

Place

Performance Report Q1 2022-23

Balancing the 2022/23 budget was reliant on £10 million of one off funding. Accordingly the recurring expenditure of £251 million for 2022/23 exceeds recurring funding by that £10 million.

The Place Principle

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.

We have endorsed the place principle because we are committed to strengthening the co-ordination and integration of all place based activity. The principle is a way of bringing together ideas about services, investments, resources and assets to achieve a shared vision. We are creating a shared understanding of what a place is for and what it wants to become with partners and communities collaboratively agreeing the joint actions required to make that happen and delivering these. This approach provides our key stakeholders with a way to exercise local or regional accountability over decisions taken about the way resources, services and assets are directed and delivered.

In implementing the place principle we:

- consider the benefits of planning, investment and implementation activity at the regional level of place - where that focus could drive faster rates of sustainable and inclusive economic growth
- ensure that place based work at the local level being led by Midlothian Council and its agencies/partnerships is taken forward in a way that is integrated and complementary of all the work being taken forward in associated policy areas and plans
- exemplify the behaviours reflecting the core of the principle, working and planning together with our partners and local communities to improve the lives of people, support inclusive growth and create more successful places.

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. This has resulted in a complete transformation of how the Council works. 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.

Hub and Spoke, one of Midlothian's key drivers for change, will see a locality approach to service delivery adopted, developed in conjunction with community planning partners. The opportunity to review and redesign services will result in a more efficient and effective operation of sites within local communities. This will improve service delivery, and ensure better outcomes for local communities. The continued rollout of enhanced ICT capabilities will strengthen cross service working, produce resource efficiencies and support the localisation of services.

Successes this quarter

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 the 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.

Alongside this, work continues with Midlothian Energy to develop the business case options for addressing building fabric and energy decarbonisation of the existing estate.

The annual Capital Works Programme for carriageway resurfacing continues, with 2.4km of carriageway resurfaced this quarter (0.34% of the total road network).

Also in this quarter, procurement commenced for a new contractor to deliver the lighting column replacement programme (with a target of 537 replacements expected to be met this year) as well as replacements planned for Sheriffhall Park and Ride. Progress has been made with the purchase of additional deployable CCTV units (as agreed by Council earlier in 2022), as well as the tender for traffic signalling and the public domain CCTV estate.

Following a successful funding bid to the Scottish Government's Recycling Improvement Fund, the in-cab units for Waste Services to progress their 'Digital Depot' workstyle have been received. Waste are now progressing the installation of the units in waste collection vehicles to increase efficiency through real-time reporting of service issues.

The pre-planning application was submitted to extend the Waste Transfer Shed at Stobhill Depot for the potential future collection of two streams of recycling. A further 3,540 customers have signed up to the chargeable garden waste collection service this quarter totalling 18,246 so far. In addition, 328 customers signed up to receive trade waste/recycling collections in 2022/23.

Land Services have been completing projects across the county including Easthouses Park, Millerhill Park, Kings Park and the tender evaluation for North Middleton pump track. New path works at Straiton pond also commenced this quarter. Alongside this, the team has been undertaking work including drainage and path repairs at Vogrie Country Park, Rosewell walk way, Roslin Glen and Waterfall Park and green flag submissions were made this quarter for Loanhead Memorial Park and Vogrie Park.

Work has been undertaken to improve the standard of shrub beds. Shrub beds in prominent locations have been barked to aid weeding and improve aesthetics. In addition, landscaping have ensured grass cutting standards are good across Midlothian benefiting from lessons learned during the pandemic and some additional cut and lift tractor grass cutting equipment financed by the Scottish Government's capital Nature Restoration Fund.

Economic and 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.

The Locate in Midlothian website continues to be a valuable tool for employability opportunities and employment support. Each social channel is targeting different audiences and each is performing well in terms of audience growth and interaction.

The Business Gateway service continues to be digitally delivered. Advisers have attended local networking events with partners to increase service reach. We have exceeded each target set for the 3 areas of business support demonstrating a level of recovery but data shows that there are still concerns around supply chain, labour shortages and Covid borrowings. We have supported 8 clients that were not aware of social enterprise as a model but did have social or environmental aims -all 8 have now expanded their initial ideas and set up as Community Interest Companies, and continue to access adviser support as they develop their social enterprises. Plans are in place for the virtual delivery of community enterprise sessions across Midlothian in 2022/23 contributing to Community Wealth Building objectives.

We have continued to maximise opportunities to support recovery of the tourism sector by supporting the development of the tourism forum's digital presence and representation on the steering group. A member benefit has been included with a quarterly roundtable meeting with Economic Development and Business Gateway to raise challenges and opportunities- early intervention in new initiatives can help accelerate those that will encourage more visitors to Midlothian. Business Gateway has referred 40 businesses to Midlothian Tourism Forum and membership is now at 55.

The Tyne Esk LEADER Scottish Rural Parliament project is now completed with a Midlothian/East Lothian needs based funding strategy produced. This will help to inform the way forward with the new fund for 22/23 and beyond. Close links with communities have been fostered and communities are open to further engagement with the Scottish Rural Parliament. Opportunities that may arise are with the Scottish Rural Youth Task Force/Scottish and Rural Islands Youth Parliament for young people, with Tyne Esk as potential first hosts, and Scotland's Older People Assembly for older people.

In quarter 1, the Planning Service lead a number of training sessions as part of the elected member induction programme, to inform the business of Local Review Body and Planning Committee, as well as preparation for the development of the next Local Development Plan. This quarter Prior to summer recess, the Planning Committee granted planning permission for the erection of 24 business (Class 4) units, a drive-through coffee shop(with associated car parking, access roads and drainage infrastructure)an application for planning permission in principle for a further three Class 4 plots all situated on land to the south of Sheriffhall roundabout. Permission was also granted for the erection of a retail food store of 1878sqm floor space (Class 1) and formation of access roads, car parking, and associated works on land at the junction of the A701 and Pentland Road, Old Pentland, Loanhead. The Committee also approved Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans for the Eskbank and Ironmills Conservation Area and the Newtongrange Conservation Area and Supplementary Guidance for Low Density Rural Housing.

Housing and homelessness

Midlothian Council's updated Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) was submitted to the Scottish Government at the end of June 2022 which sets out key actions for delivery in 22/23 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 other initiatives during 2022/23 and into 2023/24, with an emphasis on the prevention of homelessness, tenancy sustainability and early intervention.

During Q1 the number of households assessed as homeless or potentially homeless was 133, which is a 20% increase from this time last year (Q1 20/21). The number of cases provided with Advice and Assistance in Q1 was 237, which is an increase of 23% for the same period 20/21. There were 4,519 active housing applicants placed on the Common Housing Register at the end of this reporting period and 96 permanent homes have been provided to housing list applicants via the common housing register during this quarter. To aid the housing pressure, a further 22 temporary properties have been successfully changed to permanent tenancies this quarter.

The handover of the new hostel accommodation at Jarnac Court completed in Q. This newly refurbished site has 22 rooms for temporary accommodation for our homeless customers. We are working in partnership with WITHYOU and plans are being progressed for the project to open fully and begin to provide both accommodation and support to our applicants.

Housing First Annual Check-up: In Q1 Housing Services met with Homeless Network Scotland and the Scottish Government to discuss our approach to Housing First in Midlothian. This review meeting was very positive with a number of areas of good practice.

Capital 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 need. 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, totalling £0.8bn, 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.

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 COVID-19. 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.

In relation to our ambitious affordable housing programme, in total there were 334 site starts last year with 154 homes continuing construction into 22/23. In total, Midlothian Council attracted over £15m of Scottish Government grant funding into its affordable housing programme in 2021/22.

Midlothian Council is overseeing a significant housing programme. This includes the largest Passivhaus programme in Scotland, with 182 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. Progress is underway to fully open the newly conversion of Jarnac Court and will soon be providing temporary housing accommodation.

Works are underway at Polton Street in Bonnyrigg, where Midlothian Council is working closely with the Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership to build 46 homes with onsite care, as well as an Intermediate Care Facility providing interim and respite care for up to 40 short term residents and a new Day Services facility to support older people in the refurbished former Bonnyrigg Infant School. All of the new build elements of this development will be built to Passivhaus standard.

Destination Hillend continues to move forward. The first package of works, relating to the upgrade of the junction at the entrance are now out to tender and relevant planning applications are progressing. Design development continues on the most exciting elements of this development: the alpine coaster, the zipline and the new snowsports centre.

A public consultation exercise was completed for the A701 Relief Road and that project is also progressing, with the imminent selection of a preferred route and publication of the Stage 2 Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance report.

Utilising the Place Based Investment Fund, we have also invested in further public realm upgrades in Penicuik Town Centre, a new mobile library bus and a pop-up park in Newtongrange Town Centre. For the Town Centre Capital Fund, of the seven applications approved (£910,000) all projects are now complete with Penicuik Town Hall finishing this quarter.

Challenges

Financial sustainability has continued to dominate the agenda. In respect of inflation as well as rising energy costs and the real prospect of unfunded pay awards the quarter 1 financial reports to Council on 23 August 2022 highlight that the construction industry in Scotland and the UK is currently experiencing unprecedented adverse market conditions, which is 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 and whilst measures such as value engineering are partially mitigating cost increase there is a risk that the capital budgets will need to be increased with a resultant impact on the funding strategy. The situation continues to be monitored and as a consequence it may be necessary to both revisit existing capital plans and also review the 2022/23 service budgets and implement savings measures in the year.

The challenges for Midlothian continue with our recovery out of the pandemic, the cost of living crisis and the growing and ageing population and the increasing demand for services that this brings. Midlothian is projected to have the highest percentage change in population size of all council areas in Scotland. From 2018 to 2028, the population of Midlothian is projected to increase from 91,340 to 103,945. This is an increase of 13.8%, which is in contrast to a projected increase of 1.8% for Scotland as a whole with a 40.9% increase in older people over 75. 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 pace of growth demands additional capacity within the school estate to cope with the projected increase in pupil numbers. The general population growth forecast places additional pressure on our infrastructure, including the growth of the road network as new development roads are adopted, and increases the demand on essential services such as waste collection.

As part of work to address the issue of significant population growth and demographic changes within Midlothian, the key drivers of change in delivery of sustainable and transformational services and regeneration of our communities must be viewed holistically. We have endorsed the Place Principle because we are committed to strengthening the co-ordination and integration of all place based activity. This means we will:

- consider the benefits of planning, investment and implementation activity at the regional level of place - where that focus could drive faster rates of sustainable and inclusive economic growth
- ensure that place based work at the local level being led by Midlothian Council and its agencies/partnerships is taken forward in a way that is integrated and complementary of all the work being taken forward in associated policy areas and plans
- exemplify the behaviours reflecting the core of the principle, working and planning together with our partners and local communities to improve the lives of people, support inclusive growth and create more successful places.

Service Performance

56.5% of public health requests were responded to this year, a reduction compared to 61.2% responded to in Q1 21/22. This is a result of the Environmental Health team being diverted to proactively deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. This figure reflects those cases where response has been recorded in the Data Management System. It is further impacted by a number of staff vacancies. A redress of the backlog will take place during Q2 in updating the Management System which may result in revised figures.

Due to COVID-19 enhanced cleaning and janitorial services has continued to take place this year in all schools, resulting in ongoing increased weekly hours.

There continues to be a significant demand placed on homeless and temporary accommodation services. A potential key challenge will be an increase in homelessness as the financial measures put in place to protect households during the COVID-19 pandemic are now withdrawn, 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.

Re-let time for permanent properties has increased to 45 days this quarter whilst temporary re-lets has decreased to 34 days from 41 days in Q4. Increases in permanent accommodation are due to properties requiring extensive works, delays with utility connections and some delays with furnishing contractors.

Due to changes in the Energy Efficiency regulations affecting the Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS) criteria, 431 houses were identified during Q3 as failing Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing. We have reduced these failures from 431 to 160 to meet the 2025 targets. However, with the Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR's) now part of the SHQS from the 31st March 2022 we have found that 4733 fail assessment and therefore we have 34.3% meeting standard due to this. It should be noted that 100% of smoke alarm devices comply with current legislation.

Progress with annual Capital Works Programme for footway resurfacing due to focus on carriageway works is marginally off target this quarter with 0.82km of footway resurfaced to end of Q1. This includes work carried out as part of the Residential Streets Programme.

Domestic residual waste collection tonnages remain high and recycling rates have not increased this quarter which is a continued trend from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Number of Business starts ups remain similar to that of last year, however the total number of start-ups for last year represented an increase of 65% for the same period in 2020/2021. Initiatives are in place to promote and encourage businesses where possible in the current climate.

An ongoing challenge with the impacts yet to be realised in full will be mitigating the Scottish Government's decision to reject the Strategic Development Plan (SESplan2) for the South East of Scotland which leaves Midlothian and the other Council's in the region without an up to date strategic development plan.

Place

Successes and Challenges

Corporate Performance Indicators (latest)

● 5 ● 6 ? 0 ? 9

Service Plan PIs (latest)

● 10 ● 12 ? 2 ? 13

Corporate PIs Off Target

PIs ● 5

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

Performance against revenue budget

Average time in working days for a full response for escalated complaints

Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working days

Percentage of complaints escalated and complete within 20 working days

Service Plan PIs Off Target

PIs ● 10

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

Percentage of the Councils housing stock meeting the 'Modern facilities & services' Scottish Housing Quality Standard criteria

% of the footpath network resurfaced (cumulative)

Corporate Indicator - Percentage of the Councils housing stock meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard criteria (LGBF)

Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (LGBF)

Percentage of Building warrant assessments processed within 10 days (rather than nationally adopted target of 20 days), fast tracking applications which provide economic benefit to the Midlothian area or people living with disabilities circumstances.

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

Determine 80% of planning applications within target (2 months for a local application and 4 months for a major application).

Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the 'Free from serious disrepair' Scottish Housing Quality Standard criteria

Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the 'Healthy, safe & secure' Scottish Housing Quality Standard criteria

Service High Risks (latest)

▲ 3

Staff Wellbeing

Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation - Duties as a Statutory service

Housing Services Staffing resource - To enforce the provisions of the Housing (Scotland) 2014 Act

All Risks - Place

Risks ▲ 36 ● 86

Key PIs
● Off Target
● On Target
? Data Only
? Data Not Yet Available

Key PIs
● Off Target
● On Target
? Data Only
? Data Not Yet Available

Key Risks
▲ High Risk/Medium Risk
● Low Risk