

Place

Performance Report Quarter One 2021-22

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 the past year, Innovative ways of working have been introduced and services adapted to respond to the needs of our citizens, in particular those experiencing the greatest levels of poverty and inequality, at pace. This has resulted in a complete transformation of how the Council works. Place 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 that the pandemic has provided 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.

A public consultation was launched this quarter on Service Standards for Waste Services. Setting Service Standards will allow us to better monitor and improve waste/recycling collection services and will better allow customers to hold us to account if targets for service delivery are not met. Feedback from consultations will be shared in due course.

In addition, waste services submitted applications to the Scottish Government's "Recycling Improvement Fund" which were deemed "in scope" of the objectives of the fund. If approved, these would allow food waste to be offered in rural areas; improvements to be made to communal waste/recycling collection infrastructure; procurement of in-cab technology to support the service; and for a tonne bag bulky waste collection service to be introduced.

We continue to achieve our ambition for access for all abilities to our parks and play areas. Town Centre Funding has been secured for Park improvements in Newtongrange, outline layout and proposals completed for Danderhall Play improvements with a priority for completion by September 21 and contract commenced on 5th of July 2021 for the Auld Gala Park Pump Track.

We continue to build on co-production with our communities and volunteers ensuring our parks and open spaces remain attractive and safe for use.

Economic

Midlothian Council approved a new Economic Renewal Strategy sets out its 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.

Locate in Midlothian, Midlothian's new website focussed on economic development, was launched during the pandemic, with supporting social media channels. The website continues to be a valuable tool for employability opportunities and support as well as showcasing the work of our local businesses. Each social channel is targeting different audiences and each is performing well in terms of audience growth and interaction. During the quarter Economic Development refreshed their Carbon Charter and developed a marketing campaign with the aim of encouraging businesses to sign up and benefit from developing a tailored action plan with our Business Gateway team to support the net zero agenda.

Regeneration

At its meeting in April 2021, the Planning Committee determined to grant planning permission for two significant strategic developments; the first was for over a 1,000 houses and community facilities and primary school at Hopefield Farm, Bonnyrigg, and the second was for a David Lloyd Health and Racquets Club at Shawfair Park. Both developments will lead to significant investment and job creation.

Town centre Capital Fund: of the seven applications approved (£910,000) all projects, with the exception of Penicuik Town Hall project are now complete, with one project still to submit their final claim. All projects are on target for completion by 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. Teams across the Council got involved in identifying projects for consideration and four projects to be taken forward during the summer are: Ironmills pathway lighting, Jarnac Court regeneration, Newtongrange Welfare Park and New Litter and Grit bins for the region, totalling £331,000.

Housing and homelessness

Midlothian Council's Rapid Rehousing Plan (RRTP) was submitted to the Scottish Government on 30th June 2021. This sets out a vision that by 2024: an increased number of homeless households will obtain permanent accommodation, no homeless household will be accommodated in bed and breakfast accommodation, and the average time taken for the Council to complete its homeless duty will have halved from 105 to 52 weeks. The RRTP sets out how Midlothian Council will continue the work undertaken to deliver key actions during 2021/22 and explains how Midlothian Council will address the next phase of its approach to transforming the services provided to those in housing need, including compliance with the Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2020. Midlothian Council believes 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 2021/22 and into 2022/23, with an emphasis on the prevention of homelessness.

The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2021-26 was approved at the May Council meeting. The LHS is a key corporate Strategy that sets out a strategic vision for the delivery of housing and housing related services and the outcomes that it will seek to achieve the LHS's strategic vision for housing in Midlothian is that all households in Midlothian will be able to access housing that is affordable and of good quality in sustainable communities.

The Housing Charter Annual Return was completed and submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator this quarter. This reports a significant improvement in void management performance for permanent properties. The average length of time to re-let reduced from 51.8 days (2019/20) to 37.95 days. This reduction follows some changes introduced during 2020/21 as part of a test of change experiment.

The council's Strategic Housing Investment Programme (SHIP) addresses the need for affordable housing, the SHIP details potential sites for 2,602 new affordable homes to be built during 2021-26. 35 new council housing developments were completed at Roslin, Danderhall and Pathhead. The allocations were prioritised to local residents via Local Lettings Initiatives. A total of 693 homes at 15 separate site locations are planned to have works commence on site in 2021.

Capital programme

Midlothian are taking a very positive and flexible approach to build momentum around the new supply recovery. 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. 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). 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.

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 year's provision. This currently covers approximately 30 projects at various stages of development.

The Capital roads programme for carriageway and footway renewal/improvement schemes has commenced with progress to end of Q1, approximately 17% of budget completed or in progress. The embracement of new Scottish Road Works Register for coordination of all road works and Utility Works is ongoing with all street data now uploading to the One Scotland Gazetteer, managed by the Improvement Service, and adoption of new street conventions.

Challenges

The challenges for Midlothian continue with our recovery out of the pandemic, 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
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The vision for the Place is supported by the following Council key strategies:

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

To date, we have demonstrated how we embrace change and innovation through 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.

Place



Successes and Challenges

Corporate Performance Indicators (latest)

● 2 ● 8 ? 1 ? 9

Service Plan PIs (latest)

● 14 ● 15 ? 3 ? 18

Service Risks (latest)

▲ 0

Corporate PIs Off Target

PIs ● 2

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

Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working days

Service Plan PIs Off Target

PIs ● 14

Number of environmental awards e.g. Green flags

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

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

Corporate Indicator - Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard criteria (LQBF)

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

Locate in Midlothian Traffic

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.

Number of volunteer hours in countryside sites

Number of lighting columns replaced (cumulative)

Number of intelligence logs made

Length of time homeless applicants spend in temporary accommodation

Re-let time temporary accommodation properties (days)

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

Key
Risks ▲ High Risk/Medium Risk
? Data Not Yet Available