



# Midlothian Council Strategic Plan 2022-2027

A great, green place to grow:  
where people and the environment flourish

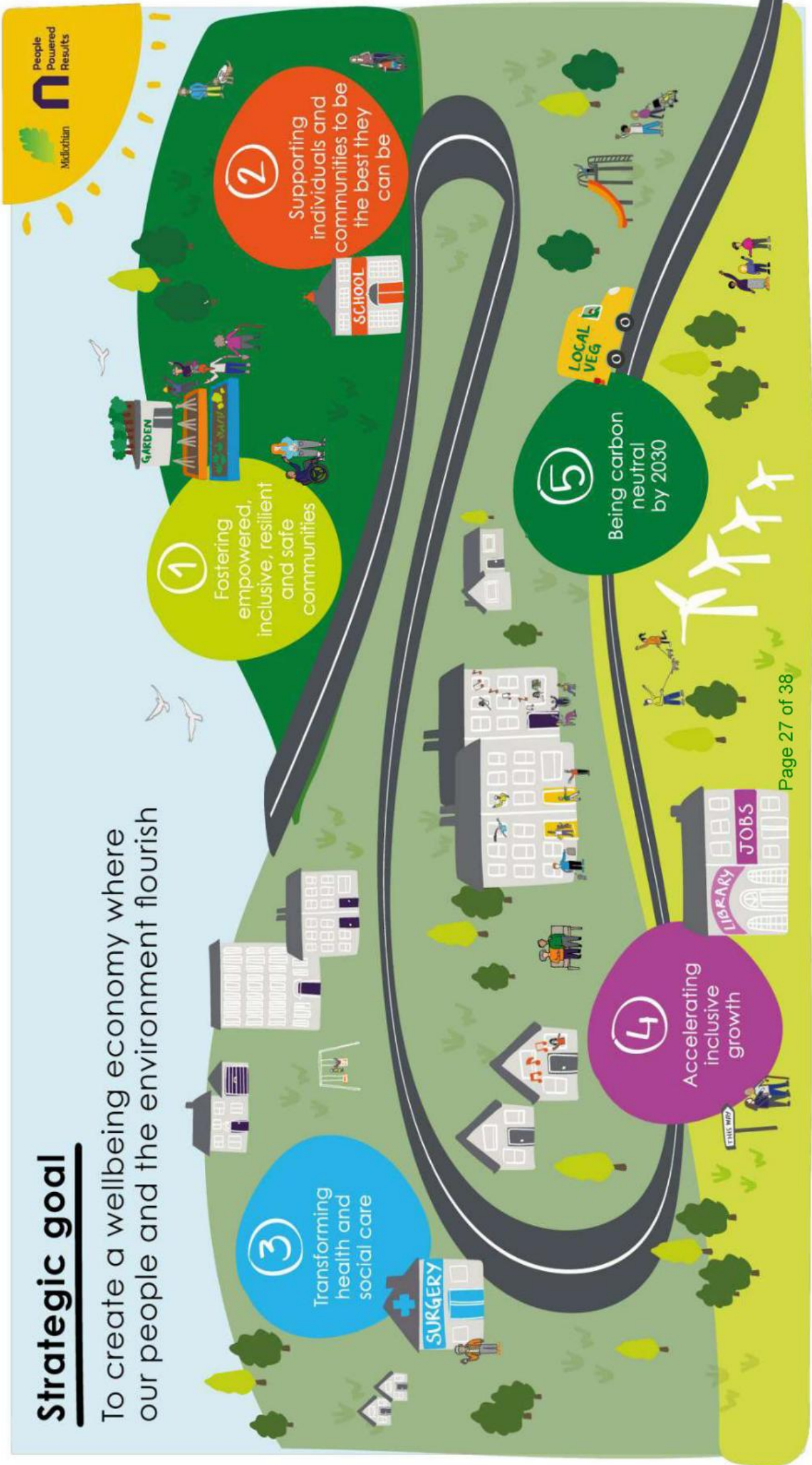
# Introduction

The last two years have brought significant and unprecedented challenge to our communities as we responded to the COVID pandemic. As we move out of the pandemic into a new post-pandemic work, we are committed to building on the learning and new ways of working that were adopted during this time, and renew our focus on delivering our key priorities at the most local level possible. Rooted in the creation of a wellbeing economy our new 5 year strategy is committed to reducing inequalities in health outcomes, learning outcomes and economic circumstances while addressing the health of our planet.



# Strategic goal

To create a wellbeing economy where our people and the environment flourish



## Strategic goal: a wellbeing economy where our people and the environment flourish



A wellbeing economy is an economy which puts people and the planet first. Midlothian aspires to be a socially, economically, and ecologically sustainable community by 2030. This is particularly critical as we respond to the ongoing Cost of Living Crisis.

This strategic goal links with the aim of the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) to promote prosperity while protecting the planet (as shown below).



### Our key objectives include:

- Responding on the ground to the current cost of living crisis, we will provide the right support at the right time through the creation of multi-disciplinary teams located in our new local 'Live Well' hubs. These hubs will be based in a central point within each of the three targeted communities in and will help our citizens with the services they need whether it be issues relating to food and fuel poverty, housing, wellbeing support and much more.
- To reduce inequality in learning, health and education outcomes.
- To adopt a Participatory Budgeting (PB) approach in which citizens decide how to spend part of the public budget. We will support PB as a tool for community empowerment and as a resource to build on the wider development of community participation. Adopting a PB approach will help deliver on [outcomes in Scotland's National Performance Framework](#) that 'we live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe' and 'we tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally'.
- To achieve Carbon neutrality by 2030.
- To increase wellbeing and prosperity. In Midlothian this means ecologically and socially sustainable economic growth, high levels of employment, sustainable public finances, and stability in the economy, all of which help [address and](#) unforeseen negative impacts on people's wellbeing.

## Strategic goal: a wellbeing economy where our people and the environment flourish



### Over the next 5 years we will:

- Grow our 'Live Well' hubs across each of the six wards where multi-disciplinary teams will provide the right support at the right time. These hubs will be based in a central point within each of our six wards and will help our citizens with the services they need whether it be issues relating to food and fuel poverty, housing, wellbeing support and much more.
- Reduce inequalities in educational outcomes, health outcomes and economic circumstances
- Adopt a Participatory Budgeting (PB) approach in which citizens decide how to spend part of the public budget. We will support PB as a tool for community empowerment and as a resource to build on the wider development of community participation. Adopting a PB approach will help deliver on [outcomes in Scotland's National Performance Framework](#) that 'we live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe' and 'we tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally'

- Accelerate the implementation of the Climate Change Strategy
- Support economic growth and resilience by attracting new investment and enable existing local businesses to survive, grow and prosper
- Maintain and enhance our towns, villages and high streets as attractive, safe, digitally connected and healthy centres for business, homes, visitors, services and facilities, creating prosperity with support for regeneration
- Work to equip people with the skills they need to enter, re-skill and progress in the labour market and meet the demands of the local economy, with a focus on apprenticeships and growing our own talent
- Work with our businesses to adapt, diversify, develop and grow and ensure local communities and workers have fairer jobs, pay and opportunities to train and progress
- Encourage people to support our businesses by spending locally and promoting the Midlothian brand.



## ① Fostering empowered, inclusive, resilient and safe communities

In line with the [Place Principle](#) we are committed to delivering services at a local level ensuring that our communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe. The adoption of the Place Principle will help to promote a shared understanding of place, and the need to take a more collaborative approach to a place's services and assets to achieve better outcomes for people and communities.

The principle encourages and enables local flexibility to respond to issues and circumstances in different places. Drawing on our Local by Default driver, we will implement the Hub and Spoke model for locality based service provision and 'Live well' one stop shops bringing our services to communities so that the right support can be delivered at the right time.

Place is where people, location and resources combine to create a sense of identity and purpose, and are at the heart of addressing the needs and realising the full potential of communities. Places are shaped by the way resources, services and assets are directed and used by the people who live in and invest in them.

A focus on Place will also deliver a more joined-up, collaborative, and participative approach 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.



## ① Fostering empowered, inclusive, resilient and safe communities

### Over the next 5 years we will:

- Ensure that our Neighbourhood Services are sustainable and modern
- Deliver the Hub & Spoke model (building and estate rationalisation) and locality based service delivery including the 'one stop shop' approach
- Empower our communities so that we co-create services together
- Implement a PB Approach to the identification of key priorities for Place to ensure that our communities are inclusive empowered, resilient and safe.
- Create a comprehensive asset management programme to include property, roads and fleet, providing more efficient and responsive services for our communities
- Continue to invest in our green and open spaces, achieve and maintain green flag awards and maximise the use of the public realm
- Facilitate modal shift, reducing the use of cars and promoting more active travel options to, from and around the county
- Develop our own people and their careers in Midlothian Council



## ② Supporting individuals and communities to be the best they can be

Our agreed vision is that:

**All children, young people, adults and communities in Midlothian are supported to be the best they can be. This will be achieved through a nurturing, respectful and collaborative approach that promotes wellbeing, equity, inclusion and lifelong learning.**

The challenges for Midlothian continue to grow with the impact of COVID-19 and our recovery out of the pandemic, the growing and ageing population and the increasing demand for services that this brings. 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 pace of growth demands additional capacity within the learning estate to cope with the projected increase in pupil and pre-school numbers and the associated children's, education and community services to support this growth. 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.





## ② Supporting individuals and communities to be the best they can be

### Over the next 5 years we will:

- Improve children and young people's attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- Close the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- Improve attainment of children and young people who require additional learning support, including young carers and looked after children
- Improve employability skills and sustained positive school leaver destinations for all young people
- Improve employability skills and opportunities, particularly within known skill gap areas for adults
- Reduce inequalities in learning, economic circumstances and health through local and inclusive actions that meet our commitment to The Promise
- Improve the physical, mental health and wellbeing of children, prioritising care-experienced and looked-after children
- Reduce poverty and disadvantage across our communities
- Improve support to children and young people affected by domestic abuse, parental alcohol or drug misuse
- Expand early years services and improve services for children and families to ensure the best start in life
- Support young carers and give them the help they need
- Continue to promote the responsibilities of the Council as a Corporate Parent, including its responsibility for the wellbeing of those in its care
- Develop new family services to improve outcomes for children and families that identifies, understands and responds to need at the earliest opportunity in line with our approach to Getting It Right for Every Child
- Place the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of CYPP service delivery
- Support our children, young people and communities to develop and engage with activities which reduce carbon emissions and support climate change

### ③ Transforming health and social care



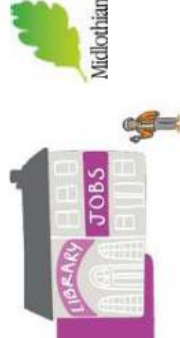
The Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership brings together parts of Midlothian Council and NHS Lothian to help people in Midlothian live well and get support when they need it - from care homes to care at home, voluntary organisations to vaccinations.

We aim to:

- **Change how health and social care is delivered** to better understand and meet the needs of the increasing number of people with long term health conditions, with complex needs and those who need support, working with people as partners in their health and social care.
- **Provide more support, treatment, and care for people in their homes, communities, or a homely setting** rather than in hospitals

- **Improve the quality of health and social care services** and achieve the [9 national health and wellbeing outcomes](#);

## ④ Accelerating inclusive growth



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

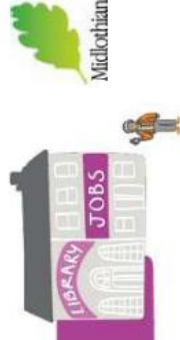
How we invest in community infrastructure must also respond to changes in our working and living patterns brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Communities need to be able to readily access the services they need.

Capital investment is also an opportunity to support our local economy through job creation and skills enhancement.

This is particularly the case as we move to ensure that our new and existing property assets contribute to Midlothian Council's commitment to being net zero by 2030. We must ensure investment in our community infrastructure delivers jobs that benefit those living locally and supports our transition to a green economy. Improving our skills landscape and developing our people to meet the future economic needs remains a high priority.

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.

## ④ Accelerating inclusive growth



### Over the next 5 years we will:

- Meet local housing need with 25% of new homes built to be affordable in perpetuity and expand Council house building.
- Invest in existing Council housing to make them more energy efficient and affordable to live in for tenants.
- Continue to invest in our learning estate to meet learners' needs, raise attainment rates and give our young people a great start towards rewarding careers.
- Enhance and regenerate key town centres in Midlothian.
- Ensure capital investment generates employment opportunities locally and delivers community benefits.
- Create new Council owned employment space to support business.
- Invest in local public transport infrastructure and active travel networks to make it easier to travel sustainably.
- Invest in the wider transport network to enhance connectivity to the City Region.
- Deliver Destination Hillend
- Protect and enhance the natural and built heritage of Midlothian to support our communities' health and wellbeing and attract visitors to the area.

## ⑤ Being carbon neutral by 2030



The Council declared a climate emergency in December 2019 and stated its ambition to achieve Net Zero Carbon status by 2030.

The Covid-19 pandemic necessitated an emergency response from the Council. It has brought about substantial organisational change across the Council in a very short period of time.

The Council's "Route Map" out of Covid-19 identifies "Digital by Default" as one of its key priorities. It supports continuing the practice of working from home (introduced because of Pandemic) and promotes a carbon neutral approach to the workplace.

New Emissions legislation (October 2019) commits the Scottish Government to achieving Net Zero Carbon status by 2045. This puts into context the scale of the challenge facing the Council and the transformational nature of the change required to achieve our 2030 target.

In light of the climate emergency, the Single Midlothian Plan has adopted a new sustainable growth outcome **to be an 'earth friendly' partnership, resource aware and committed to working to support Scotland's net zero carbon ambition by 2045 ( 2030 in Midlothian)** and prioritises the following climate change specific actions:

- a Climate Emergency group in the Midlothian Community Planning Partnership;
- a Sustainable Growth Agreement (SGA) between Midlothian Council and SEPA;
- identifying tree coverage on community planning partners land using appropriate software

## ⑤ Being carbon neutral by 2030



### Over the next 5 years we will:

- make the Council's activities net carbon zero by 2030.
  - establish a Citizens Assembly and Climate Change Partnership Group to engage the wider population, business, education and scientific sectors in the climate change debate.
  - raise awareness of the impacts and risks from a changing climate and facilitate individual and collective action to combat climate change.
  - use green energy to heat and light our estate buildings, making them as energy efficient as possible.
  - take a 'One Council' approach to reducing carbon emissions and putting this objective at the heart of our organisational activities, processes and decisions.
  - encourage people, businesses and communities to work alongside the Council and make their own climate change commitment.
  - increase our recycling rates and reduce waste.
  - lead by example and provide climate change leadership to our partners, communities and businesses.
- develop our resilience and ability to adapt to the impacts and risks of a changing climate.
  - deliver the fleet replacement programme, expanding our electric and ultra-low carbon vehicle fleet.
  - adopt the Passivhaus building standard and incorporate 'green' and 'blue' infrastructure as standard design principles for new developments.
  - investigate the feasibility of Zero Carbon Development Zones.
  - deliver the Shawfair low carbon community heating system and investigate options to develop heat networks across the county.
  - develop the Midlothian Active Travel network including cross-boundary connections for longer distance commuting and leisure routes.
  - accelerate organisational change to extend home working and reduce the need to travel.
  - promote a 'digital by default' approach to service provision, reducing paper based activity.