

# Place

## Performance Report Quarter Two 2020/21



### 01. Progress in delivery of strategic outcomes and emerging challenges

The key drivers of change in delivery of sustainable and transformational services and regeneration of our communities must be treated holistically. The positive relationships established by Midlothian Council with our partners, private house builders, voluntary sector and the other partnerships are essential in developing a shared will to deliver on these outcomes.

Midlothian are taking a very positive and flexible approach to build momentum around the new supply recovery, as while there is a clear recognition that there will be a delay in starting and completing projects in the current five year programme and speculation about medium and long term impacts of the pandemic including the implications for the design of infrastructure we have progressed a quick review rather than a complete redraft to be able to progress this work through making changes to the Capital programme in Education, Housing and our strategic sites to take advantage of off the shelf opportunities or second hand purchases directed at meeting recovery objectives and supporting economic activity. This construction will directly support employment and wherever possible, new housing will be located close to good community facilities, shops and employment opportunities, with efficient and high quality public transport connections. New development shall be of high quality, balancing a desire for good contemporary design with respect for the area's heritage. The established community will benefit as much as possible from growth, through new affordable homes, enhanced employment prospects, improved education facilities and the development of green networks with opportunities for leisure and recreation.

Midlothian Council approved a new Economic Renewal Strategy, setting out its ambitious approach to managing the transition from lockdown and planning for the longer term challenges the local economy will face. The key aims are to protect jobs, preserve business and mitigate the adverse economic impact of COVID-19. Taking a partnership approach, the strategy will encourage 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

#### Locality Place Service Delivery

As a consequence of the recent pandemic emergency a Locality approach to service delivery is being developed in conjunction with community planning partners for localised support, and the incorporation of enhanced ICT capabilities will bring opportunities for improved cross service working and efficiencies in the use of resources, localisation of services essential for future service delivery resilience. The rapid and reactive changes forced upon the Council as a result of the COVID pandemic has resulted in greater use of technology and a review of service requirements which in the medium to longer term will see a more rapid move towards improved performance and enhanced outcomes than was envisaged prior to the pandemic. The opportunity to review and redesign services that the pandemic has provided will result in a more strategic review of operational sites within local communities in order to better meet both service delivery requirements and efficiencies and local community and resilience planning needs over and above pre – pandemic.

Population growth over the next 10 to 15 years will see Midlothian remain the fastest growing Council in Scotland. A 0-15 population increase is projected at 20% and 75+ population increase is projected at 100% between 2014 and 2039. The impact of this means increased capacity within the school estate to cope with the projected increase in pupil numbers. General population increase placing additional demand on infrastructure and therefore increased pressure on services e.g. waste collection and growth of road network as new development roads are adopted.

As part of work to address the issue of significant population growth and demographic changes within Midlothian, it is Council's view that the key drivers of change in delivery of sustainable and transformational services and regeneration of our communities must be treated 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

In addition the vision for the Place is supported by the following key strategies;

- Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
- The Council's Capital Strategy (Including Housing Revenue account)
- The Climate Change Strategy

## Outcomes

During Quarter 2, the Council approved the Climate Change Strategy at its meeting in August 2020. The Strategy incorporates an Action Plan with number of initiatives and ongoing programmes which together are helping to reduce our emissions and carbon footprint. Focus continues within the Place services to achieve future emissions targets.

There has been continued progress made towards ending the use of emergency bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless households. This is principally being achieved by expanding the shared accommodation project detailed in the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan and utilisation of shared accommodation services. This has resulted in an increased number of properties that would normally be let as permanent tenancies being transferred to the temporary accommodation letting stock. This has partly been offset by flipping over temporary occupancy agreements into permanent Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreements at the request of households, reducing the time households spend in temporary accommodation, in accordance with the revised Housing Allocation Policy.

New build site opportunities are currently being considered at Shawfair (2 sites) and Roslin providing an additional 100 affordable rented properties. These sites are not currently included in the Council's affordable housing programme and will be included in the revised Strategic Housing Investment Plan to be submitted to the Scottish Government in December 2020.

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

A full evaluation was carried out of all current and planned construction projects and resourcing reviewed, to take advantage of off the shelf opportunities or second hand purchases directed at meeting recovery objectives and supporting economic activity, and ensure appropriate resourcing remains in place to progress all construction projects effectively (comprising approximately 70 projects).

Town Centre Capital Fund: A total of seven applications were approved totalling awards of £910,000. 2 projects are complete, 3 are in the final administration phase and the Penicuik Town Hall project, the largest grant awardee has completed the installation of publicly accessible WIFI in the Town Hall. The major works will commence on site in October 2020 and will be completed prior to the September 2021 deadline.

On 21st September 2020 Midlothian Council accepted a further £331,000 from the Scottish Government's £30 Million capital contribution into regeneration in 2020/21, part of the £230 million economic recovery stimulus package. Expenditure should be complete by 31st March 2021.

The Capital roads programme for carriageway and footway renewal/improvement schemes commenced at the end of June 2020, following easing of Covid-19 lockdown restrictions. At the end of Q2, 25% of 24 individual carriageway schemes were completed equating to 1.64 km of carriageway resurfacing.

Improvement works to ensure access for all abilities to our Towns parks and play areas continue to progress with work completed for Scots Corner early learning and childcare centre in Penicuik. Ongoing works for various other sites are ongoing including a consultation phase with primary schools throughout the area. In partnership with volunteers the landscaping team remains focused on developing and maintaining walking and cycling routes, taking opportunities to publicise and promote co-production with communities.

Waste Services successfully applied for £20,000 of funding from Zero Waste Scotland to implement social distancing measures at the two Recycling Centres which will allow Penicuik Recycling Centre to re-open in quarter 3. This

quarters community waste activities have focussed on supporting the reuse cabin at Stobhill recycling centre and continued support from community clear ups and litter picks.

### **Challenges**

The challenge across Place services continues to grow, particularly when we are also faced with managing the COVID response and with a growing and ageing population and the increasing demand for services that this will bring. So far, we have reshaped council services and made changes to the way we work. These changes are evidenced in the delivery of new affordable homes, new schools, improved positive destinations for school leavers and the arrival of the Borders railway as well as new initiatives such as Energy from Waste Plant, Destination Hillend and reducing our offices and other property assets.

Quarter 2 has continued to bring challenges with the COVID pandemic and much resource has been required in many areas in response, such as Environmental Health as the test and protect system begins to identify locations associated with positive cases as well as the changes to the regulatory position and associated guidance. Similarly our Health and Safety team have been supporting the challenges of workplace risk and contingencies. Additional cleaning services have been implemented to carry out touch point cleaning throughout the day and sanitising/fogging of classrooms within schools where positive Covid cases are reported. In support of businesses, Economic Development administered the Newly Self Employed Hardship Fund and Covid Business support packages delivered between April and August 2020, with new packages coming forward for quarter 3 with £161,000 of funding being awarded in total.

# Place

## Successes and Challenges

### Corporate Performance Indicators (latest)

6 6 0 7

### Service Plan Actions (latest)

3 5 0

### Service Plan PIs (latest)

11 12 1 14

### Service Risks (latest)

67

### Corporate PIs Off Target

PIs 6

% of service priorities on target / completed, of the total number

Performance against revenue budget

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

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

Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working days

Percentage of complaints escalated and complete within 20 working days

### Service Plan Actions Off Target

Actions 3

Designate housing for particular needs with existing and new build stock

Complete survey and report into EESH compliance of Midlothian social housing.

Undertake programme of work to upgrade Council Houses to maintain the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.

### Service Plan PIs Off Target

PIs 11

Percentage of consumer complaints completed within 14 days.

% of the footpath network resurfaced (cumulative)

Number of social housing completions

Number of volunteer hours in countryside sites

Number of property reviews implemented (cumulative)

Income identified for the Council by sourcing third party opportunities through land & countryside working on hard and soft landscaping

Measure satisfaction relating to key areas in Building standards including those on delivery, timeliness, information, access and the quality of customer service

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

Percentage of housing units provided for particular needs with existing and new build stock.

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

### High Risks

Risks 0

There are no High Risks

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

Key  
Actions  
Off Target  
On Target/Complete  
Data Not Yet Available

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

Key  
Risks  
High Risk/Medium Risk  
Data Not Yet Available