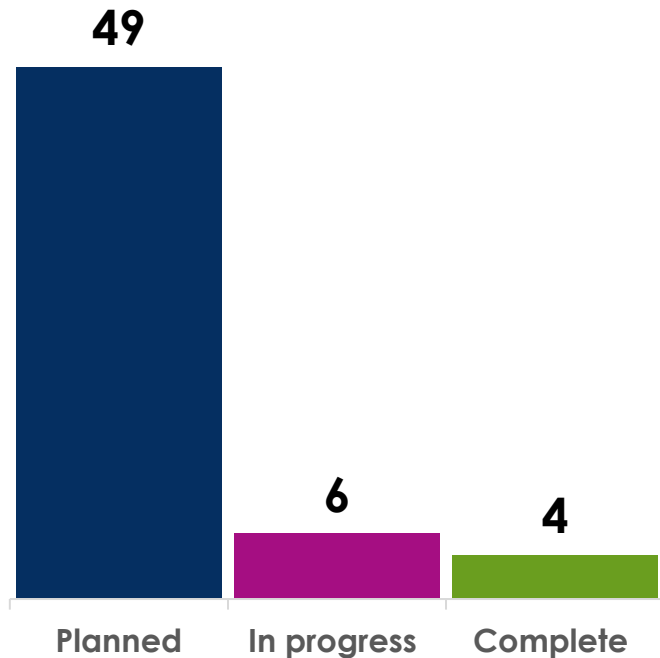
35%

of total CSP (IT foundation
and service modules)
complete

Equipped for Learning

182 panels (interactive smart boards) were upgraded across 12 schools this quarter.

Progress of total number of Customer Service Platform modules



Service and Cyber security performance

242,239

Midlothian Council
Website visits this
quarter (increased by
4,543 since Q1)

% of IT helpdesk incidents
complete within 48 hours

57%

49%

Q1 23/24

Q2 23/24

20% of cyber security
training complete

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100%

of Cyber Essentials and PSN
implemented

Corporate Resources

Key priorities for the service in 2023/24

- Redesign of business processes to achieve efficiencies across all of Corporate Resources
- Making more use of current applications to enable self-service e.g. viewing Council Tax and rent accounts online
- Continued upgrade of applications

Key achievements this quarter:

As part of the UK government's support to consumers with their energy costs this winter via the Energy Bills Support Scheme (EBSS) and Alternative Fuel Payments (AFP), Business Services successfully administered these schemes this quarter through verification of applications against the criteria set by UK government, approval/rejection of application and payments to successful applicants. Over 7300 direct payments were made for Free School Meals during holidays, Energy Bill Support Scheme, Ukrainian Host Payments and Business Covid Recovery Grants.

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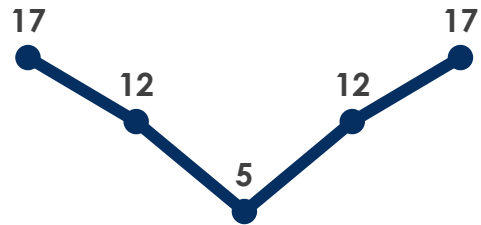
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Corporate Resources – performance measures

Revenues and Benefits

Average processing times (days)

Change of circumstances



New claims

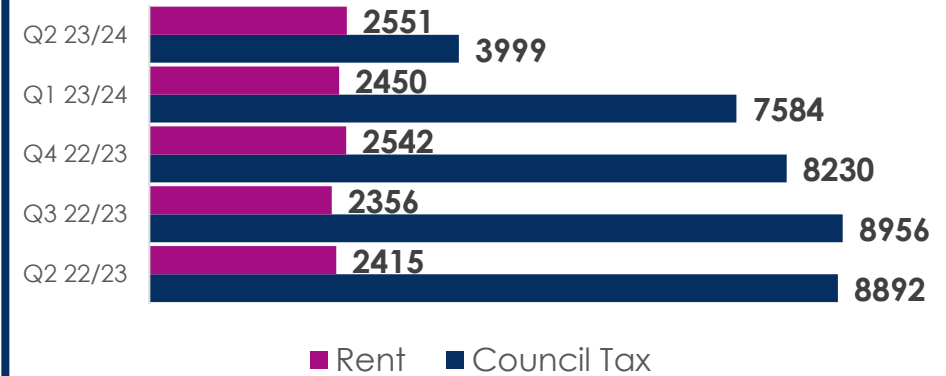


Q2 22/23 Q3 22/23 Q4 22/23 Q1 23/24 Q2 23/24

Q2 22/23 Q3 22/23 Q4 22/23 Q1 23/24 Q2 23/24

77.28% of Revenue and Benefits customer paying by **direct debit**

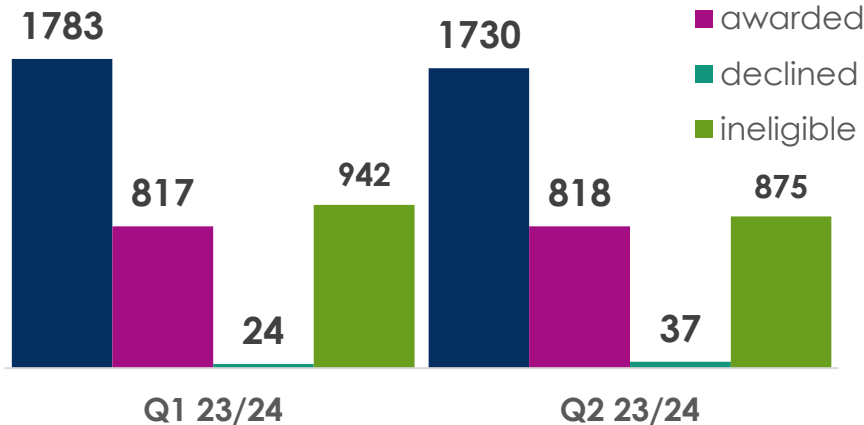
Number of online transactions



Scottish Welfare Fund

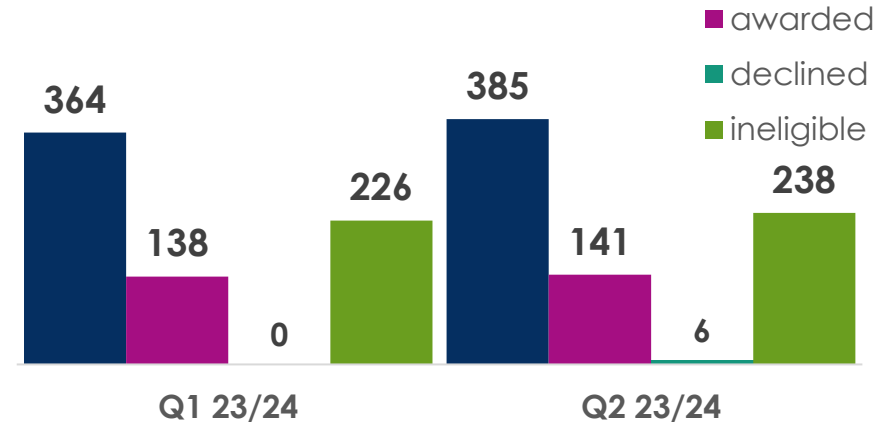
£181,536 granted from Scottish Welfare fund for **crisis grants** **£293,232** granted for **community care grants** up to Q2.

Number of Crisis Grants



49% of Scottish Welfare Fund budget spent this year.

Number of Community Care Grants



Legal and Governance

Key priorities for the service in 2023/24

- Delivery of the 2024 UK Government elections including voter Identity implementation
- Review of the Council's governance framework with revised Standing Orders and Associated Scheme(s)
- Implementation of the new Subject Access Request portal
- Development of the new Procurement Strategy, with a focus on social value, the introduction of a Council wide approach to Community Benefits, and an increased focus on local procurement
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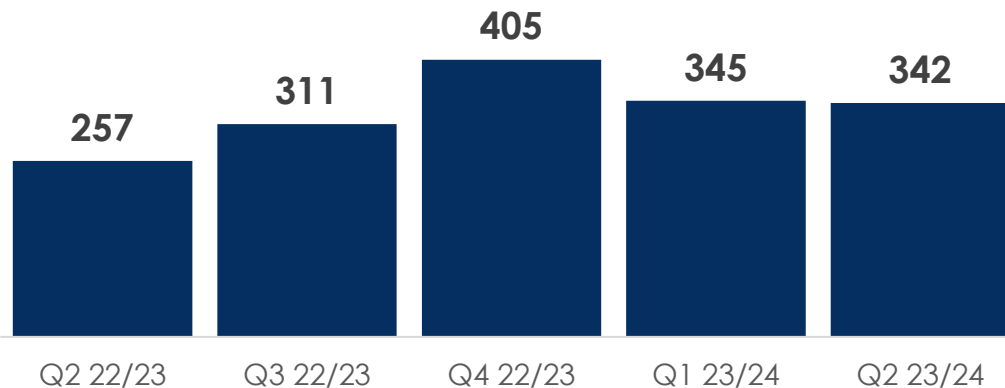
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- The procurement strategy peer review process has been streamlined to ensure audit trail and accountability.
- The Non-Competitive forms and templates have been reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with Regulations and Standing Orders.

A short life working group has been established to review contracts within Health and Social Care including the appointment of a dedicated Procurement Officer. A programme of work is being developed to bring all off-contract spend onto relevant frameworks. A key piece of work that has commenced with HSCP and Procurement is involvement in the development of the Scotland Excel (SXL) Care and Support Contract which SXL are retendering with a go live date of April 2024. This approach provides a route to compliant commissioning for almost £16.5m of social care expenditure. It is anticipated that this would reduce the resource that would need to be invested in commissioning and avoid costs associated with a recommissioning / tendering process and could potentially mitigate some of the inflationary budget risks associated with a recommissioning exercise. Programmes of work like this are part of the Transformation Blueprint 'Follow the Money' theme, looking at commissioning, contracting and identifying savings and efficiencies that can be made across the organisation.

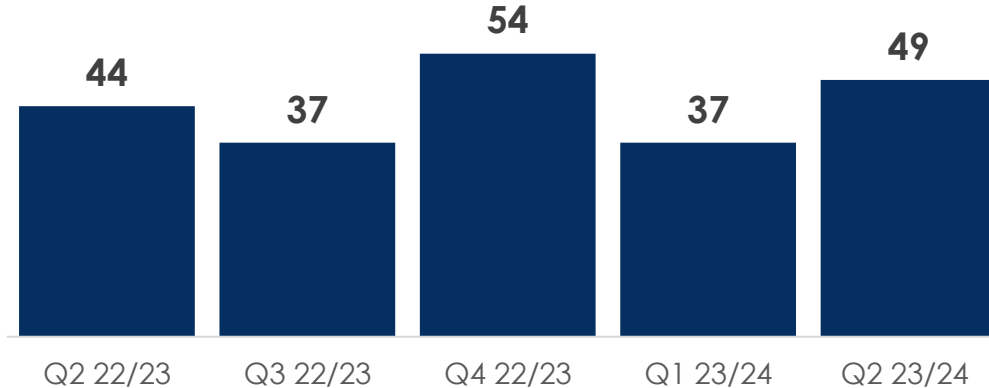
Legal and Governance – performance measures

Access to information

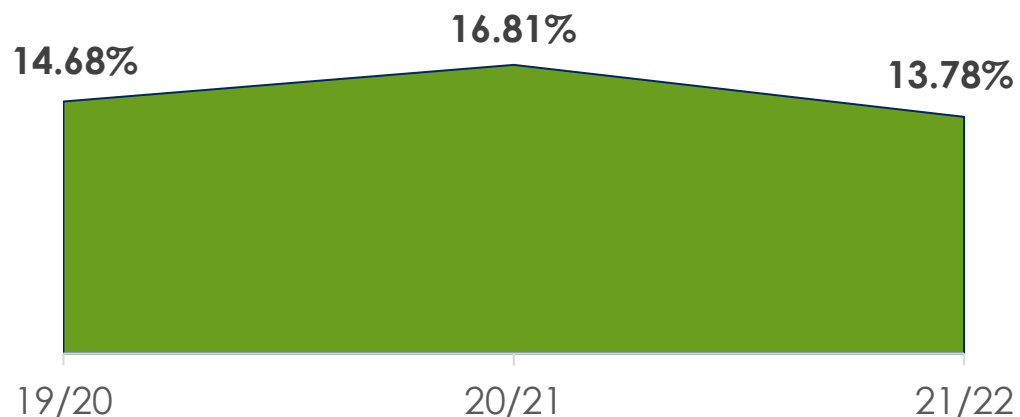
Number of Freedom of Information requests received (quarterly)



Number of Subject Access Requests received (quarterly)



% of procurement spent on local enterprises (LGBF)



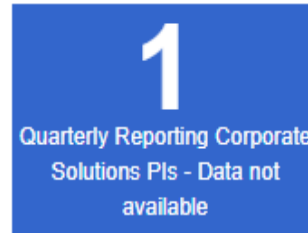
3 regulated procurement exercises undertaken this quarter

14 legal commercial transactions undertaken this quarter

Pentana Performance Dashboard

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

Quarter 2 - Corporate Solutions-



Quarterly Reporting Corporate Solutions PIs - Off Target

Code & Title	Gauge	Value	Target	Last Update	History
CORP.DIGITAL.11 % of IT helpdesk incidents complete within 48 hours		49%	60%	Q2 2023/24	
C.SE.LPI.03 Average processing time for new claims (internally calculated) (quarterly)		46 days	25 days	Q2 2023/24	
C.SE.LPI.04 Average processing time for change of circumstances (internally calculat...		17 days	8 days	Q2 2023/24	
CORPS.MPI.01 Performance against revenue budget		£25.671m	£25.062m	Q2 2023/24	
RHM.r.01.1 % of in-year Council Tax collected ytd (cumulative)		52.4%	95.2%	Q2 2023/24	
RHM.r.02.1 % of current Housing Rent arrears (total)		11.77%	7.5%	September 2023	
CORPS.SP50.05.1 Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working ...		88.89%	95%	Q2 2023/24	
CORPS.SP50.05.3 Percentage of complaints escalated and complete within 20 wor...		66.67%	95%	Q2 2023/24	

← 1 of 1 →

Challenges and risks

Financial position

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 challenges.

Financial Services continues to ensure the Council has robust financial management arrangements in place with a full suite of financial monitoring reports for quarter two 23/24, presented to Council in November 2023. The team continue to provide in-depth financial input to key revenues and capital projects embedded into the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Growing Council

In the recent Census results Midlothian is projected to have the highest percentage change in population size of all council areas in Scotland. at 16%. In addition, Midlothian has 10 zones which fall into the most deprived areas giving a local share of 8.7% living in the most deprived areas in Scotland.

This growth creates the opportunity to meet housing need with 25% of new homes being built in the affordable housing provision, in addition to the expansion in our Council house building. This construction directly supports employment and will see a steady increase in the value of Council Tax income received over time.

To ensure Midlothian is 'building back better', this investment is also creating new jobs, apprenticeship opportunities, opportunities for businesses and communities and families hard-hit by the impact of the pandemic. These new opportunities help lead the way towards a better future for Midlothian.

Midlothian's approved Capital Strategy sets out the infrastructure required to meet those demographic pressures and includes the financial contributions Midlothian will make to the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal. Encompassing five main themes the City Region Deal will bring significant investment across the regions with total investment of circa £1.3 billion across:

- Data Driven Innovation: £751 million
- Integrated Regional Employability and Skills: £25 million
- Transport: £156 million

- Culture: £45 million
- Housing: £313 million

Through the Data Driven Innovation strand the Deal will leverage existing world-class research institutes and commercialisation facilities in order that Easter Bush becomes a global location of Agritech excellence. The Easter Bush project includes significant investment in transport infrastructure along the A701/2 transport corridor. In addition, by improving on-site infrastructure at Easter Bush and transport infrastructure, The University of Edinburgh expects commercial partners will be able to co-locate at scale to commercialise Agritech breakthroughs.

The Capital Investment Strategy sits centrally within the Council's future planning activities and in doing so has to reflect the demands of Council services to ensure positive outcomes are achieved in the right place, at the right time for the maximum benefit to Midlothian. The extensive capital programme delivers new schools, a record investment in council housing, improved community infrastructure, investment in the local transport network and in innovative developments such as the new low carbon heat network in Shawfair.

Economic pressures

Inflation, as well as rising energy costs, are affecting the construction industry in Scotland. The UK is 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 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.

Cost of Living Crisis

Midlothian's citizens are facing significant financial challenges. The impact on households is already being noted across the UK with 93% of adults reporting an increase in their cost of living in March 2023 ([Office for National Statistics; Francis-Devine et al, 2022](#)). The UK is currently facing an unprecedented wave of increasing prices, bills and tax challenges. The 41 year high inflation rate of 10.4% is the main driver of the cost of living crisis which has outstripped wage and benefit increases. The price rises will impact low-income households hardest as a larger proportion of their costs are on energy and food. The Resolution Foundation estimates that absolute poverty is set to rise in the short-run, from 17.2% in 2021-22 to 18.3% in 2023/24 (or an additional 800,000 people in poverty).

As our citizens feel the impact of the Cost of Living Crisis, they will seek additional support from public services; in particular local authorities. To respond to this emerging crisis, the Council established a Cost of Living Task Force last year, which is chaired by the Council Leader and meets regularly to coordinate mitigating activities.

National Care Service

The estimated funding gap for the next three financial years does not include the associated costs of the Scottish Government's National Care Services (Scotland) Bill. If enacted, the bill would have fundamental implications for the community and for Local Government itself. The wide reaching changes in the bill aim to deliver a National Care Service by the end of the parliamentary term, which will impact on all aspects of the work of the Corporate Solutions team, including financial implications, in both revenue and capital, our asset base, our workforce, governance and legal arrangements and our digital infrastructure and platforms. It will require an immediate focus for the foreseeable future, and this will inevitably have implications for other priority work at a time of continued resource constraint.

Risk

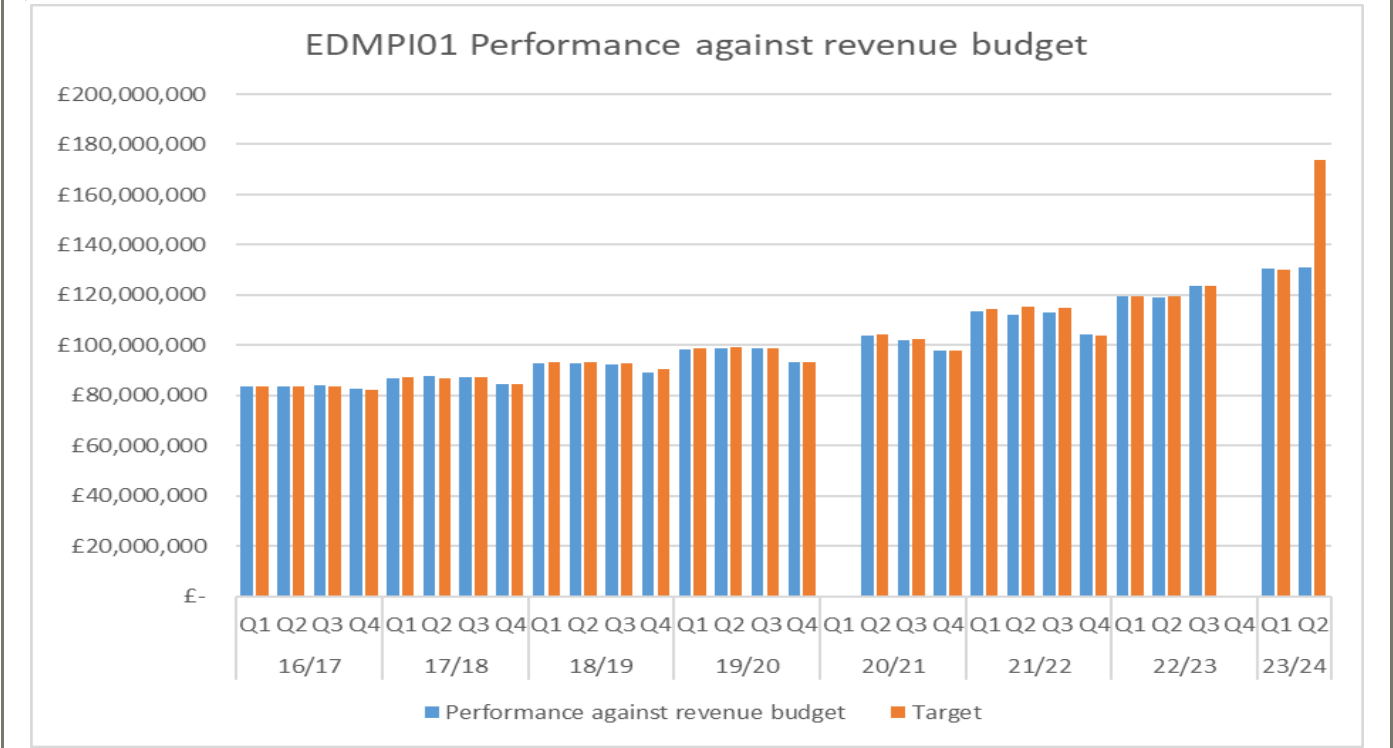
The Council's Strategic Risk Profile is presented retrospectively to Audit Committee quarterly. The most critical risks to the Council are Financial Sustainability, Climate Change and the Change Programme. Corporate Solutions is key to the delivery of mitigating actions to these risks; through strategic planning and the Medium Term Financial Strategy and driving forward the Council's transformation programme to derive change and redesign services.

Education Performance Report 2023/24 Quarter 2

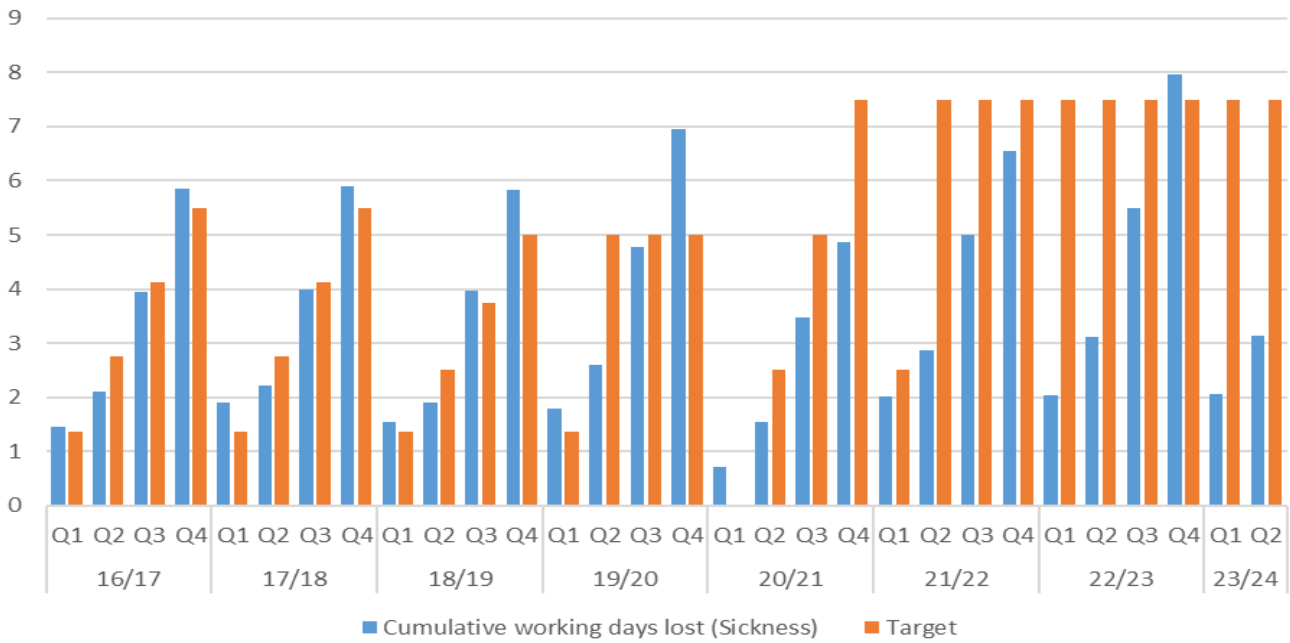


01. Progress in delivery of strategic outcomes

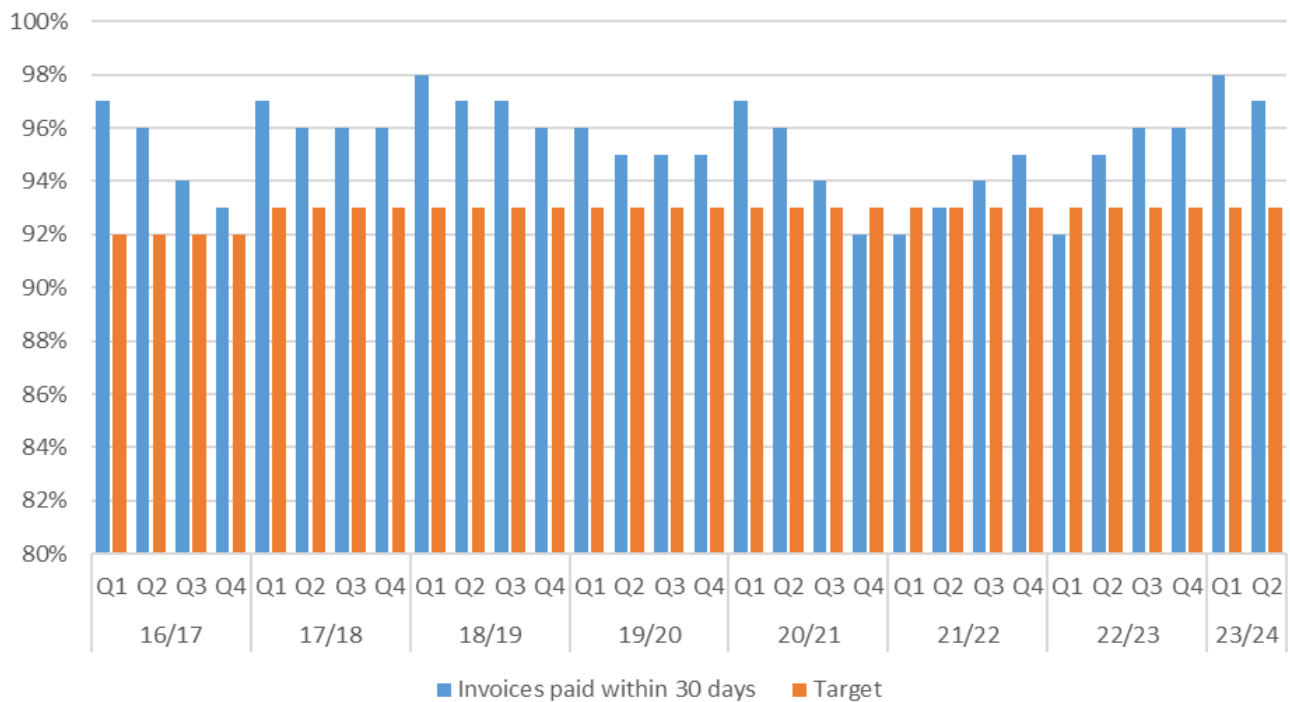
Q2 22/23:



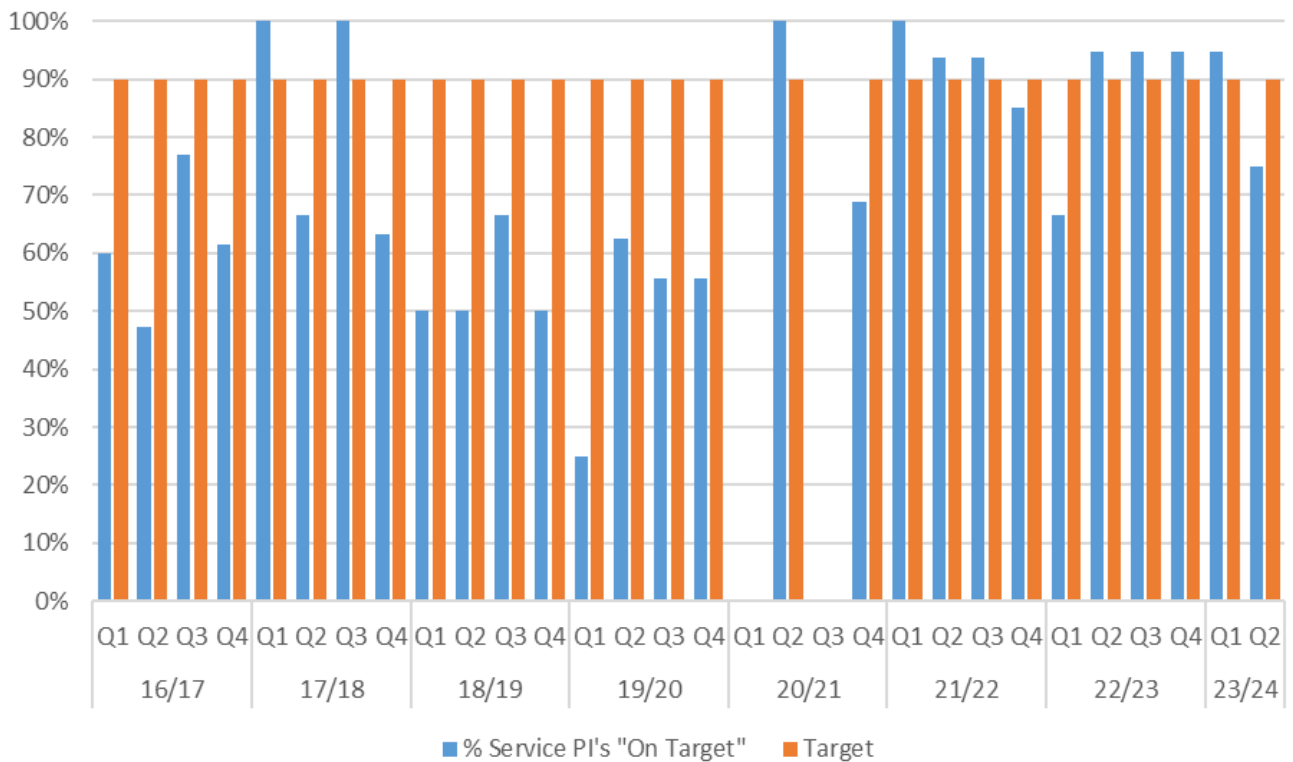
ED.MPI.02 Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence (cumulative)



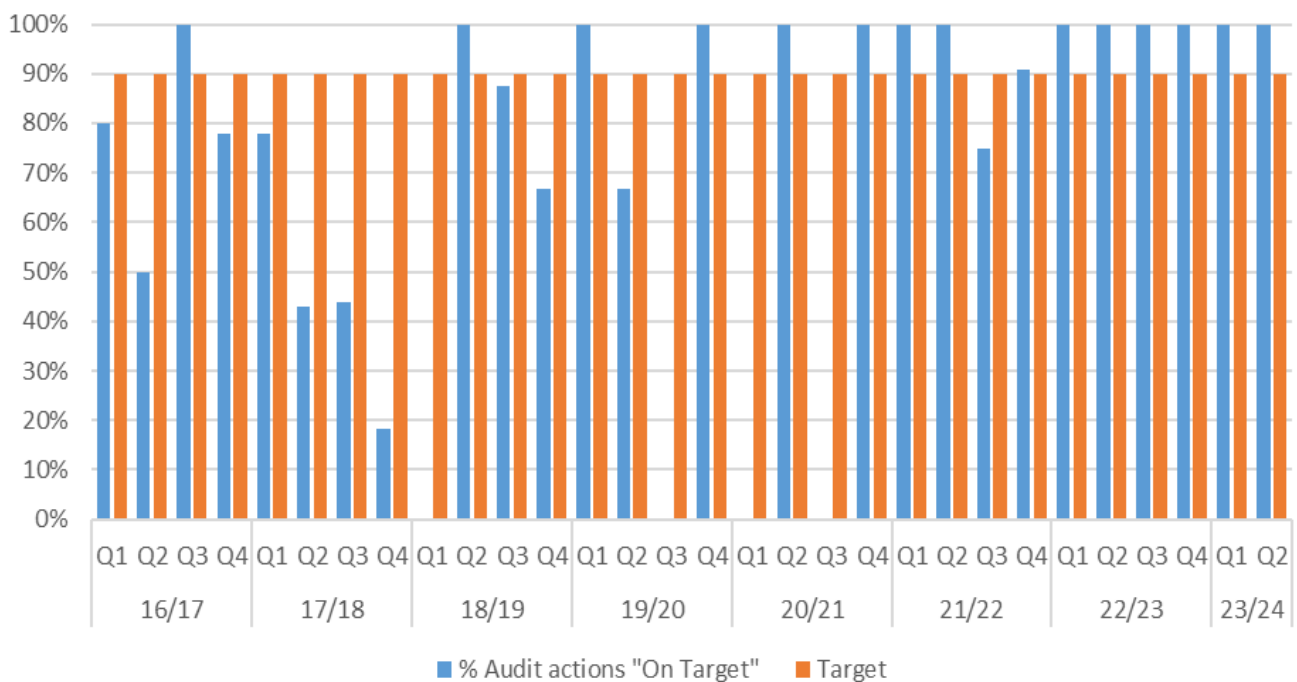
ED.MPI.04 % of invoices paid within 30 days of invoice receipt (cumulative)



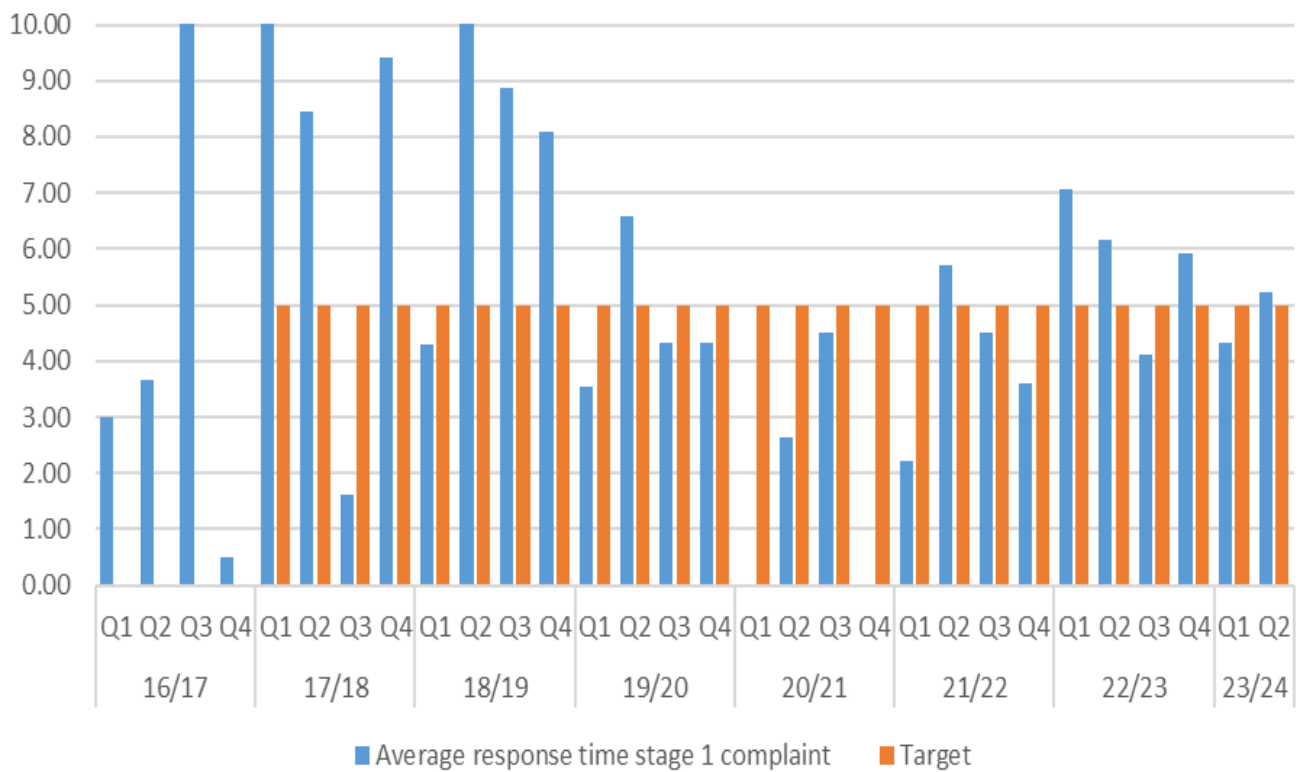
ED.MPI.05 % of Service PIs that are on target/ have reached their target. (does not include Corporate PIs)



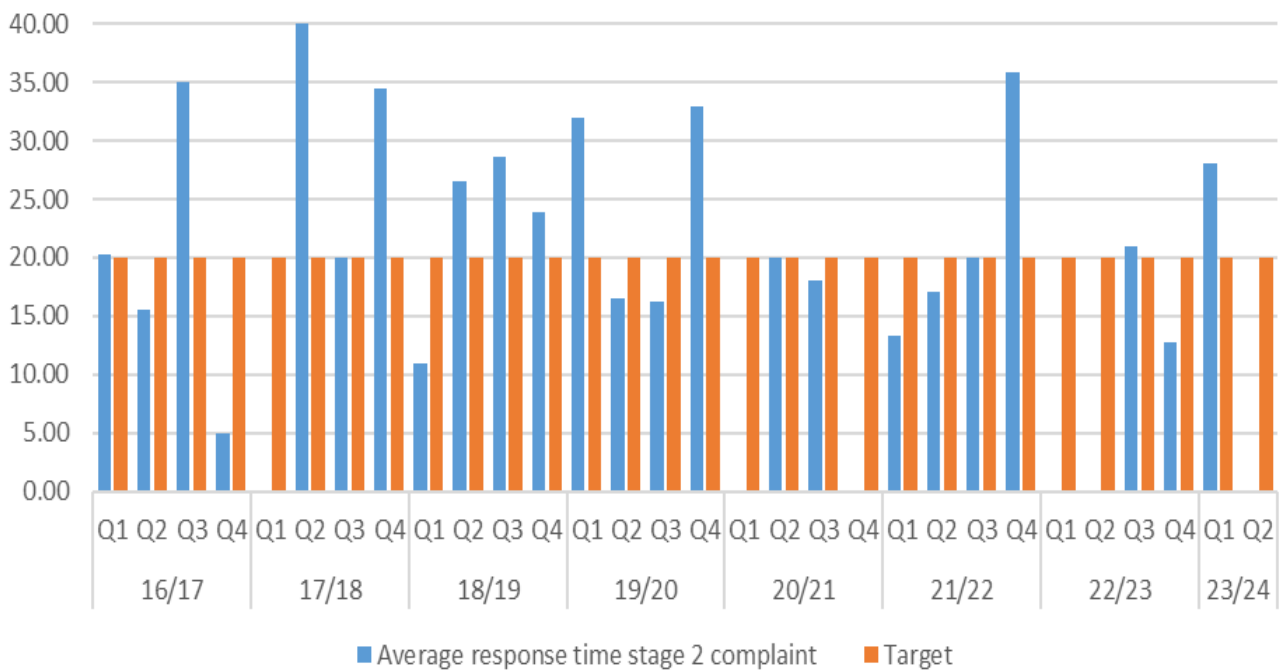
ED.MPI.07 % of internal/external audit actions progressing on target or complete this quarter



ED.SPSO.04.1 Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 1



ED.SPSO.04.2 Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 2



02. Successes and Achievements

Q2 23/24: Raising attainment

Attainment targets Stretch Aims Primary and Secondary

	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	Ave. (17-19)	Target
Pr Literacy	62.25%	74.68%	72.76%	65.75%	68.20%	71.56%	68.86%	71.5%
Pr Numeracy	71.14%	79.63%	77.77%	72.80%	76.05%	76.83%	75.34%	72.0%
S3 Literacy	76.73%	80.25%	86.80%		80.70%	85.12%	69.90%	88.0%
S3 Numeracy	88.81%	87.68%	89.56%		88.50%	91.02%	88.68%	90.5%

The 2022/23 academic year was the first year of the Scottish Attainment Challenge under its refreshed model with a requirement for local authorities to set ambitious, achievable stretch aims for progress in overall attainment and towards closing the poverty-related attainment gap in the 2022/23 academic year.

Against our targets set for 2023/23 there was above average performance in primary literacy and numeracy and S3 numeracy.

Our performance against our stretch aim targets and national performance will be reported in due course on publication of the national figures.

Improvement in literacy and numeracy attainment has been achieved through the introduction of Midlothian Literacy and Numeracy frameworks to support effective learning, teaching and assessment and a shared understanding of standards and expectations. Our Education Recovery Team also provide direct support using improved data to identify groups of learners who require additional support to address gaps in learning. Where schools benefitted from targeted recovery intervention at P4, schools exceeded their stretch aims by 9% in Writing and by 1% in Numeracy.

Data dashboards have been developed and in place to support Headteachers and staff to monitor children's progress and put in place intervention strategies to support children to be on track with their learning

The Annual Participation Measure reports on the economic and employment activity of 16 to 19-year-olds in Scotland and is the information source for one of the Scottish Government's National Performance indicators. The most recent data published in 2023, showed that in Midlothian 95.4% young people were participating in education, training or employment. This is the highest figure ever recorded and is above the national rate of 94.3%.

Equipped for learning

The *Equipped for Learning Strategy* is in Phase 2. The focus of this phase is to ensure deployed devices are used to positively impact learning, teaching and assessment. The investment in staff development as well as accessibility tools for learners are beginning to transform classroom practice. Recent school inspection reports have highlighted the digital skills of learners and the effective use of accessibility tools to support learners. Nationally, Equipped for Learning is gaining interest and the project recently won the Learning Spaces Award for Transforming Teaching, Learning & Curriculum.

Included Engaged and Involved

Two Child Poverty Directorate Conferences have taken place, cost of the school day and children's rights good practice shared and feedback informing child poverty action plan.

Revised attendance policy and strategy in place to tackle non-attendance and reduce exclusions. The newly developed data dashboard has enabled analysis of attendance patterns across schools on a weekly basis with data broken down by school, stage and characteristics including ASN and SIMD. This has enabled more insight into those at risk of non-attendance and preventative plans to be developed in schools. The attendance procedures have been reviewed and refreshed in line with UNCRC and the Promise promoting attendance as a social and cultural right and promoting effective pathways and partnerships to re-engage children and young people in education.

The Care Experienced Children and Young People continues to focus on improving outcomes for those whose attendance is less than 75%. Three children & families practitioners are working with 32 children who are care experienced. Their work centres around reducing anxiety, establishing and maintaining routines and improving links between home and school. Recent evaluations highlighted that building trusting relationships was the key to success.

Scrutiny of all PEF plans has taken place to ensure funding is targeted at those who will benefit from additional support and close the poverty related attainment gap.

A whole staff teacher conference was held at the start of the academic session. Staff attended workshop sessions on children's rights, trauma informed practice and digital learning. All Support for Learning Staff have been trained in Inclusive Classrooms, had equipped for learning digital update and new Midlothian Learning Plans to support their work.

Nurture Leads from schools and services across Midlothian have worked together on developing a common framework for relational, trauma-informed practice. Professional learning sessions on relational, trauma-informed practice have taken place for over 300 Learning Assistants across schools as well as whole school staff groups, probationer teachers and residential care staff.

Midlothian's Children and Young People's Mental Health Strategy aims to enable children and young people to build their resilience, grow their capabilities to self-manage and improve understanding of where to go for mental health information, help and support. Funds allocated from the Community Support & Services Framework to promote wellbeing and mental health have been distributed through local third sector partners with 188 children and young people benefitting from services

03. Challenges and Risks

Q2 23/24:

Attendance rates

The continuing impact of the pandemic on attendance and on post-school destinations

The implementation of a new Attendance strategy as well as strengthened supports will help to reverse this negative trend.

ELC Delivery

Midlothian Council has a relatively high proportion of funded ELC places delivered by partners in the private and voluntary sectors. Any increases in the rate that is paid to funded providers would create additional upward pressure on the early years budget.

Rate of demographic growth on the learning estate

- A full refresh of school roll projections and capacities has been undertaken to assess current and future demand. This work will inform and shape the Learning Estate Strategy over the next 5 years.

- A number of schools funded through the Scottish Governments Learning Estate Investment Programme are at the briefing and design stages. There are council and developer funded projects being undertaken also.

- The Roll Projection data will be checked and refreshed on a 6 month basis to ensure we have provided sufficient capacity in each catchment. There are a number of schools with imminent capacity breaches.

- The Place Directorate are conducting Condition Surveys in all schools assets.

-

Children with ASN

- Increase in the number of children and young people with additional support requiring more specialist provision will require robust monitoring to ensure staffing and specialist facilities meets level of needs

- Increase in the number of children and young people with additional support needs requiring more resourcing within mainstream school.

Recruitment and retention of staff

Increased difficulties of attracting and retaining subject specialists especially Maths, Science, Technologies is having an impact on service delivery in a number of secondary schools

Attracting and retaining teaching and non-teaching staff into ASN provisions is having an impact on service delivery

Financial pressure

- There is a financial challenge to deliver statutory services given the current budget gap.
- Due to the current financial climate there may be an impact on services as a result of the cost of living and increase in poverty.

Quarter 2 - Education -

12
Indicators that are On Target

5
Quarterly Education Service
Indicators Off Target

14
Education service Indicators
Data only

0
Indicators that have No Data
Available

19
Quarterly Education Service
All Risks

3
Quarterly Education Service
High Risks

Education INDICATORS Off Target

Code & Title	Gauge	Value	Target	Next Update Due	Last Update	History
ED.MPI.07 % of internal/external audit actions progressing on target or complete this...		28.57%	90%	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	
ED.SPSO.05.1 Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working days		66.67%	95%	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	
BS.E.P.1.1e Improve Secondary School Attendance		89.15%	91.5%	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	
ED.SPSO.04.1 Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 1		5.222	5	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	
BS.E.P.1.1d Improve Primary School attendance		94.48%	95%	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	

← 1 of 1 →

Place Performance Report Q2 2023/24



Place is where people, location and resources combine to create a sense of identity and purpose. The Place service ambition is to deliver joined-up, collaborative, and participative approaches to services, land and buildings, across all sectors within a place, enabling better outcomes for everyone and increased opportunities for people and communities to shape their own lives.

Place Services encompasses Building Services; Housing Services; Neighbourhood Services; Planning, Sustainable Growth & Investment; Property & Facilities Management; Protective Services; and, since September, Sport & Leisure.

Transformation Blueprint (2023-2028)

We are committed to building on the learning and new ways of working that were adopted during the pandemic and renew our focus on delivering our key priorities at the most local level possible. Rooted in the creation of a wellbeing economy, the vision of our new 5-year strategy focuses on reducing inequalities at the same time as looking after the health of our planet. Specifically, we have three main aims:

- Individuals and communities have improved health and learning outcomes.
- No child or household live in poverty.
- Significant progress is made towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

The pandemic has accelerated the financial challenges that we are facing. Reprioritisation and redesign is crucial to balancing the financial position, as well as preparing for further challenges and changes that we will face.

The strategic plan sets out our biggest challenges that need to be addressed over the next five years. We will continue to work to address the inequalities that our communities face, respond to the demands of being the fastest growing local authority in Scotland, and delivering our vision of being a great, green place to grow.

Transformation Blueprint Objectives

1. Support the Council to address the 5-year funding gap outlined in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
2. Follow the Money to ensure that the services we commission, contracts we manage and digital solutions we use deliver value for money.
3. Develop an organisational workforce that is flexible, ensuring that all staff have the necessary

- skills to work effectively, supported by digital technologies that fit for a 21st century workforce.
4. Design a workplace for the future delivering services in a holistic and integrated way.
 5. Drive forward multi-agency transformation to deliver systems-level change resulting in joined-up service delivery which improve outcomes.

Environmental

Midlothian Council was one of the first local authorities to sign Scotland's Climate Change Declaration, publicly acknowledging the challenges and opportunities that climate change brings with a commitment to make the Council's activities net zero carbon by 2030. Work continues to implement the Council's Climate Change Strategy and focus continues within Place services to achieve future emissions targets. The ambitious strategy sets out how we will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, encourage and work with others in our community to mitigate and adapt to changing climate. The strategy incorporates an action plan with a number of initiatives and ongoing programmes which together are helping to reduce our emissions and carbon footprint. The annual progress report on Climate Change was last presented to Cabinet at its meeting of 24 October 2023.

Economic Development continues to promote the Midlothian Business Green Pledge. 66 businesses have committed to the Pledge with 15 of those signing up during quarter 2. The team continue to work with pledgers to identify the best platform for group sharing. Through the LinkedIn group, pledgers share their experiences and the team continue to share a mix of green information from partners on learning opportunities, support and funding. This quarter an event was hosted during Scotland's Climate change week at the Energy Training Academy where Economic Development gave an overview of progress in supporting businesses to be greener and further promote Midlothian's Green Pledge.

The Scottish Government's Heat in Buildings Strategy (2021) sets out its aims and objectives for achieving net zero emissions within the entire building stock in Scotland by 2045, including addressing poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty. As part of this Strategy, Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) will set out the long-term plan for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving energy efficiency across an entire local authority area. The Strategies will draw on a standardised methodology to:

- set out how each section of the building stock needs to change to meet national objectives, including achieving zero greenhouse gas emissions in the building sector, and the removal of poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty.
- identify strategic heat decarbonisation zones and set out the principal measures for reducing buildings emissions within each zone.
- prioritise areas for delivery, against national and local priorities.

A Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) lead officer is now in post. Work is now progressing at pace to review the findings of the previously reported Stage 4 LHEES study, the outcome of which is confirmed as providing a good foundation for the remaining stages. The aim is to now have a draft LHEES strategy and delivery plan prepared for the end of the year. There has been positive and good engagement with internal stakeholders' business and community representatives, and regular engagement with Joint Venture Partners Midlothian Energy who will be an essential partner in delivering an effective and viable plan.

The annual Capital Works Programme for carriageway resurfacing combined with the Residential streets programme continues this quarter with 8.61km of carriageway resurfaced, representing 1.23% of the total road network. Footpath resurfacing was brought back on target this quarter with 1.63km of footpaths resurfaced this year to date (representing 0.22% of the footpath network) compared to 0.26km of surfacing that took place in Q1. This quarter a total of 396.4 tonnes of material was used to fill potholes. 168.7 tonnes of material was used for temporary repairs and 227.7 tonnes for pothole pro permanent patching. The Pothole Pro project equated to 2,020m² of permanent patching, repairing 866 potholes.

Work continues with the lighting capital programme with 176 new lighting column replacements this quarter, representing 64% of our annual target now complete. A further 213 street lights were upgraded to LED lanterns to include a central management system for dimming.

Land and Countryside Services have been heavily involved in the Neighbourhood Services joint working project to make a visible change to the aesthetics of 16 villages across Midlothian. These have included Pathhead Leadburn, Fala, Howgate, Lasswade, Ford, Edgehead, Auchendinny, Newton village and Silverburn with works planned for Cousland, Carrington, Millerhill, Temple, Whitehill and Middleton.

Work continues on our parks and greenspaces with 30 improvements/new facilities completed up to the end of quarter 2 with a further 20 improvements planned for this year. Completed park improvements to date include North Middleton Park, Kings Park, Ironmills Park, Vogrie Country Park, Mayfield Skate Park, Roslin Glen Country Park, Waterfall Park and Auld Gala Park. Works in progression include Millerhill Park loop path, Rosewell and Roslin Asphalt Pump Tracks, Cousland, Birkenhead, Clarinda gardens and Ironmills play improvements. Completed green space improvements include work at Rosewell on the Dalkeith to Penicuik walkway, Straiton pond, Roslin gun powder mill, Roslin Walkway and the Miners Memorial at Penicuik. Activities this quarter include, new bench installations, tree planting, fencing and ground works across Midlothian.

The Countryside Ranger Service continues to engage with communities and volunteers on various initiatives and events. Grassland management, to increase pollinator species and carbon sequestration rates, was carried out at Vogrie, Roslin and Straiton Pond by volunteers cutting and lifting wildflower rich meadow areas. 'Vogrie Bioblitz' of the former golf course took place with partners and volunteer recorders to gather information on species as a benchmark for future management interventions in species diversity. Butterfly Surveys were carried out weekly from April to September by volunteers as part of national monitoring scheme. Work continues this quarter with the river Esk giant hogweed eradication project.

This year 3,300 volunteer hours were spent in countryside sites ensuring an attractive, safe and welcoming environment for all to enjoy. Volunteer numbers have increased significantly over the last few years, with a 20% increase in volunteer hours this quarter compared to the same period last year. Green flag status was awarded for Kings Park Dalkeith and Straiton pond. The awards for Countryside sites would not be possible without close partnership working between volunteers and their coordination by our Ranger service.

Public Health and Environmental Protection implemented the short-term let licensing scheme within the time scales prescribed by Scottish Government. This quarter the scheme was further publicised via our social media platforms to increase the number of applications by the 1st of October. 100 short term licence applications were received by the deadline, 77 of which were received this quarter.

The Environmental Crime Pilot team commenced in July 2023 with an increased emphasis on fly-tipping, littering and dog fouling. The year long pilot with a team of wardens has the power to issue statutory and fixed penalty notices between £80-£200 to offenders and report potential crimes to the procurator fiscal. 171 fixed penalty notices were issued this quarter with the vast majority in relation to littering.

Our business regulations team was involved in the pilot of a whole systems approach to type II diabetes prevention in Mayfield, Easthouses, Woodburn and Dalkeith areas. An officer visited selected food businesses within these areas to encourage them to trial the free Food Standards Scotland Menucal tool. This tool provides information about the number of calories within the foods offered on their menu, to help customers to make informed choices. To date 3 of the 8 businesses have signed up to the pilot.

Further interventions took place this quarter, a business of concern who had applied for an animal welfare licence was referred to Police Scotland. Reports indicate the Police identified ongoing criminality at the address. As a result of a Dog control investigation an unlicensed business was identified to be reported to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

Trading Standards received 56 consumer complaints this quarter, 48 of which were completed. Completion is not fully within service control and is dependant on traders and complainants responding to investigations. 65 Trading Standards primary inspections took place this quarter including 25 under Animal Health and Welfare. This is an increase of 54% compared to this period last year. Compared to last quarter a marked decline in the number of illegal vapes being found for sale in the Midlothian area has been noted. It is possible, that following the seizure of approximately 1,400 disposable vapes from 6 shops in quarter 1, that illegal vapes are now less prevalent in Midlothian. This quarter 72 disposable vapes were seized. Vapes are seized due to contraventions of the safety law, mainly concerning the maximum quantity of nicotine.

Housing

Midlothian Council's updated Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) sets out key actions for delivery this year and addresses the next phase in transforming the services provided to meet housing need. These activities are crucial to reduce the time spent in temporary accommodation, improving the quality of temporary accommodation provided, continue to deliver Housing First and improve the health and wellbeing of those most vulnerable households. The plan also explains how Midlothian Council will address the next phase of its approach to transforming the services provided to those in housing need by developing initiatives with an emphasis on the prevention of homelessness, tenancy sustainability and early intervention. Our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is in its final year, this has brought significant change for homelessness over the last 4 years with ending the use of Bed and Breakfast type accommodation and developing better quality temporary accommodation, developing nomination agreements for people experiencing domestic abuse, and leaving the armed forces to enable access to permanent housing, preventing the need for a homeless assessment. Midlothian Council also adopted a model of Housing First which finds suitable properties before inviting nominations from a multi-disciplinary core group.

There continues to be a significant demand placed on homeless and temporary accommodation services, alongside the increase in energy, food and fuel costs, requiring a comprehensive preventative approach as

set out in the Council's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. Homelessness is not inevitable and can often be prevented. Our refreshed vision for the service is that individuals and families will be able to access housing that is affordable and of good quality in sustainable communities. Housing Services are currently exploring a new approach to deliver services and are trialling new team set ups consisting of a community housing team, aiming to ensure every tenant and resident has their individual needs and rights recognised and is treated fairly with respect to enable tenancy sustainment. A core housing team, improving quality and turnaround of our properties, ensuring residents are informed of housing options and homeless applicants are provided temporary accommodation and a Homelessness team focused on preventing and supporting homelessness.

The number of homeless cases provided with advice and assistance this quarter was 509 and prevented from homeless was 171. We continue to promote this service to ensure early successful intervention when possible. This represents a 141% increase in advice and assistance compared to the same period last year.

There were 5,251 active housing applicants placed on the Common Housing Register at the end of this reporting period. The total number of lets made to the general needs applicants this quarter was 39 and 58 made to homeless applicants.

The length of time homeless applicants waited until receiving a permanent housing outcome remains the same as last quarter at 58 weeks showing a continued downward trend from 121 weeks at the same period last year.

Economy & Regeneration

Midlothian Council's Economic Renewal Strategy sets out our ambitious approach to managing the transition from lockdown and planning for the longer term challenges the local economy will face. The strategy aims to mitigate the adverse economic impact on the local economy from COVID-19. Key aims are to protect jobs and aid business recovery using a place-based partnership approach that maximises the opportunities developing from the pandemic. Taking this partnership approach, the strategy will foster entrepreneurship, upskilling and training, addressing gaps in the market and changing the way business is done to better align this to customer behaviour. Alongside support for agriculture, tourism and the leisure and hospitality sectors, the council will also promote local jobs and self-employment opportunities, particularly for young people, to give them the necessary skills and support they need to benefit from economic recovery. Work is ongoing to refresh the Economic Strategy and will be presented for approval to Council later in the year.

The Business Gateway team continue to promote localised procurement with clients, encouraging registration with the Supplier Development Programme and Public Contracts Scotland (PCS). The team actively encourage businesses to register with the Supplier Development Programme which provides access to free training and support in all aspects of public sector tendering to improve the tender readiness of local suppliers. This quarter, a further 8 new Midlothian businesses were registered with the Supplier Development, with 16 signed up in quarter 1, this is a significant increase compared to a total of 20 during 22/23. The increase could be attributed to local engagement through targeted promotion of meet the buyer events. A digital meet the buyer event was held in July in conjunction with FES who were awarded the Shawfair low carbon district heating system project in partnership with Midlothian Energy

Ltd. Not all who registered attended so the team worked with FES to create messaging for direct and online promotion inviting specific business types to contact them directly to be added to their supply chain for the District Heating Network and future projects.

Linking into local procurement and locally led economic development, the team continue to work with the local business base to develop locality based and thematic business associations. Dalkeith Means Business and Rosemains Steading are now legal entities, Gorebridge and Penicuik are still in the development phase. Midlothian's Wellbeing Business Association is formally constituted and has had several meetings with members to include economic development support.

The Business Gateway service continue to promote the social enterprise model to clients where their plans, objectives and values align to the model. Contributing to Community Wealth Building objectives, the team continue to support the projects from Social Enterprise Conversation sessions as they develop. 12 third sector organisations/enterprises were supported this quarter, one business claimed as a start-up. These organisations are a mix of existing third sector organisations, new business associations, and existing social enterprises with growth aspirations.

The total number of new Business start-ups this quarter was 32. This should realise a forecasted creation of 40 jobs and an estimated contribution of £1.46M to the Midlothian economy in their first year of trading.

56 'Planning to Start' enquiries were received this quarter from individuals that are considering setting up a business but need support to achieve this, these clients tend to have numerous sessions with their advisor covering areas such as business planning, access to finance, regularity compliance, routes to market and can take from 3 months to a year to reach the trading stage. To stimulate interest in starting a business, The team held 5 'Meet the Adviser' sessions at libraries across Midlothian (Dalkeith, Gorebridge, Lasswade, Penicuik, Danderhall) during August and September. The sessions were published across our digital channels and in the libraires and supporting agencies via posters to encourage local residents that may be considering setting up businesses to engage with the service. Client feedback was that it is difficult to take time out of existing business or from work in the case of early-stage start-ups to attend these sessions in person and the preference is to meet on digital platforms going forward to negate travel time and have more flexibility in timing.

The Locate in Midlothian website continues to be a valuable tool for employability opportunities and employment support with 32 property enquires received via the site during Q2, all enquirers contacted by Business Gateway advisors to offer wider support.

Our Estates team have had continued success in managing our PIA estate including the letting of an industrial unit in Mayfield. The lettings of two retail units on Buccleuch Street, which are due for completion at the end of October 2023, have entered into the negotiation stage with two prospective parties. Surveys have been concluded in relation to potential presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in our Schools. All schools within the at-risk date range of 1930-2000 have been surveyed by consultant engineers who have confirmed that RAAC is not present. An assessment of the Housing stock also found no RAAC. The Non-Housing stock condition surveys continue to be progressed in line with allocated budget and agreed timelines.

Following the adoption of the National Planning Framework No.4, this quarter, the planning service has formally commenced its review of the Council's adopted spatial strategy, the Midlothian Local Development Plan 2. The first phase consists of engagement with community groups, key agencies, the development industry, local residents and elected members. This engagement will be ongoing throughout the year.

At its meeting in September 2023 the Planning Committee determined to refer two cases, one regarding an unauthorised advertisement on land adjoining the A68 Slip Road/A720 City Bypass and the second regarding the erection of an unauthorised dwellinghouse at 10 Kirkhill Terrace, Gorebridge, to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service for prosecutorial action.

The percentage of Secondary school meal uptake has increased considerably this quarter from 20.36% in quarter 1 to 45.71% in quarter 2, this is due to changes made to the menu offered to secondary schools to attract pupils back into the dining room.

Capital Investment Programme

As Scotland's fastest growing local authority area, it is critical to delivery that investment in community infrastructure, such as housing, the learning estate, economic investment and green infrastructure, is in the right place at the right time. This will help our communities to live well, live locally and prosper. How we invest in community infrastructure must also respond to changes in our working and living patterns brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Communities need to be able to readily access the services they require. Capital investment is also an opportunity to support our local economy through job creation and skills enhancement, particularly in relation to supporting a transition to a green economy as we invest in sustainable, highly energy efficient buildings.

As a growing Council, we have the opportunity to transform parts of Midlothian in a way that reflects how we live now. We will invest in community infrastructure with a focus on place-making, reducing inequalities, improving economic opportunities and improving education and health and wellbeing outcomes.

The Capital Investment Strategy brings together many strands of the Council's activities to build upon our past successes and drive forward innovation in a co-ordinated and achievable manner for the benefit of Midlothian and its citizens.

The Capital Investment Strategy sits centrally within the Council's future planning activities and in doing so has to reflect the demands of Council services to ensure positive outcomes are achieved in the right place, at the right time for the maximum benefit to Midlothian. The extensive capital programme delivers new schools, a record investment in council housing, improved community infrastructure, investment in the local transport network and innovative developments such as the new low carbon heat network in Shawfair.

To ensure Midlothian is 'building back better', this investment is also creating new jobs, apprenticeship opportunities, opportunities for businesses and communities and families hard-hit by the impact of the

pandemic. These new opportunities help lead the way out of the pandemic and towards a better future for Midlothian.

The Education Learning Estate Strategy programme has been developed and is subject to regular review meetings with Education and stakeholders to ensure effective monitoring, reporting and delivery of improvement and expansion of the Education estate including Early Years provision. This currently covers approximately 30 projects at various stages of development.

Midlothian Council is overseeing a significant housing programme. Phase 1 provided 864 additional houses within Midlothian. The total number of new homes from phase 2, 3 and 4 is currently estimated at 1201, comprising of 489 from phase 2 budget and 712 from phase 3 and 4 budgets. Progress continues with 645 homes currently being constructed on site either through commencement of enabling works or main contract works as of November 2022. This includes the largest Passivhaus programme in Scotland, with 189 homes to be built to the exacting Passivhaus standard, in line with Midlothian Council's Net Zero Housing Design Guide. This ensures exceptionally high levels of energy efficiency and low utility bills for our residents.

Challenges and risk

Over recent years, innovative ways of working have been introduced and services adapted at pace to respond to the needs of our citizens, in particular those experiencing the greatest levels of poverty and inequality. Our services are continuing to build on this learning moving forward, harnessing the energy, flexibility and creativity demonstrated by our workforce, to embed a culture of continuous improvement and innovation across Place.

Growing Council

In addition to the financial sustainability challenges, other challenges for Midlothian continue with our recovery from the pandemic, the cost of living crisis, the growing and ageing population and the increasing demand for services that this brings.

In recent Census results, Midlothian is projected to have the highest percentage change in population size of all mainland council areas in Scotland with an increase of 16%. In addition, Midlothian has 10 zones which fall into the most deprived areas giving a local share of 8.7% living in the most deprived areas in Scotland.

This growth creates the opportunity to meet the housing need with 25% of new homes being built in the affordable housing bracket, in addition to the expansion in Council house building. This construction will directly support employment and will see a steady increase in the value of Council Tax income received over time.

The approved Capital Strategy sets out the infrastructure required to meet those demographic pressures and includes the financial contributions Midlothian will make to the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal. Encompassing five main themes the City Region Deal will bring significant investment across the regions with total investment of circa £1.3 billion across:

- Research, Development and Innovation: £751 million
- Integrated Regional Employability and Skills: £25 million
- Transport: £156 million
- Culture: £45 million
- Housing: £313 million

Through the Data Driven Innovation strand the Deal will leverage existing world-class research institutes and commercialisation facilities in order that Easter Bush becomes a global location of Agritech excellence. The Easter Bush project includes significant investment in transport infrastructure along the A701/2 transport corridor. In addition, by improving on-site infrastructure at Easter Bush and transport infrastructure, The University of Edinburgh expects commercial partners will be able to co-locate at scale to commercialise Agritech breakthroughs.

Risk

The Council's Strategic Risk Profile is presented retrospectively to Audit Committee quarterly. The most critical risks to the Council are Financial Sustainability, Climate Change and the Change Programme. Place Services is key to the delivery of mitigating actions to these risks; through strategic planning and the Medium Term Financial Strategy and driving forward the Council's transformation programme to derive change and redesign services.

33
Quarterly Reporting Place PIs
- On Target

19
Quarterly Reporting Place PIs
- Off Target

74
Quarterly Reporting Place PIs
- Data only

3
Quarterly Reporting Place PIs
- No data available

6
Quarterly Place High Service
Risks

110
Quarterly Place All Service
Risks

Quarterly Reporting Place PIs - Off Target

Code & Title	Gauge	Value	Target	History
BS.PLACE.HSN.01 Re-let time permanent accommodation properties (calendar days)		47 days	35 days	
BS.PLACE.P.5.2b Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the 'Modern fa...		98.4%	100%	
HSN3 Corporate Indicator - Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the S...		34.3%	100%	
HSN4b Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (LGBF)		18.00 days	7.00 days	
HSN5 Corporate Indicator - Percentage of council dwellings that are energy efficient ...		85.7%	100.0%	
PLACE.MPI.01 Performance against revenue budget		£44.751m	£41.598m	
PLACE.MPI.04 % of invoices paid within 30 days of invoice receipt (cumulative)		85%	90%	
PLACE.MPI.05 % of Service PIs that are on target/ have reached their target. (does ...		86.24%	90%	
PLACE.P.5.2a Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the 'Free from seri...		98.9%	100%	
PLACE.P.5.2c Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the 'Healthy, safe ...		34.3%	100%	
PLACE.PFM.17 Number of secondary school meals prepared per hour (APSE)		8.46	8.84	
PLACE.PFM.18 Number of nursery and primary meals prepared per hour (APSE)		7.27	8.84	
PLACE.PFM.21 Percentage of free school meal uptake (P1-P5)		70.62%	77.57%	
PLACE.SPSO.04.2 Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 2		37.481	20	
PLACE.SPSO.05.2 Percentage of complaints at stage 2 complete within 20 working ...		14.81%	95%	
PLACE.SPSO.05.3 Percentage of complaints escalated and complete within 20 wor...		84.21%	95%	
PROSERVICES.19 Percentage of consumer complaints responded to within 5 worki...		98%	100%	
PROSERVICES.30 Percentage of businesses registered for tobacco/vapes in Midlot...		0%	5%	
RHM.h.05.5aiii Percentage of Homeless applicants sustaining a permanent tenancy ...		86.7%	95%	

← 1 of 1 →

Place Q2 23/24 performance report

Place is where people, location and resources combine to create a sense of identity and purpose. The Place service ambition is to deliver joined-up, collaborative, and participative approaches to services, land and buildings, across all sectors within a place, enabling better outcomes for everyone and increased opportunities for people and communities to shape their own lives.

Place Services encompasses Building Services; Housing Services; Neighbourhood Services; Planning, Sustainable Growth & Investment; Property & Facilities Management; Protective Services; and since September, Sport & Leisure.

Transformation Blueprint (2023-2028)

We are committed to building on the learning and new ways of working that were adopted during the pandemic and renew our focus on delivering our key priorities at the most local level possible. Rooted in the creation of a wellbeing economy, the vision of our new 5-year strategy focuses on reducing inequalities at the same time as looking after the health of our planet. Specifically, we have three main aims:

- Individuals and communities have improved health and learning outcomes.
- No child or household live in poverty.
- Significant progress is made towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

The pandemic has accelerated the financial challenges that we are facing. Reprioritisation and redesign is crucial to balancing the financial position, as well as preparing for further challenges and changes that we will face.

The strategic plan sets out our biggest challenges that need to be addressed over the next five years. We will continue to work to address the inequalities that our communities face, respond to the demands of being one of the fastest growing local authorities in mainland Scotland, and delivering our vision of being a great, green place to grow.

Transformation Blueprint Objectives

1. Support the Council to address the 5-year funding gap of outlined in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
2. Follow the Money to ensure that the services we commission, contracts we manage and digital solutions we use deliver value for money.
3. Develop an organisational workforce that is flexible, ensuring that all staff have the necessary skills to work effectively, supported by digital technologies that fit for a 21st century workforce.
4. Design a workplace for the future delivering services in a holistic and integrated way.

5. Drive forward multi-agency transformation to deliver systems-level change resulting in joined-up service delivery which improve outcomes.

Environmental

Midlothian Council was one of the first local authorities to sign Scotland's Climate Change Declaration, publicly acknowledging the challenges and opportunities that climate change brings with a commitment to make the Council's activities net zero carbon by 2030. Work continues to implement the Council's Climate Change Strategy and focus continues within Place services to achieve future emissions targets. The ambitious strategy sets out how we will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, encourage and work with others in our community to mitigate and adapt to changing climate. The strategy incorporates an action plan with a number of initiatives and ongoing programmes which together are helping to reduce our emissions and carbon footprint. The annual progress report on Climate Change was last presented to Cabinet at its meeting of 24 October 2023.

Economic Development continues to promote the Midlothian Business Green Pledge. 66 businesses have committed to the Pledge with 15 of those signing up during quarter 2. The team continue to work with pledgers to identify the best platform for group sharing. Through the LinkedIn group, pledgers share their experiences and the team continue to share a mix of green information from partners on learning opportunities, support and funding. This quarter an event was hosted during Scotland's Climate change week at the Energy Training Academy where Economic Development gave an overview of progress in supporting businesses to be greener and further promote Midlothian's Green Pledge.

The Scottish Government's Heat in Buildings Strategy (2021) sets out its aims and objectives for achieving net zero emissions within the entire building stock in Scotland by 2045, including addressing poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty. As part of this Strategy, Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) will set out the long-term plan for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving energy efficiency across an entire local authority area. The Strategies will draw on a standardised methodology to:

- set out how each section of the building stock needs to change to meet national objectives, including achieving zero greenhouse gas emissions in the building sector, and the removal of poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty.
- identify strategic heat decarbonisation zones and set out the principal measures for reducing buildings emissions within each zone.
- prioritise areas for delivery, against national and local priorities.

A Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) lead officer is now in post. Work is now progressing at pace to review the findings of the previously reported Stage 4 LHEES study, the outcome of which is confirmed as providing a good foundation for the remaining stages. The aim is to now have a draft LHEES strategy and delivery plan prepared for the end of the year. There has been positive and good engagement with internal stakeholders' business and community representatives, and regular engagement with Joint Venture Partners Midlothian Energy who will be an essential partner in delivering an effective and viable plan.

The annual Capital Works Programme for carriageway resurfacing combined with the Residential streets programme continues this quarter with 8.61km of carriageway resurfaced, representing 1.23% of the total road network. Footpath resurfacing was brought back on target this quarter with 1.63km of footpaths resurfaced this year to date (representing 0.22% of the footpath network) compared to 0.26km of surfacing that took place in Q1. This quarter a total of 396.4 tonnes of material was used to fill potholes. 168.7 tonnes of material was used for temporary repairs and 227.7 tonnes for pothole pro permanent patching. The Pothole Pro project equated to 2,020m² of permanent patching, repairing 866 potholes.

Work continues with the lighting capital programme with 176 new lighting column replacements this quarter, representing 64% of our annual target now complete. A further 213 street lights were upgraded to LED lanterns to include a central management system for dimming.

Land and Countryside Services have been heavily involved in the Neighbourhood Services joint working project to make a visible change to the aesthetics of 16 villages across Midlothian. These have included Pathhead Leadburn, Fala, Howgate, Lasswade, Ford, Edgehead, Auchendinny, Newton village and Silverburn with works planned for Cousland, Carrington, Millerhill, Temple, Whitehill and Middleton.

Work continues on our parks and greenspaces with 30 improvements/new facilities completed up to the end of quarter 2 with a further 20 improvements planned for this year. Completed park improvements to date include North Middleton Park, Kings Park, Ironmills Park, Vogrie Country Park, Mayfield Skate Park, Roslin Glen Country Park, Waterfall Park and Auld Gala Park. Works in progression include Millerhill Park loop path, Rosewell and Roslin Asphalt Pump Tracks, Cousland, Birkenside, Clarinda gardens and Ironmills play improvements. Completed green space improvements include work at Rosewell on the Dalkeith to Penicuik walkway, Straiton pond, Roslin gun powder mill, Roslin Walkway and the Miners Memorial at Penicuik. Activities this quarter include, new bench installations, tree planting, fencing and ground works across Midlothian.

The Countryside Ranger Service continues to engage with communities and volunteers on various initiatives and events. Grassland management, to increase pollinator species and carbon sequestration rates, was carried out at Vogrie, Roslin and Straiton Pond by volunteers cutting and lifting wildflower rich meadow areas. 'Vogrie Bioblitz' of the former golf course took place with partners and volunteer recorders to gather information on species as a benchmark for future management interventions in species diversity. Butterfly Surveys were carried out weekly from April to September by volunteers as part of national monitoring scheme. Work continues this quarter with the river Esk giant hogweed eradication project.

This year 3,300 volunteer hours were spent in countryside sites ensuring an attractive, safe and welcoming environment for all to enjoy. Volunteer numbers have increased significantly over the last few years, with a 20% increase in volunteer hours this quarter compared to the same period last year. Green flag status was awarded for Kings Park Dalkeith and Straiton pond. The awards for Countryside sites would not be possible without close partnership working between volunteers and their coordination by our Ranger service.

Public Health and Environmental Protection implemented the short-term let licensing scheme within the time scales prescribed by Scottish Government. This quarter the scheme was further publicised via our social media platforms to increase the number of applications by the 1st of October. 100 short term licence applications were received by the deadline, 77 of which were received this quarter.

The Environmental Crime Pilot team commenced in July 2023 with an increased emphasis on fly-tipping, littering and dog fouling. The year long pilot with a team of wardens has the power to issue statutory and fixed penalty notices between £80-£200 to offenders and report potential crimes to the procurator fiscal. 171 fixed penalty notices were issued this quarter with the vast majority in relation to littering.

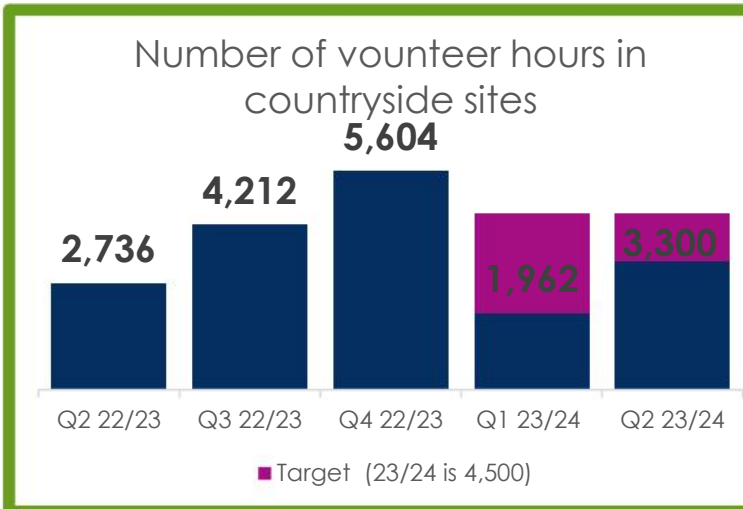
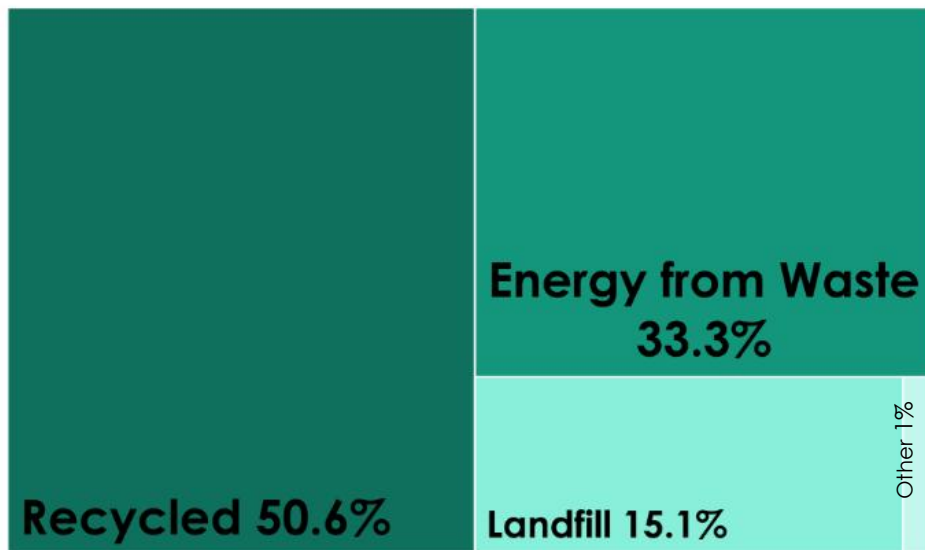
Our business regulations team was involved in the pilot of a whole systems approach to type II diabetes prevention in Mayfield, Easthouses, Woodburn and Dalkeith areas. An officer visited selected food businesses within these areas to encourage them to trial the free Food Standards Scotland Menucal tool. This tool provides information about the number of calories within the foods offered on their menu, to help customers to make informed choices. To date 3 of the 8 businesses have signed up to the pilot.

Further interventions took place this quarter, a business of concern who had applied for an animal welfare licence was referred to Police Scotland. Reports indicate the Police identified ongoing criminality at the address. As a result of a Dog control investigation an unlicensed business was identified to be reported to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

Trading Standards received 56 consumer complaints this quarter, 48 of which were completed. Completion is not fully within service control and is dependant on traders and complainants responding to investigations. 65 Trading Standards primary inspections took place this quarter including 25 under Animal Health and Welfare. This is an increase of 54% compared to this period last year. Compared to last quarter a marked decline in the number of illegal vapes being found for sale in the Midlothian area has been noted. It is possible, that following the seizure of approximately 1,400 disposable vapes from 6 shops in quarter 1, that illegal vapes are now less prevalent in Midlothian. This quarter 72 disposable vapes were seized. Vapes are seized due to contraventions of the safety law, mainly concerning the maximum quantity of nicotine.

Neighbourhood Services – performance

% OF ALL DISPOSED WASTE

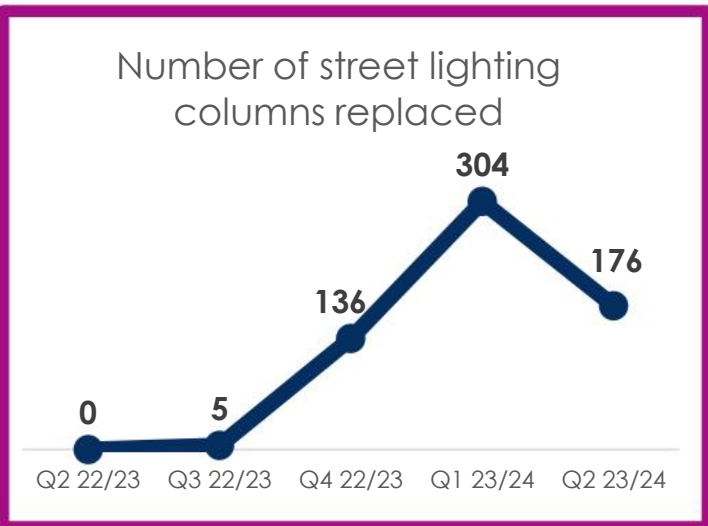


2

Environmental Green flags awarded for Kings Park and Straiton pond.

30

park and greenspace improvements/new facilities complete up to Q2 out of 50 planned (9 complete this quarter)



215

tonnes of carbon emissions saved from street lighting this quarter (Increase from 187 tonnes in Q1)

396

tonnes of material used to fill temporary and permanent **potholes** in Q2 (decrease from 417 tonnes in Q1)

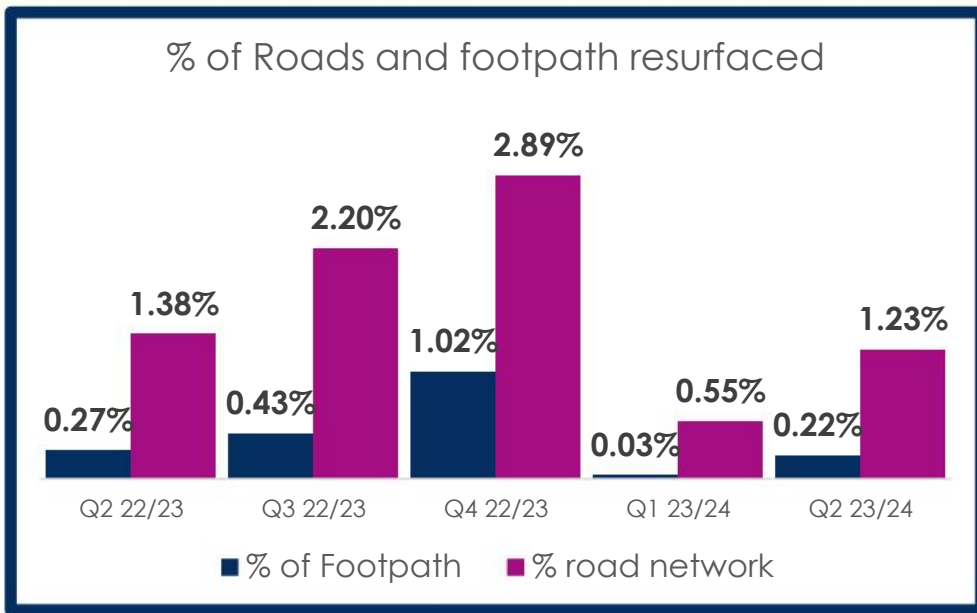
2,020

m² of permanent **patching** achieved

866

potholes were permanently repaired in Q2

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Protective Services – performance

Food Standards

80% of food related service requests from mid residents and Businesses responded to with target of 5 working days.

76 food law service requests received in Q2.

86% of Priority 1 and 2 premises receiving completed food law intervention in line with the service plan

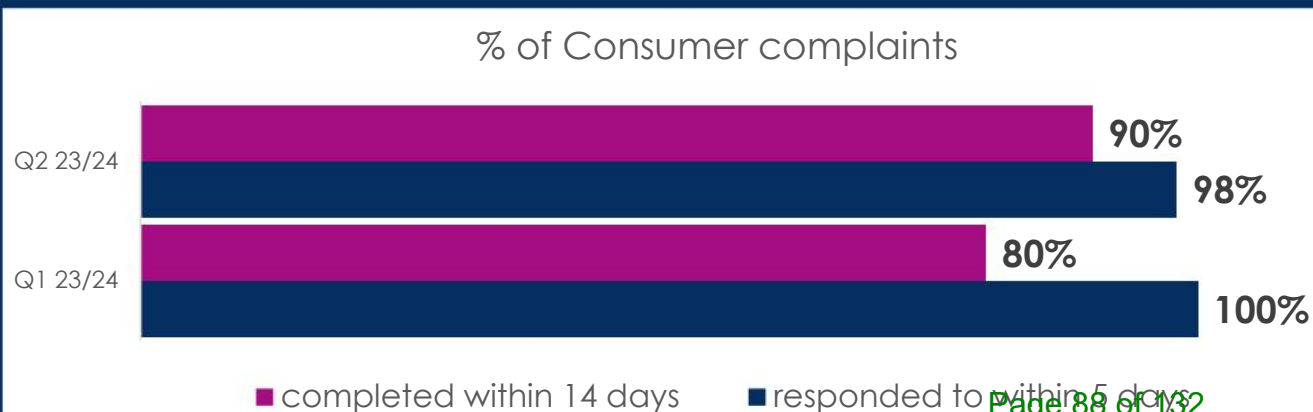
Public Health

278 Public Health service requests received from residents and businesses.

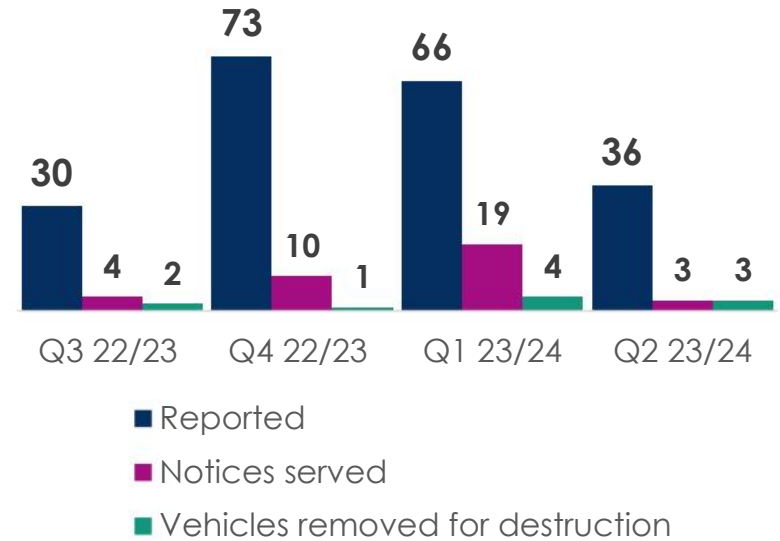
69% of public health complaints receiving first response within timescale

Trading Standards

56 consumer complaints received in Q2 (58 complaints in Q1)



Number of abandoned vehicles



6% of businesses registered for tobacco/vapes in Midlothian visited this quarter.

5 interventions carried out where products seized from 2 premises this quarter.

Housing

Midlothian Council's updated Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) sets out key actions for delivery this year and addresses the next phase in transforming the services provided to meet housing need. These activities are crucial to reduce the time spent in temporary accommodation, improving the quality of temporary accommodation provided, continue to deliver Housing First and improve the health and wellbeing of those most vulnerable households. The plan also explains how Midlothian Council will address the next phase of its approach to transforming the services provided to those in housing need by developing initiatives with an emphasis on the prevention of homelessness, tenancy sustainability and early intervention. Our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is in its final year, this has brought significant change for homelessness over the last 4 years with ending the use of Bed and Breakfast type accommodation and developing better quality temporary accommodation, developing nomination agreements for people experiencing domestic abuse, and leaving the armed forces to enable access to permanent housing, preventing the need for a homeless assessment. Midlothian Council also adopted a model of Housing First which finds suitable properties before inviting nominations from a multi-disciplinary core group.

There continues to be a significant demand placed on homeless and temporary accommodation services, alongside the increase in energy, food and fuel costs, requiring a comprehensive preventative approach as set out in the Council's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. Homelessness is not inevitable and can often be prevented. Our refreshed vision for the service is that individuals and families will be able to access housing that is affordable and of good quality in sustainable communities. Housing Services are currently exploring a new approach to deliver services and are trialling new team set ups consisting of a community housing team, aiming to ensure every tenant and resident has their individual needs and rights recognised and is treated fairly with respect to enable tenancy sustainment. A core housing team, improving quality and turnaround of our properties, ensuring residents are informed of housing options and homeless applicants are provided temporary accommodation and a Homelessness team focused on preventing and supporting homelessness.

The number of homeless cases provided with advice and assistance this quarter was 509 and prevented from homeless was 171. We continue to promote this service to ensure early successful intervention when possible. This represents a 141% increase in advice and assistance compared to the same period last year.

There were 5,251 active housing applicants placed on the Common Housing Register at the end of this reporting period. The total number of lets made to the general needs applicants this quarter was 39 and 58 made to homeless applicants.

The length of time homeless applicants waited until receiving a permanent housing outcome remains the same as last quarter at 58 weeks showing a continued downward trend from 121 weeks at the same period last year.

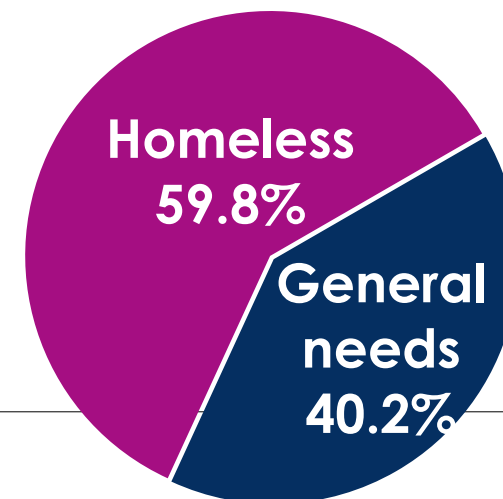
Housing – performance

5,251 applicants on housing waiting list (General needs and Homeless) (increase from 4,714 in Q1)

33 Lets to new build and open market purchases (decrease from 41 in Q1)

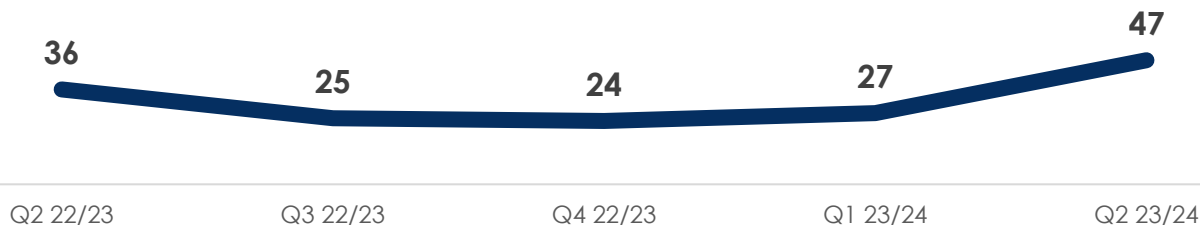
4 Lets to Housing First applicants. (3 in Q1)

97 housing lets in Q2.



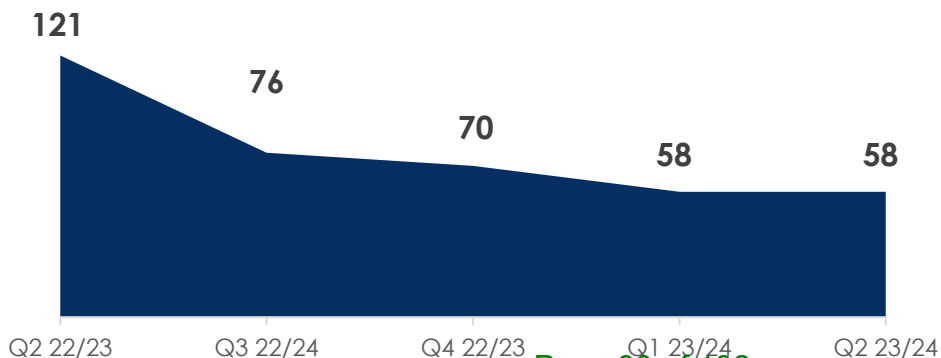
% of lets made to applicants

Time taken to re-let permanent accommodation properties (calendar days)

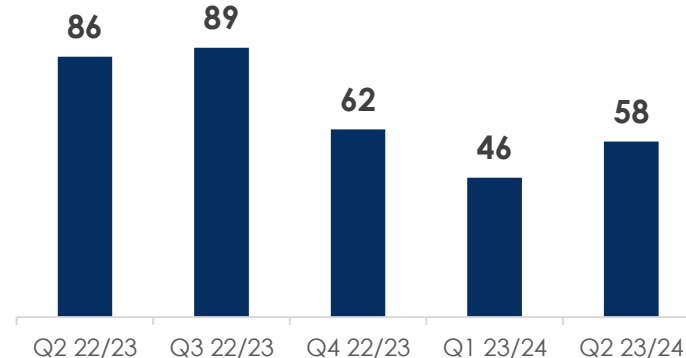


86.7% of Homeless applicants sustaining a permanent tenancy after 1 year

Length of time (weeks) homeless applicants wait until receiving a permanent housing outcome

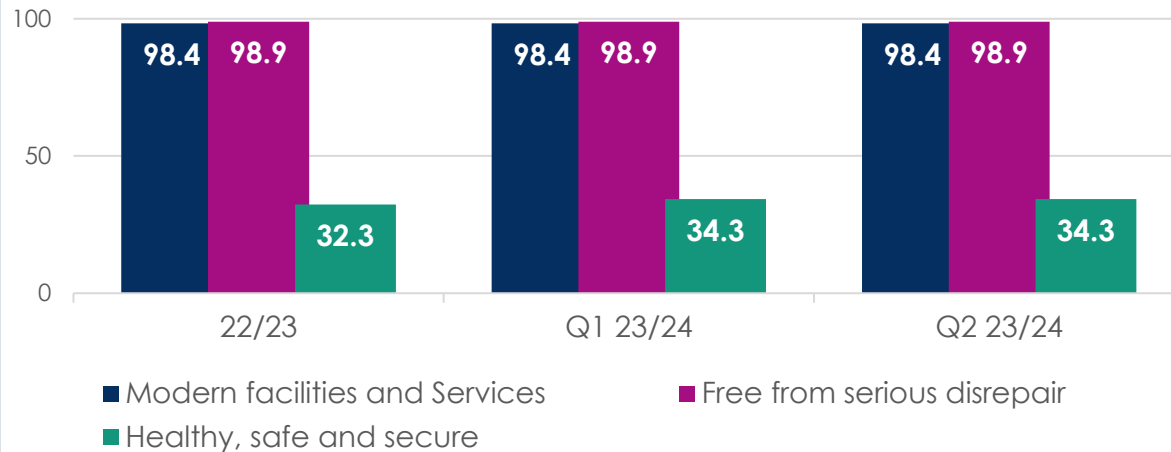


Length of time (weeks) homeless applicants spend in temporary accommodation



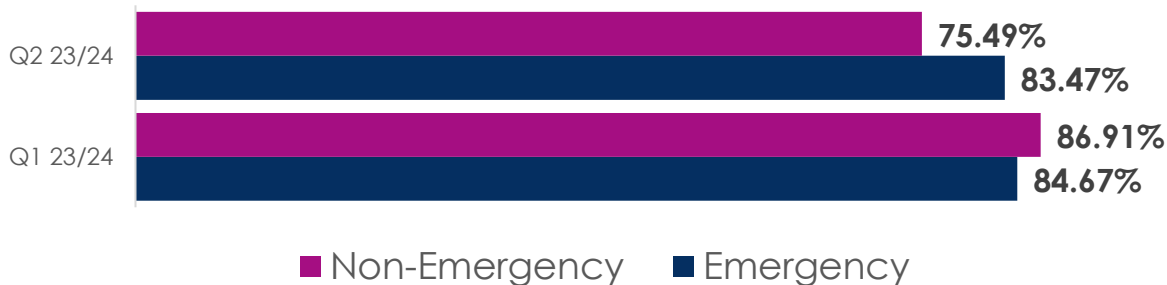
Building Services – performance

% of Council housing meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS)



Percentage of jobs completed within time is lower than expected due to a number of jobs where work has been completed but completion/invoice dates were not recorded on the system until after the target date. (E.g., standby work carried out over weekends). As Building Maintenance Service are undergoing a whole systems service transformation the work streams included for job performance and reporting will be addressed within the programme improvements. Figures reported under this indicator will be used as a baseline for improving system reporting.

% of Housing repairs completed on time



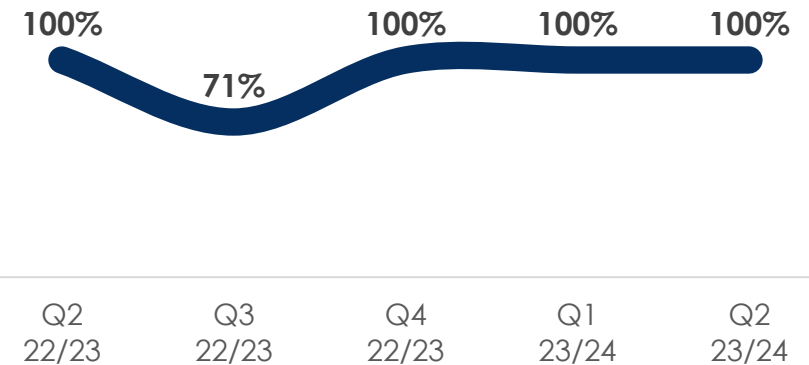
18.00 days

Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (decrease from 19.37 days in Q1)

17 hours

Average time taken to complete emergency repairs (decrease from 24.65 hours in Q1)

% of Building warrant assessments processed within 10 days



The nationally adopted target for processing warrant is 20 days, Midlothian aim to process all applications in 10 days.

Midlothian Council's Economic Renewal Strategy sets out our ambitious approach to managing the transition from lockdown and planning for the longer term challenges the local economy will face. The strategy aims to mitigate the adverse economic impact on the local economy from COVID-19. Key aims are to protect jobs and aid business recovery using a place-based partnership approach that maximises the opportunities developing from the pandemic. Taking this partnership approach, the strategy will foster entrepreneurship, upskilling and training, addressing gaps in the market and changing the way business is done to better align this to customer behaviour. Alongside support for agriculture, tourism and the leisure and hospitality sectors, the council will also promote local jobs and self-employment opportunities, particularly for young people, to give them the necessary skills and support they need to benefit from economic recovery. Work is ongoing to refresh the Economic Strategy and will be presented for approval to Council later in the year.

The Business Gateway team continue to promote localised procurement with clients, encouraging registration with the Supplier Development Programme and Public Contracts Scotland (PCS). The team actively encourage businesses to register with the Supplier Development Programme which provides access to free training and support in all aspects of public sector tendering to improve the tender readiness of local suppliers. This quarter, a further 8 new Midlothian businesses were registered with the Supplier Development, with 16 signed up in quarter 1, this is a significant increase compared to a total of 20 during 22/23. The increase could be attributed to local engagement through targeted promotion of meet the buyer events. A digital meet the buyer event was held in July in conjunction with FES who were awarded the Shawfair low carbon district heating system project in partnership with Midlothian Energy Ltd. Not all who registered attended so the team worked with FES to create messaging for direct and online promotion inviting specific business types to contact them directly to be added to their supply chain for the District Heating Network and future projects.

Linking into local procurement and locally led economic development, the team continue to work with the local business base to develop locality based and thematic business associations. Dalkeith Means Business and Rosemains Steading are now legal entities, Gorebridge and Penicuik are still in the development phase. Midlothian's Wellbeing Business Association is formally constituted and has had several meetings with members to include economic development support.

The Business Gateway service continue to promote the social enterprise model to clients where their plans, objectives and values align to the model. Contributing to Community Wealth Building objectives, the team continue to support the projects from Social Enterprise Conversation sessions as they develop. 12 third sector organisations/enterprises were supported this quarter, one business claimed as a start-up. These organisations are a mix of existing third sector organisations, new business associations, and existing social enterprises with growth aspirations.

The total number of new Business start-ups this quarter was 32. This should realise a forecasted creation of 40 jobs and an estimated contribution of £1.46M to the Midlothian economy in their first year of trading.

56 'Planning to Start' enquiries were received this quarter from individuals that are considering setting up a business but need support to achieve this, these clients tend to have numerous sessions with their advisor covering areas such as business planning, access to finance, regularity compliance, routes to market and can take from 3 months to a year to reach the trading stage. To stimulate interest in starting a business, The team held 5 'Meet the Adviser' sessions at libraries across Midlothian (Dalkeith, Gorebridge, Lasswade, Penicuik, Danderhall) during August and September. The sessions were published across our digital channels and in the libraires and supporting agencies via posters to encourage local residents that may be considering setting up businesses to engage with the service. Client feedback was that it is difficult to take time out of existing business or from work in the case of early-stage start-ups to attend these sessions in person and the preference is to meet on digital platforms going forward to negate travel time and have more flexibility in timing.

The Locate in Midlothian website continues to be a valuable tool for employability opportunities and employment support with 32 property enquires received via the site during Q2, all enquirers contacted by Business Gateway advisors to offer wider support.

Our Estates team have had continued success in managing our PIA estate including the letting of an industrial unit in Mayfield. The lettings of two retail units on Buccleuch Street, which are due for completion at the end of October 2023, have entered into the negotiation stage with two prospective parties. Surveys have been concluded in relation to potential presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in our Schools. All schools within the at-risk date range of 1930-2000 have been surveyed by consultant engineers who have confirmed that RAAC is not present. An assessment of the Housing stock also found no RAAC. The Non-Housing stock condition surveys continue to be progressed in line with allocated budget and agreed timelines.

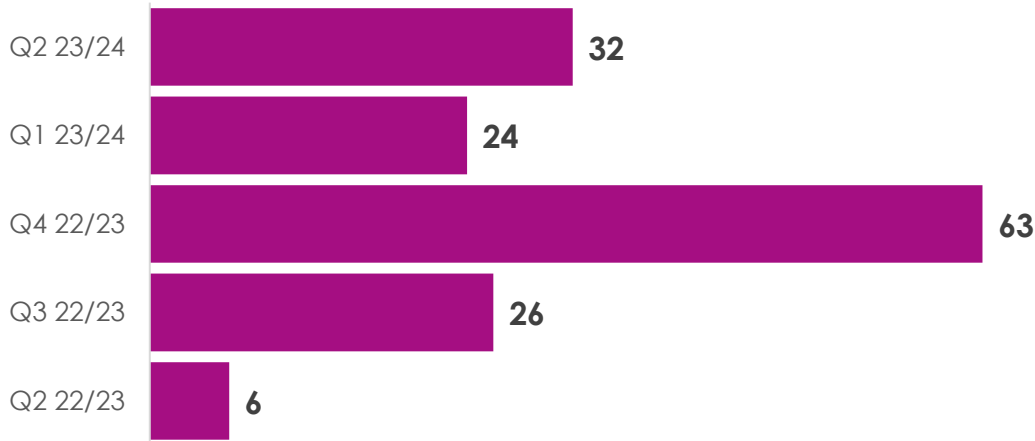
Following the adoption of the National Planning Framework No.4, this quarter, the planning service has formally commenced its review of the Council's adopted spatial strategy, the Midlothian Local Development Plan 2. The first phase consists of engagement with community groups, key agencies, the development industry, local residents and elected members. This engagement will be ongoing throughout the year.

At its meeting in September 2023 the Planning Committee determined to refer two cases, one regarding an unauthorised advertisement on land adjoining the A68 Slip Road/A720 City Bypass and the second regarding the erection of an unauthorised dwellinghouse at 10 Kirkhill Terrace, Gorebridge, to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service for prosecutorial action.

The percentage of Secondary school meal uptake has increased considerably this quarter from 20.36% in quarter 1 to 45.71% in quarter 2, this is due to changes made to the menu offered to secondary schools to attract pupils back into the dining room.

Planning, Sustainable Growth & Investment-performance

Number of new Business starts ups



Social media

1,545 Locate in Midlothian followers.

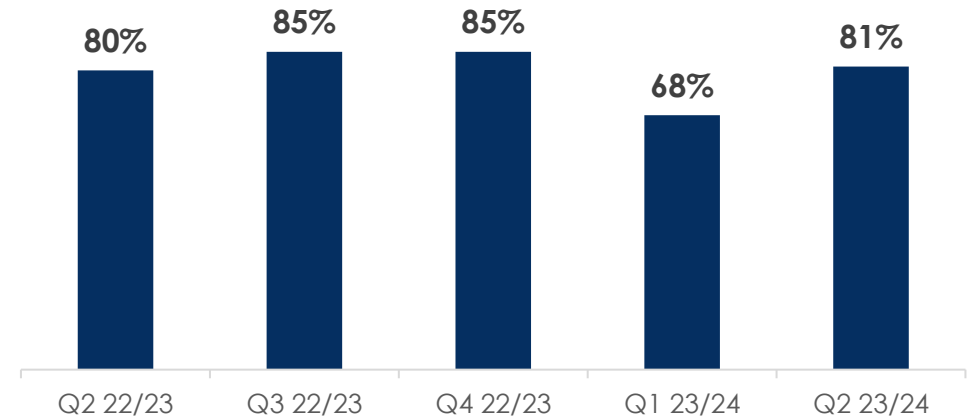
1,994 Business Gateway followers

15 Businesses signed up to the **Midlothian Business Green Pledge** in Q2 (increase from 3 in Q1)

12 Social enterprises supported in Q2 (decrease from 15 in Q1)

56 'Planning to Start' enquires/submissions in Q2 (increase from 44 in Q1)

% of planning applications completed within target of 80%



40.4 weeks -Average time to determine planning applications for **major** developments

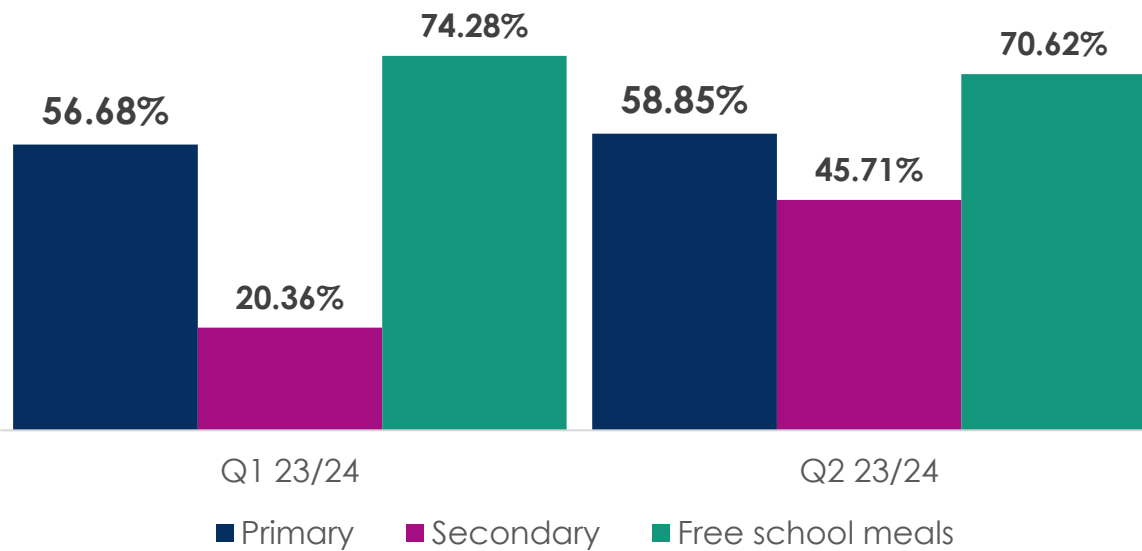
(Decrease from **102.4** weeks in Q1)

8.5 weeks

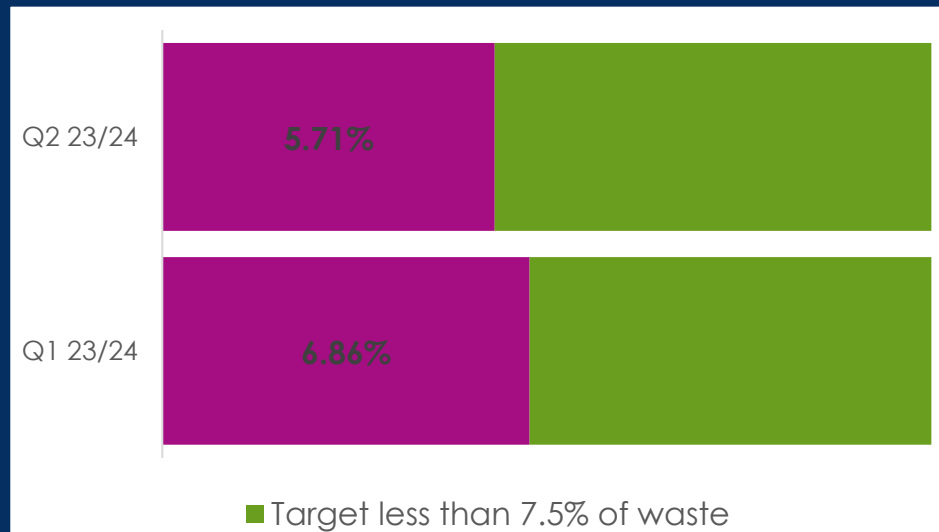
Average time to determine planning applications for **minor** developments.

Property and Facilities – performance

% of school meal uptake



Percentage of school meal food waste

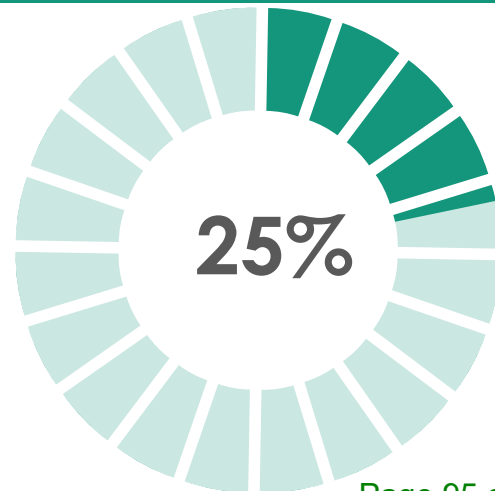


7.27 nursery and primary meals prepared per hour (increase from 7.13 in Q1)

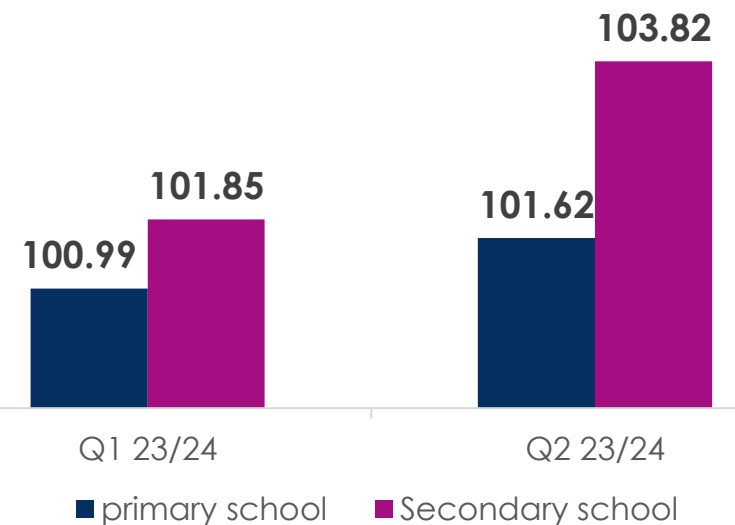
TARGET: APSE national average 8.84 meals prepared per hour

8.46 Secondary school meals prepared per hour (increase from 4.33 in Q1)

% of Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) complete



Percentage of cleaning hours against budgeted hours achieved



Capital Investment Programme

As Scotland's fastest growing local authority area, it is critical to delivery that investment in community infrastructure, such as housing, the learning estate, economic investment and green infrastructure, is in the right place at the right time. This will help our communities to live well, live locally and prosper.

How we invest in community infrastructure must also respond to changes in our working and living patterns brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Communities need to be able to readily access the services they require. Capital investment is also an opportunity to support our local economy through job creation and skills enhancement, particularly in relation to supporting a transition to a green economy as we invest in sustainable, highly energy efficient buildings.

As a growing Council, we have the opportunity to transform parts of Midlothian in a way that reflects how we live now. We will invest in community infrastructure with a focus on place-making, reducing inequalities, improving economic opportunities and improving education and health and wellbeing outcomes.

The Capital Investment Strategy brings together many strands of the Council's activities to build upon our past successes and drive forward innovation in a co-ordinated and achievable manner for the benefit of Midlothian and its citizens.

The Capital Investment Strategy sits centrally within the Council's future planning activities and in doing so has to reflect the demands of Council services to ensure positive outcomes are achieved in the right place, at the right time for the maximum benefit to Midlothian. The extensive capital programme delivers new schools, a record investment in council housing, improved community infrastructure, investment in the local transport network and innovative developments such as the new low carbon heat network in Shawfair.

To ensure Midlothian is 'building back better', this investment is also creating new jobs, apprenticeship opportunities, opportunities for businesses and communities and families hard-hit by the impact of the pandemic. These new opportunities help lead the way out of the pandemic and towards a better future for Midlothian.

The Education Learning Estate Strategy programme has been developed and is subject to regular review meetings with Education and stakeholders to ensure effective monitoring, reporting and delivery of improvement and expansion of the Education estate including Early Years provision. This currently covers approximately 30 projects at various stages of development.

Midlothian Council is overseeing a significant housing programme. Phase 1 provided 864 additional houses within Midlothian. The total number of new homes from phase 2, 3 and 4 is currently estimated at 1201, comprising of 489 from phase 2 budget and 712 from phase 3 and 4 budgets. Progress continues with 645 homes currently being constructed on site either through commencement of enabling works or main

contract works as of November 2022. This includes the largest Passivhaus programme in Scotland, with 189 homes to be built to the exacting Passivhaus standard, in line with Midlothian Council's Net Zero Housing Design Guide. This ensures exceptionally high levels of energy efficiency and low utility bills for our residents.

Challenges and risk

Over recent years, innovative ways of working have been introduced and services adapted at pace to respond to the needs of our citizens, in particular those experiencing the greatest levels of poverty and inequality. Our services are continuing to build on this learning moving forward, harnessing the energy, flexibility and creativity demonstrated by our workforce, to embed a culture of continuous improvement and innovation across Place.

Growing Council

In addition to the financial sustainability challenges, other challenges for Midlothian continue with our recovery from the pandemic, the cost of living crisis, the growing and ageing population and the increasing demand for services that this brings.

In recent Census results, Midlothian is projected to have the highest percentage change in population size of all mainland council areas in Scotland with an increase of 16%. In addition, Midlothian has 10 zones which fall into the most deprived areas giving a local share of 8.7% living in the most deprived areas in Scotland.

This growth creates the opportunity to meet the housing need with 25% of new homes being built in the affordable housing bracket, in addition to the expansion in Council house building. This construction will directly support employment and will see a steady increase in the value of Council Tax income received over time.

The approved Capital Strategy sets out the infrastructure required to meet those demographic pressures and includes the financial contributions Midlothian will make to the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal. Encompassing five main themes the City Region Deal will bring significant investment across the regions with total investment of circa £1.3 billion across:

- Research, Development and Innovation: £751 million
- Integrated Regional Employability and Skills: £25 million
- Transport: £156 million

- Culture: £45 million
- Housing: £313 million

Through the Data Driven Innovation strand the Deal will leverage existing world-class research institutes and commercialisation facilities in order that Easter Bush becomes a global location of Agritech excellence. The Easter Bush project includes significant investment in transport infrastructure along the A701/2 transport corridor. In addition, by improving on-site infrastructure at Easter Bush and transport infrastructure, The University of Edinburgh expects commercial partners will be able to co-locate at scale to commercialise Agritech breakthroughs.

Risk

The Council's Strategic Risk Profile is presented retrospectively to Audit Committee quarterly. The most critical risks to the Council are Financial Sustainability, Climate Change and the Change Programme. Place Services is key to the delivery of mitigating actions to these risks; through strategic planning and the Medium Term Financial Strategy and driving forward the Council's transformation programme to derive change and redesign services.

Pentana Performance Dashboard

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

Quarter 2 - Place -



Quarterly Reporting Place PIs - Off Target

Code & Title	Gauge	Value	Target	History
BS.PLACE.HSN.01 Re-let time permanent accommodation properties (calendar days)		47 days	35 days	
BS.PLACE.P.5.2b Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the 'Modern fa...		98.4%	100%	
HSN3 Corporate Indicator - Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the S...		34.3%	100%	
HSN4b Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (LGBF)		18.00 days	7.00 days	
HSN5 Corporate Indicator - Percentage of council dwellings that are energy efficient ...		85.7%	100.0%	
PLACE.MPI.01 Performance against revenue budget		£44.751m	£41.598m	
PLACE.MPI.04 % of invoices paid within 30 days of invoice receipt (cumulative)		85%	90%	
PLACE.MPI.05 % of Service PIs that are on target/ have reached their target. (does ...		86.24%	90%	
PLACE.P.5.2a Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the 'Free from seri...		98.9%	100%	
PLACE.P.5.2c Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the 'Healthy, safe ...		34.3%	100%	
PLACE.PFM.17 Number of secondary school meals prepared per hour (APSE)		8.46	8.84	
PLACE.PFM.18 Number of nursery and primary meals prepared per hour (APSE)		7.27	8.84	
PLACE.PFM.21 Percentage of free school meal uptake (P1-P5)		70.62%	77.57%	
PLACE.SPSO.04.2 Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 2		37.481	20	
PLACE.SPSO.05.2 Percentage of complaints at stage 2 complete within 20 working ...		14.81%	95%	

Midlothian Council Report Quarter 2 2023/24



Progress Against Strategic Outcomes

Individuals and communities in Midlothian will be able to lead healthier, safer and greener lives by 2030. No child or household need live in poverty. Midlothian will be a Great Green Place to Grow by achieving our net zero carbon ambitions and supporting local people to strengthen the skills they need for learning, life and work.

Our new [Single Midlothian Plan](#) focuses on three main priorities:

- Individuals and communities have improved health and skills for learning, life and work.
- No child or household need live in poverty.
- Significant progress is made towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

In recent Census results, Midlothian is projected to have the highest percentage change in population size of all mainland council areas in Scotland with an increase of 16%. In addition, Midlothian has 10 zones which fall into the most deprived areas living a local share of 8.7% living in the most deprived areas in Scotland.

To accommodate growth within the resources available we will need to think differently about the services we deliver and how we deliver them. Rooted in the creation of a wellbeing economy, in June 2023 Council approved the new [Transformation Blueprint](#) 2023-2028. Some services will be transformed to meet our growing population within the financial envelope available, others may be delivered in a different way and some will need to stop. Fostering a collaborative culture where everyone is focused on the same end goal – creating effective and efficient services which will benefit our citizens – will be crucial to future success. The Transformation Blueprint will focus on the nature of the work we will do, developing a 21st century workforce supported by a workplace fit for the future where joined up services are delivered in a holistic and integrated way.

The 5 key objectives of the Transformation Blueprint are:

1. Support the Council to address the 5 year funding gap of £29.121 million outlined in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
2. Follow the Money to ensure that the services we commission, contracts we manage and digital solutions we use deliver value for money.
3. Develop an organisational workforce that is flexible ensuring that all staff have the necessary skills to work effectively supported by digital technologies that fit for a 21st century workforce.
4. Design a workplace fit for the future delivering services in a holistic and integrated way as well as utilising our assets to maximise their potential.
5. Drive forward multi-agency transformation to deliver systems-level change resulting in integrated service delivery which improve community outcomes.

Whilst a full update for the performance for each of the Council's Service areas is published separately, this report reflects an overview of the key service updates, against the thematic areas of the Single Midlothian Plan.

Single Midlothian Plan Themes in 2023/27

Midlothian will be Healthier - Achievements

The Midlothian Integration Joint Board (IJB) plan and direct delegated health and social care services for the people of Midlothian. Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) oversees the delivery of all the services delegated to Midlothian IJB. The aim of integrated health and social care is for the people to experience more joined up treatment and care.

This report brings together the priority actions of the seven main areas that plan and deliver integrated care and support:

- Adult Services
- Older People
- Justice Service and Protection
- Public Health
- Mental Health and Substance Use
- Midlothian and East Lothian Drug and Alcohol Partnership (MELDAP)
- Learning and Development.

This quarterly update is provided in alignment with the four key themes of Service Actions & Indicators:

Prevention

Prevention is a key role of services within the HSCP. Social Work services in particular work with our most vulnerable populations and are crucial to ensuring people remain safe and well. Public protection is prominent and is key to what social workers do.

We operate an assertive outreach model within Substance Use Services to reduce harm and drug and alcohol related deaths. The service offers a multi-disciplinary working model blending social workers and nurses. Practically, the model involves engagements at No.11, our recovery hub, as well as home visits and appointments elsewhere. Whilst drug-related deaths are a complex issue, the model adopted in Midlothian did have some impact in reducing numbers in 2022 to 4 (from 23 in 2021).

The newly established Social Work Assurance Group (SWAG) has established a layer of governance for Social Work and Social Care services across Adults and Childrens' Services and is Chaired by the Chief Social Work Officer. It considers all inspection reports and other work and monitors and evaluates action plans. Whilst only recently established, SWAG has already provided a degree of governance that did not exist previously in a systematic form.

Understanding Changing Needs

Occupational Therapy and Physical Disabilities service has introduced a paper and electronic feedback form for people to undertake when their involvement with the Service is complete. Through the use of Outnav, responses from service users to our feedback form and collation of emails from people we have supported we are gathering more information to evidence that people engaging with our Service feel listened to and are treated with dignity and respect. People are letting us know that when we are able to work together, that even a small piece of equipment or change to their home environment can make a huge difference to the quality of their life.

This summer MELDAP carried out a consultation process with people with lived and living experience, carers/families, members of the public, services and partners. This included noting their priorities in relation to prevention / children / families services, treatment service and recovery orientated provision.

Duty Social Work Team introduced a paper and electronic feedback form that is initially sent out to those identified as Unpaid Carers. This commenced on 1/9/23.

Improving Outcomes - socioeconomic, health and wellbeing, personal outcomes

The HSCP is currently developing its approach to outcomes and has purchased the OutNav tool from Matter of Focus. It is currently too early to ascertain the effectiveness of this but there is a strong commitment from the HSCP to having a more systemic approach to outcomes as it is acknowledged that this has been a gap.

Midlothian will be Safer – Achievements

This theme aims to address the underlying causes of offending behaviour, working with a range of individuals and organisations within community justice. The Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 supported a redesign of the community justice system, transferring the responsibilities for reducing offending and reoffending to local Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs). A National Strategy for Community Justice (2022) and National Outcomes, Performance and Improvement Framework (2023) were published by the Scottish Government to outline the new model.

The Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan (CJOIP) has been approved and we are working on the actions agreed in the plan. During Q2 the Community Justice Service was onboarded to OutNav, the digital platform used to capture contributions and report on progress towards improved outcomes at personal, service and strategic levels.

Research continues to show that community based sentences are more effective in reducing offending than short prison sentences; they enable those convicted of offences to retain connections with local supports and family relationships. Community Payback Orders (CPO) have a number of requirements but Supervision and/or an Unpaid Work or Other Activity Requirement are those most often used by the Courts.

In the reporting year the Unpaid Work team completed 278 projects which benefited 221 people. We collated feedback from beneficiaries at the end of a project and 100% of respondents reported that the quality of the work was good (3%) or excellent (97%). From the feedback provided by individuals on an order, 100% of those who completed unpaid work or other activity advised that they learnt new skills and had been able to make reparation for their offending behaviour

Midlothian will Get it Right for Every Child - Achievements

The Getting It Right for Every Child theme oversees the effective delivery of the Integrated Children's Services Plan which is built around a set of core principles. Our vision for children and young people in Midlothian is to *have the best possible start in life and live safe, healthy, active, happy and independent lives.*

Based on the national Getting it right for every child wellbeing framework a set of priority actions has been developed which will make a significant contribution towards achieving the wellbeing outcomes. The Community Planning Partnership (CPP) are fully committed to realising the children's rights approach and ensuring that the principles of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) are embedded in plans taken forward.

Outcome 1: Midlothian Children and Young People are Healthy, Active and Nurtured

Outcome 2: Midlothian Children and Young People are Achieving and Responsible

Outcome 3: Midlothian Children and Young People are Respected and Included

Outcome 4: Midlothian Children and Young People are Safe and Nurtured

This quarter was a hugely successful year for the Summer Reading Challenge. The theme was Ready, Set, Read! based around the power of play, sport and games. Over 1,000 children signed up for the challenge (a 15% increase on last year) with 55% of those completing the challenge (a 4% increase on the numbers finishing last year). Nearly 130 events were attended by over 4,000 children and their families and over 21,000 items of junior stock were issued over July and August. Libraries saw 668 new child memberships which reflects the positive engagement of the Summer Reading Challenge.

Work is being progressed and is almost complete around gaining a clearer understanding on how all referrals come into the Children's service.

This has been a significant piece of work involving many stakeholders. Within Q2 there is a 7% decrease compared to last year at this time and a 12% decrease in referrals from Q1. The impact of this piece of work is already evidencing positive results. This said the complexity of the referrals coming into the service remains high however it is hoped that we shall offer a much improved service

The Family Wellbeing Service are already working with over 100 children and young people. Significant amount of training is on offer to the new workforce to ensure they have a good understanding of their role going forward. We have an independent person undertaking a review of what voluntary support we can buy-in to support this service. It is hoped this shall be concluded by the end of October. Arrival of Ukrainian Families and Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC). We continue to welcome Ukrainian families into Midlothian adopting a holistic approach to the support on offer. We are confident that our steady and thorough approach to this work has ensured that we are robust in the work we are undertaking.

Focus continues on the following 5 priority areas within Education:

Priority 1: Attainment and Achievement

Priority 2: Included, Involved and Engaged: Wellbeing & Equity

Priority 3: Self-improving Systems

Priority 4: Life-Long Learning and Career-Ready Employability

Priority 5: Finance & Resources

Midlothian will Support Residents to Improve Employability and Outcomes in our Communities - Achievements

The vision for this theme is to reduce the gaps in learning, economic circumstances and poverty.

The [Community Learning and Development Partners Strategic Plan 2021-24](#) aims to build skills for learning, life and work and supporting communities to improve outcomes through community development approaches. The [No One Left Behind plan 2022-25](#) is aimed to address the needs of Midlothian residents seeking employability support. It sets out how the Council and partners will work together to offer a range of targeted programmes and support for all.

Poverty and in-work poverty continues to increase due to the rise in the cost of living, particularly food and energy costs. This means that more individuals and families are struggling to support themselves and provide for their basic needs. As one of the fastest growing areas in Scotland, the Council cannot support more customers using the current resources, systems and processes. This means that the adoption of digital and automated processes will be key to continuing to provide a seamless customer journey, satisfying enquiries at the first point of contact and meeting increased demand.

Outcome 1: Improve employability outcomes for Midlothian residents

Outcome 2: Local people will have increased opportunities to influence decisions through work with public sector, Third Sector and community capacity building

Outcome 3: Improve the breadth, quality and impact of informal and formal lifelong learning including access to qualifications

Outcome 4: Enhance the impact of Police Scotland's priorities to support the communities through the work of the Police Scotland Local Authority Liaison Officer

Midlothian will be Greener - - Achievements

The Climate Emergency Group's and Community Planning Partnership vision is *significant progress is made towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030*. Our values are to get to net zero equitably, taking into account different people and communities capacities and abilities to get there. The Group consists of individuals and representatives of Midlothian Community Councils, Community Groups, national government agencies, Third Sector organisations, Midlothian Council, local chamber of commerce, land owners and Midlothian Energy Ltd.

The [National Planning Framework 4 \(NPF4\)](#) forms part of the local development plan for Midlothian and will also be the strategic basis that future plans and applications will need to take into account.

The biggest sources of carbon emissions in Midlothian are still domestic uses (30.5%) and transport (27.5%). Therefore, this theme will concentrate on reducing carbon emissions in the areas of domestic heating/power and transport to get to Net Zero.

Thematic actions are designed to increase awareness, promote reflection and action on the key Climate Emergency issues of energy, food and travel. They will lead to a better understanding of carbon emissions and greater investment in greener travel, renewable heat, energy sources and heating efficiency in Midlothian. The actions will help inform and give people the opportunity to get involved to make a difference. Midlothian's future will be different through having more people aware and engaged in Climate Emergency issues, both consciously and subconsciously. This will make Midlothian more resilient to the effects of Climate Change and in addition help contribute more widely to Climate Change resilience.

Outcome 1: Learning for Sustainability is increased

Outcome 2: Sustainable Living is increased

Outcome 3: Low Carbon/Renewable Energy Development and Home Energy Saving is Increased

Outcome 4: Carbon Storage is increased

Work continues to engage with businesses regarding their own climate change commitments via the 'climate change pledge' programme and there is increasing awareness in the Council and across communities on the back of communications from the Council and the working progressed by the Community Planning Climate Change Emergency group. Furthermore, this action will be progressed when the Council's adopted Climate Change Strategy is reviewed in 2023/24

The Scottish Government's Heat in Buildings Strategy (2021) sets out its aims and objectives for achieving net zero emissions within the entire building stock in Scotland by 2045, including addressing poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty. As part of this Strategy, Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) will set out the long-term plan for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving energy efficiency across an entire local authority area. The Strategies will draw on a standardised methodology to:

- set out how each section of the building stock needs to change to meet national objectives, including achieving zero greenhouse gas emissions in the building sector, and the removal of poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty.
- identify strategic heat decarbonisation zones and set out the principal measures for reducing buildings emissions within each zone.
- prioritise areas for delivery, against national and local priorities.

Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) set out the long-term plan for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving energy efficiency across an entire local authority area. The Strategies draw on a standardised methodology. Work is now progressing at pace to review the findings of the previously reported Stage 4 LHEES study, the outcome of which is confirmed as providing a good foundation for the remaining stages. The aim is to now have a draft LHEES strategy and delivery plan prepared for the end of the year. There has been positive and good engagement with internal stakeholders' business and community representatives, and regular engagement with Joint Venture Partners Midlothian Energy who will be an essential partner in delivering an effective and viable plan.

Work continues with the lighting capital programme with 176 new lighting column replacements this quarter, representing 64% of our annual target now complete. A further 213 street lights were upgraded to LED lanterns to include a central management system for dimming.

Six new 12 tonne food waste collection vehicles have recently been delivered, including one funded from the Zero Waste Scotland Recycling Improvement Fund to allow the introduction of this service in rural, and previously excluded areas. New collection routes have been developed during Q2. The Garden waste service re-started in March with 17,839 customers signed up to the service by the end of quarter 1, totalling 18,840 garden waste bins to be collected. Customer sign ups have reduced by 2.2% compared to the same period last year.

Work continues on our parks and greenspaces with 30 improvements/new facilities completed up to the end of quarter 2 with a further 20 improvements planned for this year. Activities this quarter include, new bench installations, tree planting, fencing and ground works across Midlothian.

Midlothian Council is overseeing a significant housing programme. Phase 1 provided 864 additional houses within Midlothian. The total number of new homes from phase 2, 3 and 4 is currently estimated at 1201, comprising of 489 from phase 2 budget and 712 from phase 3 and 4 budgets. Progress continues with 645 homes currently being constructed on site either through commencement of enabling works or main contract works as of November 2022. This includes the largest Passivhaus programme in Scotland, with 189 homes to be built to the exacting Passivhaus standard, in line with Midlothian Council's Net Zero Housing Design Guide. This ensures exceptionally high levels of energy efficiency and low utility bills for our residents

Midlothian will have a Wellbeing Economy and be Better Connected - Achievements

A wellbeing economy aims to deliver increased economic opportunities for all, providing meaningful and fair work, better outcomes for young people, sustainable places, improved health outcomes, reduced poverty and environmental sustainability.

To develop a wellbeing economy we will use Community Wealth Building (CWB) which is based around five interconnected pillars that centres on People, Place and Planet. Community Wealth Building changes the way local economies function by redirecting wealth into local economies, creating opportunities for the benefit local people. We have embedded three of the pillars into our delivery over the past two years and will continue to build on this work.

The [Regional Prosperity Framework \(RPF\) 2021](#) guides and integrates public, private and Third Sector decisions, actions, collaborations, strategies, policies and investments and sets out 3 key areas to support the rebuilding of the economy:

- people – to access fair work, to learn and develop new skills and to live happy and healthy lives
- places – that are sustainable, and attractive to live and work in and where enterprise thrives
- planet – meeting our needs in a way that will allow future generations to meet theirs, with a focus on reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (sustainability).

The Economic Development priorities for the 2023/27 Single Midlothian Plan align to the social, environmental and economic aspirations of the wellbeing economy with people focussed outcomes that will also deliver local economic benefit.

Outcome 1: Develop a Midlothian Community Wealth Building Action Plan to guide future economic activity across the partnership

Outcome 2: Increase economic opportunity to maximise income, empowering individuals and communities

Outcome 3: Develop a culture of entrepreneurship, increasing business knowledge, for current and future generations

The Business Gateway continue to promote localised procurement with clients, encouraging registration with the Supplier Development Programme and Public Contracts Scotland (PCS). The team actively encourage businesses to register with the Supplier Development Programme which provides access to free training and support in all aspects of public sector tendering to improve the tender readiness of local suppliers. This quarter, a further 8 new Midlothian businesses were registered with the Supplier Development, with 16 signed up in quarter 1, this is a significant increase compared to a total of 20 during 22/23. The increase could be attributed to local engagement through targeted promotion of meet the buyer events. A digital meet the buyer event was held in July in conjunction with FES who were awarded the Shawfair low carbon district heating system project in partnership with Midlothian Energy Ltd. Not all who registered attended so the team worked with FES to create messaging for direct and online promotion inviting specific business types to contact them directly to be added to their supply chain for the District Heating Network and future projects.

Working with our Procurement Team, Economic Development continue to identify upcoming procurement opportunities, promoting local procurement opportunities via digital channels and for any that suit a specific business the client is contacted directly.

The total number of new Business start-ups this quarter was 32. This should realise a forecasted creation of 40 jobs and an estimated contribution of £1.46M to the Midlothian economy in their first year of trading. 56 'Planning to Start' enquiries were received this quarter from individuals that are considering setting up a business but need support to achieve this.

The Locate in Midlothian website continues to be a valuable tool for employability opportunities and employment support with 32 property enquires received via the site during Q2, all enquirers contacted by Business Gateway advisors to offer wider support.

Our Estates team have had continued success in managing our PIA estate including the letting of an industrial unit in Mayfield. The lettings of two retail units on Buccleuch Street, which are due for completion at the end of October 2023, have entered into the negotiation stage with two prospective parties. Surveys have been concluded in relation to potential presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in our Schools. All schools within the at-risk date range of 1930-2000 have been surveyed by consultant engineers who have confirmed that RAAC is not present. An assessment of the Housing stock also found no RAAC. The Non-Housing stock condition surveys continue to be progressed in line with allocated budget and agreed timelines.

There were 5,251 active housing applicants placed on the Common Housing Register at the end of this reporting period. The total number of lets made to the general needs applicants this quarter was 39 and 58 made to homeless applicants.

We have maintained the Healthy Working Lives Gold Award for over 9 years and work has commenced on the development of our Wellbeing Strategy which will focus on the financial, physical, and psychological wellbeing of our workforce and ensure employees have access to advice, guidance and initiatives which support their health

and wellbeing. The rolling programme of Wellness@Midlothian initiatives continues this quarter to ensure we are supporting the positive health and wellbeing of our staff.

Midlothian will Work Towards Reducing Poverty - Achievements

This theme focuses on reducing all aspects of poverty using a data informed approach whilst learning from those with direct experience of poverty.

There continues to be a significant demand placed on homeless and temporary accommodation services, alongside the increase in energy, food and fuel costs, requiring a comprehensive preventative approach as set out in the Council's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. Homelessness is not inevitable and can often be prevented. Our refreshed vision for the service is that individuals and families will be able to access housing that is affordable and of good quality in sustainable communities. Housing Services are currently exploring a new approach to deliver services and are trialling new team set ups consisting of a community housing team, aiming to ensure every tenant and resident has their individual needs and rights recognised and is treated fairly with respect to enable tenancy sustainment. A core housing team, improving quality and turnaround of our properties, ensuring residents are informed of housing options and homeless applicants are provided temporary accommodation and a Homelessness team focused on preventing and supporting homelessness.

Challenges and Risks

Financial position: 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 challenges

Economic pressures: Inflation, as well as rising energy costs, are affecting the construction industry in Scotland. The UK is 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 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.

Growing Council: In recent Census results, Midlothian is projected to have the highest percentage change in population size of all mainland council areas in Scotland with an increase of 16%. In addition, Midlothian has 10 zones which fall into the most deprived areas giving a local share of 8.7% living in the most deprived areas in Scotland.

This growth creates the opportunity to meet housing need with 25% of new homes being built in the affordable housing provision, in addition to the expansion in our Council house building. This construction directly supports employment and will see a steady increase in the value of Council Tax income received over time.

To ensure Midlothian is 'building back better', this investment is also creating new jobs, apprenticeship opportunities, opportunities for businesses and communities and families hard-hit by the impact of the pandemic. These new opportunities help lead the way towards a better future for Midlothian.

National Care Service: The estimated funding gap for the next three financial years does not include the associated costs of the Scottish Government's National Care Services (Scotland) Bill. If enacted, the bill would have fundamental implications for the community and for Local Government itself. The wide reaching changes in the bill aim to deliver a National Care Service by the end of the parliamentary term, which will impact on all aspects of the work of the Corporate Solutions team, including financial implications, in both revenue and capital, our asset base, our workforce, governance and legal arrangements and our digital infrastructure and platforms. It will require an immediate focus for the foreseeable future, and this will inevitably have implications for other priority work at a time of continued resource constraint.

Cost of Living Crisis: Midlothian's citizens are facing significant financial challenges. The impact on households is already being noted across the UK with 93% of adults reporting an increase in their cost of living in March 2023 ([Office for National Statistics; Francis-Devine et al, 2022](#)). The UK is currently facing an unprecedented wave of increasing prices, bills and tax challenges. The 41 year high inflation rate of 10.4% is the main driver of the cost of living crisis which has outstripped wage and benefit increases. The price rises will impact low-income households hardest as a larger proportion of their costs are on energy and food. The Resolution Foundation estimates that absolute poverty is set to rise in the short-run, from 17.2% in 2021-22 to 18.3% in 2023/24 (or an additional 800,000 people in poverty).

As our citizens feel the impact of the Cost of Living Crisis, they will seek additional support from public services; in particular local authorities. To respond to this emerging crisis, the Council established a Cost of Living Task Force last year, which is chaired by the Council Leader and meets regularly to coordinate mitigating activities.

Midlothian Council - How we are Performing-



PI Off Target i

Code & Title	Gauge	Value	Target	Next Update Due	Last Update	History
● BS.MC.MPI.05 Performance against revenue budget		£288.042m	£284.167m	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	
● CORP8 Corporate Indicator - Percentage of invoices sampled and paid within 30 day...		90.0%	95.0%	01 Jan 2024	2022/23	
● BS.MC.SPSO.05.1 Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working d...		80.75%	95%	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	
● BS.MC.SPSO.05.2 Percentage of complaints at stage 2 complete within 20 working ...		17.24%	95%	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	
● BS.MC.SPSO.05.3 Percentage of complaints escalated and complete within 20 work...		85.37%	95%	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	
● MC.SPSO.04.2 Average time in working days for a full response at stage 2		36.241	20	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	

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Balanced Scorecard Indicators

Half Year Report 2023/24

This section of the Council report is presented using the Balanced Scorecard approach. The four Balanced Scorecard perspectives and key areas of focus are shown in the following table and the associated key indicators that follow are drawn from across the Councils services.

Customer/Stakeholder	Financial Health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving outcomes for children, young people and their families • Ensuring Midlothian is a safe place to live, work and grow up in • Creating opportunities for all and reducing inequalities • Growing the local economy and supporting businesses • Responding to growing demand for Housing and Adult Social Care services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining financial sustainability and maximising funding sources • Making optimal use of available resources • Reducing costs and eliminating waste
Internal Processes	Learning and Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving and aligning processes, services and infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing employee knowledge, skills and abilities • Improving engagement and collaboration • Developing a high performing workforce

Each of the perspectives shown above are supported by a number of key measures and indicators which ensure that the Balanced Scorecard informs ongoing performance reporting and helps to identify areas for further improvement. The strategy map below provides an at a glance summary of the key performance indicators identified for the Single Midlothian Plan and under each of the perspective headings of the Balanced Scorecard. Detailed performance data is available in the quarterly service performance reports.

Single Midlothian Plan - Key Indicators



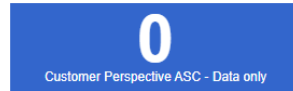
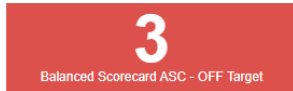
Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) draw together public, voluntary and private sector bodies, and local communities. CPPs deliver a shared 'plan' based on evidence to improve the lives of local people, in Midlothian, the plan is called the Single Midlothian Plan. By working together as a Community Planning Partnership, individuals and communities will be able to lead healthier, safer and greener lives by 2030. No child or household need live in poverty. Midlothian will be a Great Green Place to Grow by achieving our net zero carbon ambitions and supporting local people to strengthen the skills they need for learning, life and work.

From 1st September 2023 we are moving to a four-year Single Midlothian Plan from 2023-27. The structure will now consist of 7 thematic priorities with key actions across the four years and will be refreshed annually.

- Midlothian will be healthier
- Midlothian will be safer
- Midlothian will Get it Right for Every Child
- Midlothian will support residents to improve Employability and Outcomes in our Communities
- Midlothian will be Greener
- Midlothian will have a Wellbeing Economy and be Better Connected
- Midlothian will work towards reducing poverty

The first reporting of the key performance indicators in the new plan will be included in this report at Q4 2023/24.

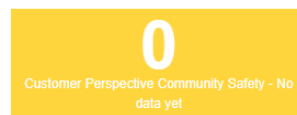
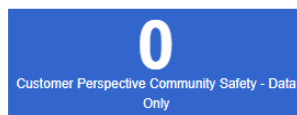
Customer Perspective - Adult, Health and Care



1. Adult Health and Care

Performance Indicator	2021/22	2022/23	Q1 2023/24			Q2 2023/24		
	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
Number of completed Adult Carer Support plans by VOCAL (accumulative)			144	150		257	300	
Number of completed Adult Carer Support plans by HSCP (accumulative)			36	20		82	40	
Number of service areas with a functioning feedback mechanism.			3	2		4	4	
Percentage of Health and Social Care specific LearnPro modules working / accessible that relate to registered professional practice.			100%	100%		100%	100%	
All Health and Social Care specific LearnPro modules with up to date content that relate to registered professional practice.			No	Yes		Yes	Yes	
Performance against revenue budget	£52.319m	N/A	£56.580m	£56.580m		£56.580m	£56.580m	
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence (cumulative)	17.10	21.16	5.60	10.53		13.19	10.53	
% of service priority Actions on target / completed, of the total number	82.86%	72.97%	100%	90%		87.5%	90%	

Customer Perspective - Community Safety



2. Community Safety

Performance Indicator	2021/22	2022/23	Q1 2023/24			Q2 2023/24		
	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
% of satisfactory complete Community Payback Orders	73.4%	70%	91%	80%	✓	98%	80%	✓
Percentage of all street light repairs completed within 7 days (cumulative)	100%	98.74%	99.27%	90%	✓	97.6%	90%	✓

Customer Perspective - GIRFEC



Customer Perspective GIRFEC - Off Target						
Code & Title	Gauge	Value	Target	Last Update	History	
● BS.E.P.1.1d Improve Primary School attendance		94.48%	95%	Q2 2023/24		
● BS.E.P.1.1e Improve Secondary School Attendance		89.15%	91.5%	Q2 2023/24		

← 1 of 1 →

3. Getting it Right for Every Midlothian Child

Performance Indicator	2021/22	2022/23	Q1 2023/24			Q2 2023/24		
	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
Number of outcome focused assessments undertaken (cumulative)	1,339	1,329	343	Data only		694	Data only	
Number of referrals to the duty service (cumulative)	8,287	9,016	2,353	Data only		4,420	Data only	
Number of foster carers going through prep groups on a quarterly basis (cumulative)	24	14	7	Data only		9	Data only	
Number of new foster carers approved (cumulative)	3	1	0	Data only		1	Data only	
Number of foster carers de-registered quarterly (cumulative)	5	4	2	Data only		3	Data only	
Number of permanence LAAC Reviews happening quarterly (cumulative)	10	27	7	Data only		10	Data only	
Number of children matched in quarter – (average months from perm LAAC to matching panel) (cumulative)	8	4	0	Data only		0	Data only	
Number of places taken at residential houses - capacity 12	12	10	10	Data only		10	Data only	
The number of children living in kinship care	61	59	58	Data only		53	Data only	
The number of children living in foster care	65	61	56	Data only		63	Data only	
Number of Midlothian children on the Child Protection Register	38	43	69	Data only		49	Data only	

Performance Indicator	2021/22	2022/23	Q1 2023/24			Q2 2023/24		
	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
Rate per 1,000 population of Midlothian children on the Child Protection Register in relation to the Scottish average	2.1	2.4	3.8	Data only		2.7	Data only	
% of Child Protection plans which have integrated chronology	79%	94%	77%	Data only		N/A	Data only	
Rate per 1,000 of Midlothian Looked After Children AT HOME in comparison with the Scottish average	1.5	1.3	1.7	Data only		1.7	Data only	
Rate per 1,000 of Midlothian Looked After and Accommodated Children in comparison with the Scottish average	7	6.7	6.5	Data only		6.6	Data only	
The number of looked after children and young people not in residential placed outwith Midlothian	11	8	8	Data only		10	Data only	
The number of looked after children and young people placed in Residential School outwith Midlothian	2	2	2	Data only		2	Data only	
The number of young people who are allocated/engage with Through Care and After Care service	64	64	65	Data only		62	Data only	
Child Protection: % of Core Group meetings held within a 8 week period.	98%	99%	100%	100%		100%	100%	
Child Protection: % of Core Group meetings held within 15 days for Initial	86%	89%	89%	100%		100%	100%	
Improve Primary School attendance	92.25%	93.03%	93.32%	95%		94.48%	95%	
Improve Secondary School Attendance	87.36%	87.11%	87.17%	91.5%		89.15%	91.5%	
Reduce exclusions in Primary schools (Rate per 1,000)	3.04	3.03	4.08	15		1.45	15	
Reduce exclusions in Secondary schools (Rate per 1,000)	20.2	22.6	28.01	15		3.54	15	
Percentage of Midlothian Care Experienced school leavers progressing to positive destinations	88%	90%	No Data yet			No Data yet		

Customer Perspective - Improving Opportunities for Midlothian



0
Customer Perspective IOM - Off Target

0
Customer Perspective IOM - On Target

1
Customer Perspective IOM - Data only

2
Customer Perspective IOM - No Data available

4. Improving Opportunities for Midlothian

Performance Indicator	2021/22	2022/23	Q2 2023/24		Status
	Value	Value	Value	Target	
Midlothian Citizen Advice Bureaux (CABs) will generate an income maximization of £625k per quarter	£5,703,704	£5,119,209	No data available		
% of those leaving school secure a positive destination	95.5%	LGBF annual indicator – data not released yet			
Percentage of Unemployed People Assisted into work from Council (LGBF)	16.17%	LGBF annual indicator – Data only			

Customer Perspective - Sustainable Growth and Housing



Code & Title	Gauge	Value	Target	History
BS.PLACE.P.5.2b Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the 'Modern fa...		98.4%	100%	
HSN3 Corporate Indicator - Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the S...		34.3%	100%	
BS.PLACE.HSN.01 Re-let time permanent accommodation properties (calendar days)		47 days	35 days	

5. Sustainable Growth

Performance Indicator	2021/22	2022/23	Q1 2023/24			Q2 2023/24			
	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
Number of environmental awards e.g. Green flags	1	2	0	0		2	2		
Percentage of Council fleet which is 'Green' (cumulative)	8.2%	8.2%	8.2%	8%		8.2%	8%		
Percentage of waste going to landfill per calendar year (quarterly)	12.3%	13.3%	15.1%	15.0%		N/A	15.0%		
Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the 'Modern facilities & services' Scottish Housing Quality Standard criteria	98.4%	98.4%	98.4%	100%		98.4%	100%		
Number of New Business Start Ups (LGBF)	124	118	24			32			
Street Cleanliness Score (LGBF)	89.1%		LGBF annual indicator – data not released yet						
Percentage of total household waste that is recycled (LGBF)	47.5%	42.0%	50.6%	54.0%		N/A	54.0%		
Corporate Indicator - Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard criteria (LGBF)	77.55%	32.28%	34.3%	100%		34.3%	100%		
Re-let time permanent accommodation properties (calendar days)	46 days	33 days	27 days	35 days		47 days	35 days		
Percentage of total road network resurfaced (cumulative)	2.05%	2.89%	0.55%	0.55%		1.23%	1.23%		

Financial Health Perspective



Customer Perspective GIRFEC - Off Target

Code & Title	Gauge	Value	Target	Next Update Due	Last Update	History
BS.MC.MPI.05 Performance against revenue budget		£288.042m	£284.167m	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	
CORP8 Corporate Indicator - Percentage of invoices sampled and paid within 30 day...		90.0%	95.0%	01 Jan 2024	2022/23	

← 1 of 1 →

Short Name	2021/22	2022/23	Q1 2023/24			Q2 2023/24		
	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
Performance against revenue budget	£240.921m	£258.468m	£287.019m	£283.793m		£288.042m	£284.167m	
Corporate Indicator - Primary Education - Cost per pupil (LGBF)	£6,299.70		Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - Secondary Education - Cost per pupil (LGBF)	£7,703.62		Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - Pre- Primary Education - Cost per pupil (LGBF)	£9,891.00		Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - The Gross Cost of "Children Looked After" in Residential Based Services per Child per Week (LGBF)	£6,509.46		Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - The Gross Cost of "Children Looked After" in a Community Setting per Child per Week (LGBF)	£466.60		Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - Central Support services as a % of Total Gross expenditure (LGBF)	3.79%		Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - Cost of collecting council tax per dwelling (LGBF)	£8.54	£11.70	Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - Percentage of invoices sampled and paid within 30 days (LGBF) (quarterly)	93.1%	90.0%	92.4%	95.0%		92.0%	95.0%	
Corporate Indicator - Net cost of waste collection per premise (annual) (LGBF)	£59.60		Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - Net cost of waste disposal per premise (annual) (LGBF)	£53.53		Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population (LGBF)	£11,744.82		Annual Measure					

Short Name	2021/22	2022/23	Q1 2023/24			Q2 2023/24		
	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
Corporate Indicator - Cost of maintenance per kilometre of roads (LGBF)	£8,815.00		Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - Cost of Trading Standards, Money Advice & Citizen Advice per 1000 population (LGBF)	£5,424.36		Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population. (LGBF)	£15,682.00		Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - Older Persons Home Care Costs per Hour (Over 65) (LGBF)	£27.88		Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator -sds	4.41%		Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - The Net Cost of Residential Care Services per Older Adult (+65) per Week (LGBF)	£816.86		Annual Measure					

Learning and Growth Perspective



Short Name	2021/22	2022/23	Q1 2023/24			Q2 2023/24		
	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
Percentage of staff turnover (including teachers) (quarterly)	9.5%	10.36%	2.4%	Data only		2.9%	Data only	
Corporate Indicator - The Percentage of council employees in top 5% of earners that are women (LGBF)	55.0%	56.9%	57.1%	50.0%		57.7%	50.0%	
Corporate Indicator - The gender pay gap between average hourly rate of pay for male and female - all council employees (LGBF)	2.52%	2.86%	2.39%	Data only		2.22%	Data only	
Corporate Indicator - Sickness Absence Days per Employee (All employees)	9.33	11.04	2.97	Data only		5.17	Data only	
Corporate Indicator - Teachers Sickness Absence Days (LGBF)	4.61 days	5.62 days	1.51 days	Data only		2.20 days	Data only	
Corporate Indicator - Local Government Employees (except teachers) sickness absence days (LGBF)	11.22 days	13.20 days	3.55 days	Data only		6.37 days	Data only	

Internal Processes Perspective



Code & Title	Gauge	Value	Target	Next Update Due	Last Update	History
BS.MC.SPSO.05.1 Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working d...		80.75%	95%	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	
BS.MC.SPSO.05.2 Percentage of complaints at stage 2 complete within 20 working ...		17.24%	95%	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	

Short Name	2021/22	2022/23	Q1 2023/24			Q2 2023/24		
	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
% of internal/external audit actions progressing on target.	93.06%		90.68%	85%		85.82%	85%	
% of high risks that have been reviewed in the last quarter	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	100%	
Corporate Indicator - Percentage of adults satisfied with libraries (LGBF)	66%	66%	Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - Percentage of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces (LGBF)	83%	83%	Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - Percentage of adults satisfied with leisure facilities (LGBF)	63%		Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - Percentage of Adults satisfied with local schools (LGBF)	67%		Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - Percentage of Adults satisfied with refuse collection (LGBF)	N/A	81%	Annual Measure					
Corporate Indicator - Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning (LGBF)	N/A	56%	Annual Measure					
Total number of complaints received (quarterly)	6,450	6,459	573	Data only		378	Data only	
Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working days	87.7%	90.67%	87.68%	95%		80.75%	95%	
Percentage of complaints at stage 2 complete within 20 working days	70.21%	77.55%	72%	95%		17.24%	95%	

Rosewell to Auchendinny NCN 196 Pathway Upgrade**Report by Derek Oliver, Chief Officer, Place****1 Recommendations**

- a) Cabinet notes and welcomes the significant numbers of responses to the public consultation;
- b) Approves that the Rosewell to Auchendinny NCN 196 Pathway be upgraded using “Flexipave” materials at an approximate grant funded expenditure cost of up to £590,000 to provide a safer and more user accessible path at no additional cost to the Council.

2 Purpose of Report/Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to identify options to deliver an upgrade to the Rosewell to Auchendinny NCN 196 Pathway, one of the key active travel and leisure routes in Midlothian. This report also describes the significant and welcome public feedback response to an online public consultation exercise. There were 752 responses.

The report recommends that Option 2 described at paragraph 4.16 b) be taken forward to install a “Flexipave” surface which would be markedly softer than asphalt/tarmac providing a surface suitable for the majority of users including cyclists, horses, joggers, wheelers and walkers.

Date: 8 November 2023
Report Contact: Steven Psihramis Sustrans Senior Project Officer
Robbie Beattie Neighbourhood Services Senior Manager
Email: Steven.Psihramis@midlothian.gov.uk
Robbie.Beattie@midlothian.gov.uk

3 Background

- 3.1** In recent years, the council has received numerous queries about the surface of NCN 196 between Rosewell and Auchendinny. Forming part of a route between Musselburgh (where it links with NCN 1, the primary North-South active travel corridor in the UK) and Penicuik. The section in question is currently the only portion that does not have a sealed surface, with the remainder of the route consisting of bituminous tarmac.
- 3.2** The unpaved section had been known for its muddy conditions and poor drainage, although there have been surface and drainage improvements in recent times. Nevertheless, there have still been many comments from path users that state the pathway surface is unsuitable for certain users – particularly road bikes, and for those with mobility issues. These issues are exacerbated in periods of poor weather.
- 3.3** A fully surfaced route will provide an accessible, quiet, off-road option for those travelling from Penicuik and Auchendinny to Rosewell, Bonnyrigg, Dalkeith, and beyond, avoiding the busy A701, steep gradients crossing the river North Esk through Roslin Glen, and busy/exposed roads around Auchendinny, Roslin and Howgate-particular concerns that have been raised in previous consultation feedback.
- 3.4** The Council has aspirations to connect this long-distance popular off-road path with the Shawfair to Roslin off-road path, as well as extending the route to Leadburn. Surfacing of this section of path will allow these options to be pursued to provide an extensive long-distance and well-connected option for off-road active travel throughout Midlothian and into neighbouring local authority areas.”
- 3.5** In national transport policy, active travel has formed a key part of the Scottish Government’s transport priorities. The Scottish Government Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR 2) identified the National Cycle Network to be key transportation infrastructure, with the proliferation of ‘active freeways’ being one of the major strategic aims.
- 3.6** The National Transport Strategy, STPR2, and the new National Planning Framework also place a spotlight on equalities issues, and the need to consider the needs of protected groups in design decisions. Access difficulties for certain user groups was a consideration in pursuing this project to provide a sealed surface for the path, as was ensuring consistency for users across the entire length of the path.
- 3.7** In summer 2022, initial discussions were held by officers on potential surface upgrades to NCN 196 between Rosewell and Auchendinny. Following an initial expression of interest to Sustrans, the Cycling, Walking, and Safer Routes programme (CWSR) fund was identified as a potential funding mechanism. CWSR is distributed to Councils from Transport Scotland to improve walking, cycling, and wheeling infrastructure for everyday journeys.

4 Main Report

4.1 Path Upgrade Options

Initial officer proposals (Option 1) suggested that the remaining section of path NCN 196 be asphalt in a similar fashion to the adjoining sections. The proposal would make use of a coarser aggregate to improve grip in wet or icy conditions. The total anticipated cost was £370,000, of which £50,000 would be made up of design costs.

4.2 The proposed works were to be funded through the Transport Scotland (TS) Cycling, Walking, and Safer Routes Fund (CWSR). The CWSR fund exists to enable Local Authorities to fulfil the desired Outcomes for Active Travel in their locality. These Outcomes are published in the Scottish Governments Active Travel Framework.

The Outcomes are:

- a) Walking, cycling and wheeling is available to all.
- b) Walking, cycling and wheeling is safer for all.
- c) High quality walking, cycling and wheeling infrastructure is available for all.
- d) Increase the number of people choosing walking, cycling and wheeling in Scotland

4.3 There was some opposition to these initial proposals, particularly from local equestrian users. In feedback equestrian users noted the NCN196 path is part of the Tyne Esk trails network, and horses prefer softer surfaces under hoof. Therefore, further options were explored by officers to help find a solution acceptable to all path users.

4.4 Option 2. Use a resin-bound surface such as Flexipave. This surface would be markedly softer than asphalt and would interfere less with root growth of neighbouring trees. As Flexipave is a porous surface, this would likely assist with drainage, and could potentially reduce the iciness of the pathway in winter.

However, Flexipave cannot be machine-laid, and will require a longer construction period of approximately 3 to 4 months instead of 6 weeks, and significantly higher costs due to the labour required. The cost for the flexible option would be approximate £505,000 plus an additional £50,000 in design costs and £35,000 as a contingency. At a cost of £590,000 this option would be £221,000 costlier than the originally proposed asphalt solution. The additional funding will be found by reprioritising other projects in the CWSR workstream.

4.5 Option 3. Install a 2-metre tarmac strip, with a 1-metre wide Flexipave surface. This would allow for a more cost-effective upgrade of the surface, while implementing a strip of resin-bound surface that would accommodate equestrian users and those with mobility difficulties. However, this option is not considered optimal by Transport Scotland (providers of the CWSR fund), or by Sustrans (custodians of the National Cycle Network and potential additional funder) due to potential territorialism from users, and differing installation and maintenance requirements.

4.6 Public Consultation

An online public consultation was launched on 8 August 2023 and closed on 5 September 2023. This was hosted on the council consultation portal.

https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/directory_record/78600658/resurfacing_ncr196_between_rosewell_and_auchendinny/category/721/closed_consultations_2023

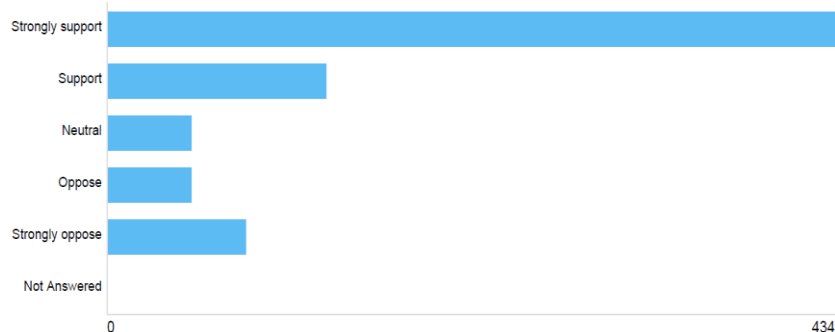
<https://midlothiancouncil.citizenspace.com/communications/ncn196/>

4.7 The consultation sought views on the three options outlined above at 4.1, 4.4 and 4.5 and alternative solution put forward by respondents which could include do nothing.

4.8 Survey Consultation Feedback

Survey results showed a strong level of support for active travel improvements generally. Those opposed to active travel improvements often listed the cost of active travel infrastructure, and the desire to prioritise road improvements and maintenance over active travel. Similarly, some who were supportive of active travel voiced opposition to this particular project.

Support for active travel improvements



Respondents to the survey described themselves mostly as pedestrians/runners or cyclists, with a sizeable group of respondents being equestrian users.

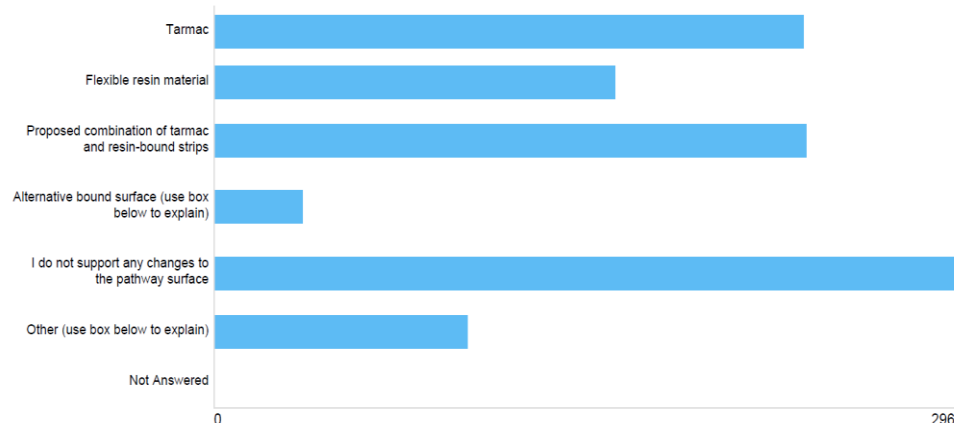
Option	Total	Percent
Walk/Run	583	78.15%
Cycle	494	66.22%
Wheelchair/Powerchair	11	1.47%
Alternative Cycle (recumbent bike, tricycle, etc)	8	1.07%
On horseback	101	13.54%
Skateboard	2	0.27%
Scooter	16	2.14%
Pram	76	10.19%
Other (use box below to explain)	58	7.77%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

- 4.9** Many of those in support commented on the pathway's important role for recreation and countryside access, as well as its key role in connecting communities. It was held up as one of the few examples in Midlothian of pathways separate from vehicular traffic. High levels of traffic, and dangerous conditions for pedestrians, cyclists, and horse riders on roadways were listed as key concerns for many respondents.
- 4.10** Responses were much more split when determining a course of action for this section of pathway. A plurality of respondents (39.7%) did not support any changes to the pathway surface, while 31.5% of respondents would prefer the surface be upgraded to a tarmac surface.

Overall, the response total adds up to more than 100% as respondents were permitted to choose as many surface types as they would be comfortable with. 31.6% of respondents would be comfortable with alternative bound surfaces, and 21.4% of respondents supported the proposed resin bound surface. Other responses supported a range of surface types – largely with various unbound surfaces, or better maintenance of the existing pathway.

Question 8: What sort of changes would you support to the pathway surface? Select all that apply:

Types of surface - checkboxes



- 4.11** The majority of the respondents used the pathway for recreational or social purposes, although there is a sizeable minority of users who use the section for utility journeys such as commuting, shopping, or accessing key services. This demographic was the most likely to indicate that they would use the pathway for a broader range of journeys should the surface be improved.
- 4.12** Common themes present in the consultation responses were the poor surface quality of this section – particularly the muddy surface in rainy conditions, and general difficulty in winter. There were a number of respondents who claimed that they avoid the unpaved section of the pathway due to difficulties with the surface. Many of these respondents are less mobile users who experience difficulty with the occasionally muddy conditions and uneven surfaces. Many cyclists have noted that they cannot take their road bikes along the route, and that they often experience tyre punctures along this section.

- 4.13** Among those who were not supportive of changes preferred softer surfaces as a preference for horses, and an easier surface for jogging on. Many of those who opposed surface changes also pointed to poor path etiquette with excessive speeds from cyclists, and claims that a harder surface would encourage this behaviour. The desire to maintain a natural feel to the pathway was also commonly articulated, as there was a feeling that the countryside is increasingly becoming urbanised, and the pathway is seen as an important recreational amenity.
- 4.14** Winter conditions with paved surfaces were also a common comment. The location is particularly prone to frost and ice, and a common complaint is that the paved sections of NCN 196 are often icy and slippery. This is a concern that is shared almost universally, including by those who are supportive of resurfacing. Many have indicated that they would be supportive of a bound surface on the condition that the route be gritted and receive proper seasonal maintenance.
- 4.15** Many respondents have also commented that this pathway is one of the few that can accommodate active travel journeys, and that a lengthy closure period would have a significant impact on them, as there are few safe alternative routes. The pathway's important role as an equestrian route should also be considered when discussing any closures and diversions that may take place.
- 4.16 Next Step Options**

Based on feedback from the public consultation and constraints from installation or funders, there are six potential courses of action:

- a) Proceed with Option1 which proposed asphalt/tarmac surface, ensuring that works can be carried out in a period that would minimise both environmental impact, and impact on users. Should this be the chosen option, it is highly recommended that the council commit to winter maintenance along the pathway to ensure usability for everyday journeys year-round.
- b) Proceed with the Flexipave solution (Option 2). Additional funding would need to be secured above that already agreed via the CWSR grant. There are three potential sources for the top up funding 1) an additional CWSR grant in 2024-25 2) Sustrans have indicated that they would likely be able to bridge the funding gap and 3) top up funding may also be available via the City Deal and Regional Prosperity Framework UKSPF fund. Planning for these works will need to be conducted more carefully as there is a shorter season in which this surface can be laid. Furthermore, it would require diversions to be identified and alternative routes outlined.

- c) Proceed with the proposed 2:1 solution (tarmac and resin-bound strips (Option 3). This option is seen less favourably by funders and could potentially compromise the shared nature of the pathway. This option would also cause uncertainty in terms of construction phasing, as the materials have differing limitations in their construction timeframes. There are further uncertainties around the long-term maintenance requirements of the two materials when used in tandem.
- d) Option 2 variation. Wait for machine laying solutions to become available for Flexipave surfaces. Work is ongoing to identify methods of machine-laying flexible rubber surfacing. This would significantly reduce the costs and closure periods associated with the surfaces and would deliver a higher quality end product as machine laying tools would not result in the surface imperfections characteristic of hand laying. However, this option would delay the works by a number of years until the technology is ready.
- e) Provide localised surface and drainage improvements. The Council does not have its own funds to deliver this project. It is likely it would not attract the funding required to carry out, as it falls short of the equalities requirements and year-round accessibility required for active travel improvements. However, this would improve some of the problem spots in wet and icy conditions.
- f) Do nothing. This option received the highest number of responses in favour during the consultation period but would result in no improvements to usability.

4.17 Taking account of the feedback from the public consultation, views from governmental stakeholders with a mandate to improve active travel and equal access to a usable path network officers are of the opinion and recommend that council should proceed with next step b) to implement Flexipave option 2. The project delivery will require to straddle two funding years and at a cost of £590,000 will be £221k costlier than the original proposal (Option 1)

5 Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)

5.1 Resource

The capital cost of the project is £550,000 with CWSR grant funding of £369k allocated to the project of which £8k has been spent on design. Additional top up funding of £221k will be required in 2024-25 from either CWSR, Sustrans or UKSPF. If the £369k fund is not spent in the current financial year it must be returned to transport Scotland CWSR fund

5.2 Digital

There are no Digital Services issues associated with any aspect of this project.

5.3 Risk

If the project does not go ahead or is delayed the £369k CWSR grant will be lost and returned to Transport Scotland. There may be accident claims against the council for failure to maintain a pathway.

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

The project aims to address equality-related comments from the public relating to poor access quality of the existing infrastructure. The pathway is a key connector for various user groups, including many users from protected user groups.

7 Additional Report Implications

Appendix A – Report implication

APPENDIX A – Report Implications

A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

The path promotes active travel which supports delivery of health inequality outcomes and achieving net zero by 2030.

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

The recommended solution is not the cheapest but is the best value option that allows access to and use of the path by the widest group of users.

A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The path is well used by the community for various purposes such as walking, running, cycling, horse riding etc. There were 752 responses to the online consultation which indicates a significant community interest in the path.

A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

Installing an improved path surface will encourage more active travel and leisure activity which will benefit health and wellbeing outcomes.

A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Installing an improved path surface will encourage more active travel and leisure activity which will benefit health and wellbeing.

A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

The proposed pathway is constructed from materials that will allow water drainage to tree roots. Provides an accessible route to allow movement between communities with use of a vehicle.

