

Individual comments received from residents and joint responses received from local groups

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*** Supplementary papers available with the full results of the Shaping our Future consultation**

Paper A: Summary findings of the public consultation on service changes and savings options 2016

Paper B: Choices for Change Public Opinion Survey and Citizens' Panel results 2016

Education

- Increasing school meals would have a negative approach to children who are borderline for free school meals and increase the gap of disadvantaged children and stop children having at least one good healthy meal a day. If possible children should use local transport to and from school at a reduced rate, have a school travel card. this would give children a little independence and confidence in making their own way to and from school, teaching them life skills. Encourage children to play musical instruments by having free tuition.
- If its not broken do not fix it. Change for the sake of change is us
- This must be complimented with new secondary schools where required
- If you stop building housing you will severely limit the increase in pupil numbers. Schools should not be an area for savings
- Ensure all classroom/corridor lights are switched off overnight/weekends/holiday periods- i.e. local p sch lights on all day & night in a toilet area. reported to janitorial service in a high sch- to date no action in switching light off!!! P Sch just as bad during term time
- Review does NOT mean reduce
- Means testing for school to home transport?
- I do not consider that the current meals on offer are either balanced or healthy. I regret the Scottish Government's decision to provide free school meals for all children in early years at a time when childhood obesity is a far greater problem than malnutrition or under nutrition. I would strongly favour a return to those who can afford it, paying a realistic price and even subsidising a higher quality of school meal for all. I cite as examples the poorest quality white roll with cheese and a toffee yoghurt which my P1 child received on a packed lunch last year and the nutritional fiasco only possible in Scotland whereby if a child opts for macaroni cheese as a main course for a school meal they are offered chips or roast potatoes as a "vegetable" side order. This can only be improved upon. I have no issue with reinstatement of a charge for music tuition. It would be lovely if this could be free but it is far from a funding priority. I think independent pupil transport to secondary schools should be encouraged. Use of safe cycle routes and an acceptance that to walk up to 2 miles to school is healthy, should once again become a societal norm and should be encouraged. There should be no expectation for the council to provide transport for able bodied children attending a catchment school.
- My main concern is the academic achievement of each child at Newbattle High. I would pay for music tuition happily. I don't think there should be free school transport. I come from a country where you only get that when you are over 10miles from the school! If schools don't provide good quality hot food each day - then just do a cafe lunch. i.e don't do it if you can't do a good enough job of it. I would much prefer the emphasis to be on training and paying for really good teachers to focus far more attention on getting the overall grades up and discipline, manners and respect. I don't agree with out-of-catchment requests because one school is better than the other, but I'm faced with placing my bright child in Newbattle which I'm really concerned about. She will have adverse school experiences that distract from where the focus should be just

because her peers will be from the poorest areas. The focus should be on all the children attending Newbattle getting good grades. It's harder for kids from poor households, so Newbattle High's teacher need to focus more on that to get those kids brains developed and achieving high awards.

- Transport to secondary schools should be provided in winter months. Young people should be encouraged to walk, cycle to school for the rest of the year. More exercise, more energy, greater concentration and a reduction in obesity in children.
- Having taxis to pick children up for school is a total waste of money. Why aren't minibuses used that could pick up more than one child? Cut this cost now!
- The Council must focus on increasing revenue first, rather than cutting spending first. It must make maximum use of the historically low cost of borrowing to invest now so that the future costs of providing services are reduced. Measures such as cutting teacher numbers and school meals will simply increase problems in the future, generating higher demand for services, so they are self-defeating.
- Non teaching staff in schools are primarily learning assistants who support ASN and are absolutely vital to maintain mainstream education and also the most cost effective resource
- It says at the top of this page that Midlothian council spends £81.4m. I believe that the council's income is £190m. Where does the rest of it go?
- Make it 4 miles and look at mini buses instead of Taxies
- A1 What does this actually mean? A2 What flexibility have you got? A3 What is the present level? How effective is it? A4 What is the scheme? What does it cost? What are the options? A5 I am assuming that you mean musical instruments (not 'instrumental'). How are you going to achieve 'World Class' level? E.g. Are you going to remove charges? A6 Review provision. Does this mean more meals or fewer meals, lower quality of meals, or higher quality of meals? Cost increased or decreased? A7 Why do you say 'larger primary schools'. We could have more primary schools of an ordinary size. What about secondary schools?
- Massive PPP spend has only had a marginal effect over the years. Streaming is showing poor results elsewhere in Scotland and as low cost allows bright kids to shine whatever their background. Any form of selection is however opposed by the Unions who keep incompetent teachers in jobs such that Scotland slips down international rankings for results.
- Those that can't afford to pay should be subsidised. Far too much money is spent on education management staff at the HQ and in schools. Grossly overpaid and over provided for.
- There are still kids coming through school who are plodding on and could be doing better as the focus is targeted at the higher achieving pupils in high school. There is also too much pressure on kids leaving school and going into positive destinations to give better school statistics. This is putting pressure on kids during an already stressful time. A cafe style menu is not ideal when there is already an obesity problem in children.
- A1- too many assumptions here A2- but first there's a need to ensure that adequate public transport is available

- Strongly approve of the building of new schools. population growing, so provision for increasing primary school places essential. Also secondary places will need reviewed
- I think a hot meal should be provided at primary school but not necessarily at high school. Good nutrition is important for children to learn. We need to ensure the revising of school transport doesn't have a huge impact on road congestion at an already busy time
- School meals should be paid for by parents - why should others subsidise their offspring?
- as education is 40% of total spend this area needs most focus.
- Properly manage the transport you provide for ASN children
- I believe school meals could be reviewed but not that cafe menu is necessarily the best option. Costs could be saved by reducing the number of options to children - there is no need to have 2 main options + soup + sandwiches. Focus on quality cooking, not quantity, trying to appeal to all. Also savings could be made to drinks options. Kids should be offered water only, from a jug, poured by them into washable glasses. There is no need to offer milk (esp sugary flavoured milk) as they have that option in the classroom, nor fruit juice, and offering water in individual plastic bottles is wasteful and unnecessary. Also, the council could save money by NOT increasing the early years hours offered. It is not the job of the education dept to provide wrap around childcare, and focus should be on quality not quantity.
- I am sure on balance parents that can afford school meals would accommodate the price increase to ensure children get the hot meal option
- Make all school meals vegetarian as this is healthier and will save money. Music tuition should be chargeable as this is not an essential service.
- I think it is a joke to increase school meals by 60p. The cold lunch options as are not nutritional as it is 1 1/2 bits of bread. This is not enough for p6-7 pupils. I also think portions should be adjusted for ages e.g. 1 sausage may be ok for p1-3 but not p4-7
- 1. We should not look to cuevels of support to staff, but look for ways to increase or improve offering. 2. It is imperative that children continue to have hot meal option at school. We already know that for some, this is the only proper meal they get. We also need to address the fact that despite legislation, some lunches are far from nutritional. For example, the Friday pack lunch. Choc milk, 3(!) biscuits and artificially coloured cheese is not a suitable lunch, even with the token apple. 3. Think it is important to keep schools managed at a local level, and by the schools themselves.
- As an employee of another council, I understand the difficulty of balancing spending on services and the reduction in government funding. However, as a parent in Midlothian, I strongly believe that the education system cannot and should not be subject to further budget cuts. Schools in Midlothian are already struggling with old and unsuitable buildings and a lack of staff to adequately cover when class teachers are unwell and unable to work. The children in our schools are the future of our economy and our community and to not invest in them now is sure to cause further problems in years to come.

- Education should not be targeted for cuts, in fact, anecdotally, it seems that Midlothian Council should be making increased funding available to schools across the region but especially those schools with disproportionately high numbers of children from disadvantaged backgrounds. And increase in support staff and training on issues such as LGBTi are desperately needed in Midlothian schools, as is significantly increased spending on identifying and supporting children with additional support needs, including SENs.
- The Scottish Government is pushing for housing development within the Lothians and Midlothian Council is blindly following this without considering the financial implications of a growing population. Perhaps if we stalled the development until we can afford the infrastructure and additional staffing needs that are required we might not have such a projected overspend.
- Keep Midlothian council tax in Midlothian. Ensure enough nursery places for all kids in catchment area
- Saving money from other areas could then be redirected to education. We currently own our home as an ex-council property and the houses beside us are still council owned, the property next door has had the kitchen and bathroom refitted 6 times in the last 3 years when tenants have moved out, if money is being wasted like this throughout the whole of Midlothian it is likely adding up to much more than the shortfall for education. I am certain that people would rather invest in our children's future than be replacing items that are no longer requiring to be updated. By putting in fees for music tuition/higher cost for school meals or travel costs you are affecting the people in the community who do work and contribute to our community and who are likely struggling already due to pay restraints/cuts and who do not receive any benefits or help. Removing hot meals from the school could be removing the only hot meal that child gets each day and therefore again affecting the families who need it the most.
- Music should be free! Hot balanced meals are the only hot meals some children get each day. This option should NOT be removed.
- School meal focus should be health not cafe style
- The area at the bottom of lauder road where the old dalkeith high school used to be. Build a shopping complex with a cinema and activities centre to increase custom to the area. This will help local business as well as it will encourage people to go to dalkeith rather than fort kinaird or straiton park.
- Cutting these essential services would increase inequality dramatically and affect future generations significantly. They would be a Mistake of the highest order.
- Put schools back into smaller communities negating the cost of buses.
- Your questions in many of the areas above are meaningless. How can we agree or disagree with items when you are asking whether you should review something. People could agree to Review something but you are not asking whether you want to know if you should increase funding or decrease it so how can people express an opinion when 'Review' means you would look into it, but not either decrease or increase priority. So how can we express an opinion on the importance of something when reviewing could mean either an increase or decrease in funding. I could say yes to a review of something because I want you to decrease its funding or because I want you to

increase its funding. So how can you gauge my opinion on the importance of an item by asking if I think you should review it. This survey is inherently flawed and misleading!

- I feel that investment in the youth of our community and those who are disadvantaged would most likely provide a great advantage in the future for not only the older generation but help create a brighter future for the younger and more disadvantaged youth.
- Look at options of more high schools. Gorebridge has 4 primary schools as well as those on the outskirts temple etc it could do with its own high school such as before when there was Greenhall. Newbattle and Dalkeith schools must be pushed extremely
- a small charge for student transport should be in place. school meals compulsory for all pupils as this would stop the unbelievable diet many school children have during the lunch break i.e. purchases made at Tesco! if by non teaching staff you mean 'classroom assistants' then they are vital if integration of students with support needs in mainstream is to continue
- I believe that those children who are most disadvantaged through poverty etc... should be protected at all costs, those who can afford the extra burden should shoulder the costs if that makes sense?? I don't understand the full implications to your proposed changes to budget allocation, but there should be some change impact analysis done to help guide your final decision.
- If there is any significant use of taxis to transport pupils, I think this needs to be seriously reduced as it seems extremely wasteful and polluting. Apparently Scottish councils spent £90m on taxis in 2015, which is staggering. I would strongly oppose removing the option of a hot meal but I think there is probably a great deal of scope for a review of the type of food provided. There's masses of evidence from places like Copenhagen that you can make better, healthier food for the same or less budget if you approach it right. Involve the Soil Association Food for Life scheme.
- Point 7 can community buildings be used instead, instead of building?
- Ensure investment in all schools is protected but all children do not need transport to school paid for, free school means should be based on need and parents who don't work shouldn't get nursery hours free at age 2-3.
- Education and children is not a place for cuts. It may not be as glamorous a cause but helping working families by not raising costs for dinners and instruments is vital. You will need less adult employment programs in the future if you get education right now. Hot lunches and extras like instruments have been proven to drastically improve children's education and outlook to lifelong learning
- Free school meals for all children under 16. Keep hot meals. Stop letting developers build where ever they please. As the infrastructure needs to be able to cope.
- It's difficult to know what you mean by 'review'. This could be just another word for cut. This ambiguity makes it hard to answer the questions. Please do not re-instate music tuition fees. You want to close the attainment gap, removing the ability of lower income families to access expressive arts, creativity and self expression is the WRONG way to do it. Also, whatever you do

about closing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged should be done equally across Midlothian.

- I think the questions are misleading "Review" could mean reduction of charges but question 8 is suggesting that "Review" in all these cases means increase charges to service users - I have responded accordingly. Re school meals - many families that do not quite qualify for free school meals could really struggle (particularly in light of current inflation) to provide health meals - any increase could potentially lead to hungry children. Re instrumental music tuition - I think it is very important that music/art/sport are all available to all pupils free of charge - some children are not academic but may benefit enormously from learning music etc - these chances should not be available only to affluent families.
- Its very difficult to make an opinion when you don't have any financial figures provided to make a decision
- The charge for instrumental music tuition should be reinstated.
- Only provide transport for over 3 miles if there is no public transport available
- A substantial increase in contributions from housing developers towards increased costs of provision of education in Midlothian
- I see no reason why all primary 3 pupils are automatically given free schools meals. It might be interesting to get the Scottish costing for this. I believe this should be means tested. In my opinion the only people who 'gain' from this are those who can actually afford to feed their children.
- By adding charges to pupils not on benefits could tip the balance and make the non benefits pupils move over to the underprivileged category and they will then loose out. Should be a fair system for all to access
- Existing schools could be extended to accommodate more pupils and a cafe style menu would be more popular with children
- Survey seems to be regarding schools?
- Our children need consistency in teaching staff rather than supply teachers that change frequently
- I feel the school need more class assistants not less!! For some people their hot meal at school could be their only hot meal and you want to take that away that's awful!
- I don't have children at school and don't know any of the teaching staff so I felt I couldn't answer some of these questions properly. I do however think education and support for all involved is hugely important for the whole community
- I feel education is an essential service and critical to improving our society and future generations. I don't think there should be any reduction in the education budget at all!
- Introduce Spanish lessons alongside French in primary school and guitar lessons too.

- Disagree with free school transport and also any payment of taxi fares in any circumstances.
- Focus on teaching digital skills
- The building of infrastructure must keep pace with new housing
- I think music tuition should remain free within schools.
- Choices of hot school meals should be enhanced, not removed. This is a move back to the Victorian ages. Choice of a healthy balanced school meals are key to pupil performance and education on health and well being.
- Decisions need to be longer term sustainable. Mistakes with the closures of schools in the past for example
- You need to build a high school in Gorebridge.
- Reviewing school menus is a big no - for a few this may be the only hot meal they have all day! School meals are already expensive and what's on offer is terrible! No wonder the high school kids are always in the high street at Greggs or the chippy! Maybe if there was more choice like there was 15 odd years ago kids would maybe want to eat in school!
- by keep putting up the price less people will take the meals and then you get the risk of unhealthy packed lunches
- I would suggest a more efficient and effective strategy would be to review the council's internal education structure as mismanagement is where the problems lie.
- Education should be a priority
- Give teachers more freedom and less paperwork is the number one (free) way to improve pupils' educational attainments. Questions 2,3,4,& 6 are totally ambiguous about what you are actually asking and the consequences, and asking whether you should 'review' it still gives you carte blanche to do as you wish, these questions do not give me as a community member a choice. On question 7 what is the alternative? It looks like you are just setting up a question so you can get some positive responses so you can say you listened. I imagine you will have to build/extend those schools anyway. I wish you would give the public the respect of asking things where they can genuinely and helpfully engage. That is a risk, but it is the only place you can engage with the community and together the community and council can address social needs and budget issues.
- Charging for instrumental tuition would not save very much - why do that? Music can be a pathway to a career, why not give all children an opportunity to have tuition, irrespective if they can afford. Looks a little petty. If you make poorer families pay for transport they may not send their children to school, defeating the object of targeting deprivation and closing attainment gap.
- If there is a growing population due to the large amount of housing development the council must have known this would happen why didn't the infrastructure get reviewed earlier - more housing needs more schools more gp surgeries, more services etc. Seems like an afterthought
- Put more money into the community education part of schools.

- Keep income from council tax in own area
- regardless of the price of school meals' the quality appears to be deteriorating. Larger primary schools may well impact negatively upon the principles of GIRFEC as young children may not thrive in such environments.
- Pupils can walk or cycle to school. No need for free transport. Stop wasting money by building new schools. Extend and refurbish existing schools.
- I think a review of food provided for school meals such as the use of cheap unhealthy white bread and flavoured sugary milk.
- Think café style would be best but not increased cost. the meal needs to be nutritional
- Why do p1 - 3 have free school meals? Why can't we make it more accessible for all and meals for p1 - 7 are £1 each. It makes no sense that all of a sudden in p4 we are not bothered if you get a meal!! More people would benefit if everyone paid a nominal fee of £1 and this would not cost any more
- To promote life long health and well being, we need to set a better example through school meals. I would be prepared to pay more for better quality hot and cold choices which are prepared freshly using local and better quality ingredients by well trained kitchen staff. Invest in links with local transport providers, charge for transport or use paid public transport to secondary schools, except for those with additional support needs. Charge for instrument tuition, but make it more widely available. Our school does not have music tuition. Share unused or less used resources among schools. E.g. Rolling Library in primary schools. Toy/games library for early years for supplementary resources.
- Does it make sense to take the balanced hot meal off the menu?
- Scrapping free school meals for those who don't need it reinstating nursery class teachers
- Early intervention and work with parents should be a focus and it would be helpful for high school pupils to be taught the ways of encouraging early literacy and numeracy in babies and toddlers so that they put this into practice when they eventually become parents
- 'Review' doesn't really mean much, it could mean increase or decrease school meals prices, it would have been better to term it for example 'increase school meals' review means nothing
- Ensure all book, chairs, computer equipment is reused / recycled rather than sent to landfill and educating children about the environment. Including food waste. Schools appear to make a 'token gesture' to recycle when this could in fact make them a lot of money.
- My eldest couldn't receive music tuition as I couldn't afford it, my child in p6 has just taken up free music lessons which is amazing! I think the free school dinners are great for p1-3. I think free school meals should be re evaluated as we are a one parent working family and have little money so could benefit free meals however we don't qualify.
- Build a theatre with dressing rooms in schools, so schools could do west end shows.

- Do children need snack made by staff in nursery can the parent/carer not supply small snack like what you do at school?
- Review snack at nursery do the children need it? Can parents/carers provide small snack to have. Don't think school meals should go up
- Some experts think that having larger primary schools gives a better education than small primary schools. I would suggest that careful thought should be given to any more new primary schools, rather the existing primary schools should be extended or refurbished.
- Our Council in Midlothian needs to recognise and prioritise the serious need for ASD and Additional needs Provisions in most, if not all of our Midlothian Primary schools. There is an overwhelming number of children of Primary school age in Midlothian who need specialist one-to-one Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) teachers, assistants and facilities yet these are sadly lacking and as a result children and families are suffering, mainstream schools are failing them as they cannot cope.
- Funding for ASD and other Additional Needs must be prioritised and provided. Provision, staff and facilities must be provided for every child who needs it within our schools.
- Education is a priority.
- Schools and nursery places - priority.
- Jobs for younger people – priority.
- Charge a wee bit more for adult education concessions an over 60's.
- It is important to ensure that children with disabilities are supported in mainstream schools. Early intervention for children with learning disabilities is important to support their achievement. Support for pupils should be maintained.

Health and social care

- we need more not less, its how we do this, they are all important
- Improving recovery is very important but it is unlikely that technology will support independent living- it may support independent survival and reduce quality of life
- it would seem to me that the higher number of people being kept at home who require increasing amounts of care and support the more pressure and cost to the council budget. I think there should be a balance between care within the community but once the cost of home care increases for individuals then care centres should be used - surely these are more cost effective and users have better support with staff on hand 24/7 which should be more cost effective
- Technological care is potentially unsafe and does not provide genuine care. Many old people can't handle technology. I speak as full time carer for 93 year old w Alzheimer's. Carers need support, respite too. Need to increase budgets for social care!

- Disabled People have higher costs for many things. Disabled People pay more for many ordinary things in the community. It is hard for many to get out to the biggest and cheapest supermarket. People have to pay for their clubs and activities. Taxi travel can quickly eat up the limited amount people get in mobility benefits and eat into their other money. They need more money to just get by.
- Those most in need of personal and day care are historically the poorer in society so adding to their costs is a deterrent to them making use of vital services for socialisation and opening the door to isolation and poor health.
- Preventative medicine was the reason the NHS was formed - get back to the values.
- The Council must focus on increasing revenue first, rather than cutting spending first. It must make maximum use of the historically low cost of borrowing to invest now so that the future costs of providing services are reduced.
- Open the statutory systems to collaboration with community-led initiatives, such as Penicuik Community Alliance's 'Storehouse Project'. Greater reliance will have to be placed on volunteers within the community to deliver services that the council has previously delivered alone. Identify good community practices and replicate them elsewhere. Introduce more flexibility on rules of confidentiality, record keeping, Health and safety to facilitate collaborative working.
- Charges should be made for all the above services.
- Think out of the box and get students to look after older pensioners in exchange of board and lodgings as is done on the Continent
- B1 What are the 'preventative approaches' that you have in mind? B2 If the IJB takes the decisions, what influence do we have? B3 What would this mean in terms of personal safety for those who have little money? B4 If the charges are too much, no one will go and the centres can be closed down... People have been trained over many years into believing that they will receive help when unable to manage because of health problems etc. A sudden move away from this will risk compromising the safety of vulnerable residents.
- self-help is the key. Expensive paternalist nanny state provision has failed. Partnering with volunteer services gives a less artificial human interface than statutory rights driven provision. In that formal individuals are not treated holistically but according to rules, rights, functions, eligibility and related artificial constructs.
- Again top heavy with management staff costs. Senior managers are invisible and seem to spend most their times in dubious 'meetings'
- Charges should be means tested
- The Voluntary sector are able to help with a lot of methods of supporting people to live independently for longer - many of these services can be provided by involving volunteers. Although services that involve volunteers are not free, they do provide good value for money, and high quality services. Charges for transport and services should be considered but should not prevent the most in need from receiving them - maybe a small budget needs to be held for those who otherwise cannot afford the costs??

- reduce reliance on external support agencies which cost more money. Increase use of highly trained (and valued) volunteers and internal staff
- The reduction in time spent in care for the home visits seems to indicate the need for staffing levels to be reduced
- If we want to live in a forward thinking cohesive, considerate, happy society we need to help and provide for the most vulnerable groups.
- Community based services need more not less provision for service users
- as Midlothian Council hands funds over to IJBs do some Councillors sit on the IJB and have influence over its decisions?
- Hit the most vulnerable? Really?! Some peoples only contact may be with the care worker try engage with - take that away and what do they have? The disabled, the elderly etc NEED the support! Why don't you stop your staff using taxis? Or maybe everyone and their dog didn't need an iPad?!
- Introduction of charges to day care may lead to some older people not attending due to them not being able to afford this, hence making them even more isolated
- Perhaps consideration to reduce back office council staff hours by improving technologies. Could there not be a collaborative approach to certain services with other Councils to reduce costs? Petition the government to reduce the state pension age to allow people to be more financially stable and reduce age related illnesses.
- Invest more money in day services and day centres as these are excellent preventative services which reduce need for care packages and care home admissions. Cut housing support services as these are not used appropriately. Instead employ more benefits/advice workers who will undertake home visits. Do not employ any agency social workers due to high costs. Instead invest in permanent social workers and improve terms and conditions so council retains staff.
- Introducing charges may lead to excluding those who need it most
- With a higher proportion of disabled individuals than the other 31 local authority areas, this is another area which requires increased spending rather than compromising the health and well-being of local residents.
- Why do the council pay for free gym memberships for certain groups of people?
- I don't fully understand how you increase personal care costs if personal care is supposed to be free for the elderly? More day centres and opportunities to use them would help. Also, 15 minute lunch and dinner calls are too short for the old people who get no other interaction during the day
- Allow old folks to stay in their communities by provision of small sheltered housing with warden support
- Don't think there is enough bus services for family to visit care homes particularly those with larger busier roads to cross. Care home sizes should be extended as population increase. Elderly

are being moved further away from home and makes difficult for elderly relatives to visit etc and has a downward spiral on their mental health both patient and relative

- we need to improve the 'community ' aspect in peoples lives - increasing numbers of people young and old experience social isolation either because they live alone o/ do not have family/social skills etc LONLEYNES is a terrible affliction impacting on peoples physical and mental health.
- To cut down on costs for people going to and from centres is wrong. These people rely on these centres as a life line. This then helps them in their mind and body, it gets them out meeting people therefore the chances of depression is lessened and there will be less strain on medical professions to then help these people
- Again this should be risk and means tested. Can you remove free bus passes for people who don't need them?
- People who receive "support at home" pay domiciliary care bills each towards there car wthey recover and rightfully. However I do not understand to why they do not pay council tax? They receive enough in benefits and have more money to spend than the average working family. Disabled people for years have wanted equality... Make them pay the same bills as everyone else!!!!
- It's hard to pull much meaning out of your jargon and Orwellian double speak. Does 'preventative approaches within communities' actually equate to unpaid volunteers delivering services previously delivered by trained nurses and social workers to vulnerable people with serious long-term conditions? Of course it's wonderful for community groups to be pro-active, deliver services and activities, but you're kidding yourselves to think you can save money by cutting out vital professional services and leaving people in the hands of volunteers.
- I believe that cutting access to social care to enable them to stay at home could be a false economy as may result in older people requiring to go into a care home or hospital.
- You need to invest in preventative strategies rather than doing the same old
- Any increase in cost needs to be assessed to ensure that an elderly persons quality of life is not reduced simply as they do not have the means to pay.
- There is no effective care in place for people dealing with addiction problems. When people leave hospital after detox there is no support offered to them. This has to be begged for and even then the support is minimal so to take what little is available away would have catastrophic implications on other services e.g. housing / hospital care
- Interesting to suggest that MDC are improving in this area while making cuts! Costs for Social Care will always be increasing while we have an ever growing population. I find it distasteful at best to decrease the funding in this area. The reality is that social workers are under ever increasing pressure to cut vital services whilst apparently given out quality support to the most needy! Moreover, to cut the cost of 'individual packages' in reality means cutting that support since the Scottish Government has passed the SLW which means all local authorities should be given care companies an uplift to reflect this! I will watch this area with interest.

- Care agencies should have staff integrate with social and health care and work as a team. Just now you can have 3 or 4 teams into one client undoing what the previous one has done! Eg nurse does dressing (not knowing Carer has changed bath day!), then Carer turns up and baths client, leaving bandage wet! Hence long term non healing wounds which in turn decrease clients ability to return to independent living!
- Let's encourage independent living but let's not use it as an excuse to cut costs or ease the pressure. Each person has the right to live an independent but we need to provide adequate support and resources to make this achievable.
- The people are at the heart of this and to allow them to remain at home the support needs to be available. I understand that it is important to retain services like occupational therapists who can support others to regain/maintain independence and therefore this will reduce the cost of services.
- Unfortunately I can't have a lot of sympathy for those struggling with addiction related illnesses and believe costs on this should be greatly reduced.
- Find a way to build community connections, people helping people
- People do not ask to become disabled an increase on personal care and housing support would be an additional tax that able bodied would not pay.
- The only care that should not be impacted is for the elderly. Those adults with addiction issues should not be out above our elderly population who need support and care.
- Cut ineffective middle management increase number of carers
- Having recently experienced first hand the level of support service supplied by Midlothian Council I am astonished that they would even consider reducing services as they are already abysmal.
- 1- I don't know what 'preventative approaches' mean in practice, because I would assume that is in place anyway. Vulnerable people should not have to rely on technology over a real person, that would increase loneliness. What about an award for young people where they pair up with an experienced carer and care for a vulnerable older person for a year - for school leavers who have not chosen another route. Improving community connections and people knowing each other would mean that in any given street there might be people who could look out for a vulnerable older person. This could be done through community-led programs and good access to facilities for communities.
- This is an area that requires professional people - often they are better assisting than family. Yes develop this but don't reduce the money available to social care. Technically and elderly with dementia or memory impairment not a good combination. Financial provision must be in place for the growing elderly population. The success of a council should be judged on its provision for the care of the elderly.
- Our pensioners have already paid enough over their working career. Time for us to help them and support them.

- As long as the vulnerable members of our community get the support they need I have no objection to those who can afford it paying for services.
- Increasing charges for vulnerable people who are in difficulties already cannot be justified.
- Campaign for more people to volunteer their time to help provide support to vulnerable groups
- We are in a no win situation here. There is pressure to reduce bed blocking in the NHS therefore there will be an increased burden on community social care. We can't have people at risk in our communities and it's unfair to put an additional care burden on already stretched family resources. I think community health and social care should be properly resourced even if it means cuts elsewhere
- Allow more time for care at home services to give carers time to implement enabling and person centred care. It is quicker and easier for carers to wash and dress someone, but better in the long run if the person is supported to do so by themselves. Better for mental health, physical ability and therefore would reduce long term cost in related services.
- it sounds very like the people in most need are going to suffer and no real savings by the way I read it.
- Older people are fiercely independent and often don't ask for help until they really need it. It's important to promote 'coffee mornings' or OAP lunches and the like to encourage 'friendships' and get people out of the house once in a while.
- See if the transport buses could get sponsored by companies.
- It is a false economy to decrease services. Less services usually results in more isolation for people leading to mental health and other problems and ultimately means more expensive hospital treatment in the long term. We should be looking at new and innovative methods of providing care and preventative health. We need to be building different types of housing, small integrative complexes where people with long term conditions can live independently, but within easy reach of nursing, care staff and where resources can be shared easily. We need to be harnessing modern technology as part of the solution, not the whole solution. If you have ever cared for anyone with long term mental, physical and emotional problems, the answers are not quick and slick.
- Currently people who rely on home care get a very poor service. So improve it rather than damage it.
- Services to housebound and elderly - priority.
- Without the help of the Orchard Centre and staff, life would be a darker place for me. If you have personal problems, filling in forms or self harm thoughts they are then in person at the centre or ready to answer the phone and also after hours. I enjoy coming in to the groups as when you are isolated the centre makes you welcome.
- I would not be able to go out with my family if i hadn't got the Orchard Centre to go to. I get a one to one basis when needed. Also do a knitting group on a Monday. Also meet other people. Does me a lot of good.

- Mental Health facilities require – independent building facilities, shared facilities – for example within a school – would mean service users would be scared to come along. A hub for preventative services combined may work. I wouldn't be here without the Orchard Centre. Having a staff team that know you makes dealing with my mental health easier. Coming to Orchard Centre I have received 1:1 support, befriending which led to confidence and returning to work. I continued to use the centre whilst working, access to a nurse, art groups, fun evenings, meals in the cafe, day trips. I am a carer for 3 family members and the vital support from the Orchard Centre and vocal and Psychiatrist helps get me through. I cannot emphasise enough how having a working service users relationship with reliable, professional, approachable staff is important to my health and well being. I don't like leaving the house, coming here builds my confidence.
- I am a user of a wide range of health and social care in Midlothian from getting home support weekly and also having my own adult social worker from Joint Mental Health Team. Having these services available to me has helped my mental health in many ways, so much so that I get unsupervised contact with my eldest son and get overnights with my youngest. This would not have been possible without these services being available 7 days a week.
- Orchard Centre is second to none with regards to level of support that it provided to people with mental health issues. I comment as a person who has suffered a great deal with mental health and someone who has managed to become a volunteer. What appears to be simple 'drop in' is much more than that and provides a safe place to attend without fear of being judged. There is also an area where the atmosphere is more serene for those who require it, the staff provide great help for members regarding their benefits and other issues which for a lot of members is completely overwhelming in a time of crisis. Also a great number of groups to attend, designed to be informative and also fun. Important to remember that the service also benefits members' families. Over the years there are thousands of Midlothian residents who have used these services and with my strongest conviction I must say that I genuinely fear for many residents of Midlothian if the services did not continue.
- Coming to the Orchard Centre in the past few years has helped me a lot controlling anxiety and depression. Also it gives good advice on problems relating to helping myself get on with my life
- A good thing to get out of the house (to Orchard Centre) twice a week or I'd be 'stuck in'. I lost all my friends after my accident. We made new friends here. I can talk to the staff if I am worried about anything
- My father has Alzheimer's and receives little or no social care. Social workers are extremely dismissive and my mum is unable to voice her opinion or concerns. Almost all their support is from voluntary organisations.
- Many people pay for their support already and this takes money out of their already meagre budget.
- Targeting the more vulnerable members of our society by cutting services/ increasing costs is wrong
- Further health problems may be caused by increasing the cost of day to day services for vulnerable Midlothian Citizens

Children's services

- Early intervention is the answer, we will improve children's lives and save long term
- Need to prioritise the child's needs, tune provision to them. Decisions based primarily on cost are socially irresponsible
- I would strongly support increased funding for early years social care as a proven preventive measure to reduce later use of health and social care services.
- Money should be put in to making foster care more attractive for Midlothian residents. More children's social workers are important.
- The Council must focus on increasing revenue first, rather than cutting spending first. It must make maximum use of the historically low cost of borrowing to invest now so that the future costs of providing services are reduced.
- Have strong locality family support teams
- You will be fortunate if you can hold demand for children's services constant. There are many indications that factors such as alcohol and substance abuse in early pregnancy are increasing the incidence of behavioural abnormalities in the young. Diagnosis is improving in precision. Reducing demand should not be considered to be a major source of cost saving
- Think out of the box again see how other nations do this and learn from them!
- Do you really mean here that 'improvement' is synonymous with spending less? Is the voluntary sector going to be expected to run the services? C1 - Early intervention. How is this to be achieved? Preventative approaches. What kind?
- Loaded question if you mean the named persons scheme there are problems of individuals freedom and the arbitrary nature of the judgements involved. clearly named person will create fresh burdens on e.g. school heads who will need extra payments! How much? Provided there is at least one functioning individual in a family group risks are much lower e.g. Granny/Aunt/Uncle etc. Fostering needs to be made easier/not ageist!
- Raise the threshold in terms of interventions
- There needs to be a clear priority of work that helps young people to help themselves. Work should be aimed at providing young people with motivation, skills and determination to achieve in their lives. We need to do more to make these young people resilient and reach their potential. This is true for all young people.
- As I live close by to a house for children I see damage done to house. police called regularly. I know we cannot restrain them. It must cost a lot of money. I am not one of these person they must be punished severely but I think they should be pointed out to them. We try to be kindly and find some punishment that would find the take up to 10 policemen which must reduce cover for people in the Lothians.
- Making the adoption process more straight forward and less negative with less obstacles for genuine loving families and couples

- Adopting a tried and tested (lessons learned in other councils) approach would reduce duplication of work and costs whilst the value of service should not be compromised. Make the overall process quicker and less bureaucratic
- Increase opportunities for learning and development for parents and kinship carers, in line with that offered to foster carers.
- Ensure that residential units are not closed while demand for this service is still high. Employ more social workers, foster carers and respite carers in order to provide services within Midlothian. Stop placing children with private fostering agencies which are much more expensive.
- Whilst I agree with the above proposal I would like to point out the sorry state of current children's services, and its inability to adequately address the needs of those vulnerable children who do fall into current government definitions of risk and need. Additionally, and anecdotally, there are a significant number of children currently being failed by existing services. Again, more spending would be needed to address these issues.
- All the parents in Penicuik need the ymca for child care as no other available
- This is nonsense question (as a number are) giving false choices where you can be damned by either agreeing or disagreeing!
- Support for parents groups and parents centre's that work holistically with the family, such as the fantastic work at Midlothian Surestart.
- Preventing courses always fail on financial front use the funds for what's needed now not in 5 years as long as there is funding to enable this to happen
- Support childcare of school age children through providing sufficient breakfast club and after school club places.
- You have to protect vulnerable children. Keep foster places.
- Once again, how is an ordinary person supposed to answer this question. Please somebody take a lesson in Plain English.
- I agree that early intervention and preventative approaches are best for many reasons, e.g. using voluntary sector organisations before Child Protection processes kick in - however, sufficient funds have to be allocated to allow these services to be able to plan ahead.
- I have concerns over transport costs for children in 'placements' being ferried to school by taxi at cost to the taxpayer! Is this the case in Midlothian as it is in East Lothian?
- On going education to reduce the amount of children being cared for by social work. Stop teenage pregnancy and so called advantages to gain more benefits by having children
- Use of services provided by voluntary sector should be increased e.g. Safe Families for Children
- I would agree with early intervention as the sooner you can try and teach children or those around them new strategies the easier they are to implement and continue with.

- I would worry about cooperation between voluntary and council and how much the Data Protection act would influence a clear pathway.
- Early detection and intervention is key but teachers who are most likely to spot issues are under far too much pressure as it is. There needs to be more consultation with teachers to understand how they can help and identify vulnerable children
- Intervention with children at risk should be increased to take them out of toxic living conditions
- Focus should be placed on helping dysfunctional parents.
- 'Big Toes Little Toes' is a charity which offers evidence-based training in baby-bonding, toddler-bonding and parent-child-attachment-play. It is high quality and cheap. If Midlothian Council could get highly trained people such as child therapists to provide parent-child attachment play it would make life less stressful for parents, reduce mental health needs of parents now and children now/ in the future, it would reduce anti-social behaviour and improve health. Improving parent-child relationships is the single greatest thing that will make a difference to human welfare in Midlothian because then the adults will be calmer and have more emotional resources and energy for their jobs. Even people in good office jobs have struggles at home with their kids, and so if good quality work such was done where needed (its not therapy, so it is not potentially so long term or costly) that would have a positive impact. Plus community-led resilience building events/activities such as business skills for kids.
- As long as the Intervention works. Keeping a child somewhere unsafe or damaging is the worst outcome
- the Council needs to invest in this area to save money in the long run
- More money needed for recruitment of foster carers
- Campaign for more volunteers to help families stay together wherever possible and establish strong family and childcare ethics
- Invest in adult education and parenting support. Recruit more social workers.
- Requiring quicker responses by speech and language, camhs etc
- any preventative work is better than re-active.
- I believe grandparents should get a lot more support by helping them take care of the children instead of paying for foster parents A fortune To take care of the same children i'e paying for three holidays a year and free house Extensions, you could help the grandparents some of which who may have to give up their jobs to so but are not entitled to any assistance even though they are very hard-working and a credible individuals regardless of how their own child may have chosen to live their life's.
- Review staff if demand is been reduced.
- Review staff if you are reducing demand
- Midlothian services to vulnerable kids is poor . Considering the issues in this area.

- For children with learning difficulties, it is very important to get early support to ensure education is accessible and children reach their potential

Property and Facilities Management

- Depends on which goods and services (the council would sell to generate income)
- Energy efficiency measures such as insulation are vital but remote monitoring systems are not. If you treat your staff well and show them respect they will not leave heating and lighting on.
- our company has timers on our lights and heating. don't think this requires remote energy management!
- Review does NOT mean reduce.
- Community renewable energy schemes could both generate income and contribute to carbon reduction targets.
- I think that the council should constantly be looking for ways to be more energy efficient both on grounds of financial economy and environmental protection.
- Community asset transfer?
- Educate users of public buildings. At present heating is on and windows are open at same time. Often because no-one understands or can be bothered to use the energy management system effectively.
- If facilities are combined then ensure that the offices are accessible to residents. Cut the amount of staff - save money by cutting unnecessary jobs.
- The Council must focus on increasing revenue first, rather than cutting spending first. It must make maximum use of the historically low cost of borrowing to invest now so that the future costs of providing services are reduced. One of the most promising means of doing this is by setting up a council-owned energy company to own and operate renewable energy facilities that supply power and heat to residents and businesses and can sell surplus power to the grid, generating revenue for the council. There are ample opportunities to do this in Midlothian and the Council should be pursuing this urgently, making use of all available assistance from the Scottish and UK Governments to make the initial capital investments.
- stop internal billing between council departments. Ensure work carried out in council buildings is
- Consider the role of 'community hubs' that are not of your making (see 'Social Care' comments)
- All is Common Sense but get on with it and do not prevaricate!
- I think that you shouldn't be consulting the public about management. I think that you shouldn't be aiming to have replacement schools. Schools should be maintained and extended. Do you have a 'property officer' - someone who is knowledgeable about energy management and use, and maintenance of buildings? Switch off lighting to cut energy costs.

- intranet allows part-time homeworking which if tasks can be monitored is a source of labour force flexibility to mutual benefit (e.g. mum's going part time) (or even dads)
- Ridiculous levels of money thrown at building new schools with private sector benefiting. Use directly employed council staff to do the work, keep the private sector out.
- Energy management could definitely be managed better, I often find the heating in council buildings up way too high and unnecessarily hot.
- Staff will need to accept changes to their roles and working practices to achieve the required savings. I can't understand how savings will be achieved with a policy of no forced redundancy.
- New buildings should have a focus on using up to date environmental building technologies including energy generating tech such as solar panels, individual wind turbines and proper insulation.
- Reduce council property replacement of kitchens, bathrooms and windows programmes in properties that don't require an upgrade, also where long term working tenants who benefit from low rent can afford to do renovations they require
- Consolidating staff from different areas is not always effective or efficient as they have different specialisms. This usually has a negative impact on front line workers who do not receive enough support.
- I feel it is important to keep as much of this in public hands. Once it goes to the private sector it is gone forever and with it we lose control of costs and standards.
- Sell off old inefficient buildings where possible to the private sector. House services in efficient low-cost buildings. Introduce planned preventative maintenance systems to save money in the longer term. Retire the workforce who are close to retiral and no longer able to cope with changes. Employ short term contractual staff and monitor performance before offering long term full contract. Centralise services where possible or contract out if more efficient in the long run. Utilise experience within council to bid for private sector contracts (with income returned to the council) eg council experts in parks and recreation may offer the many private land owners a service for parks management.
- Remote staffing and heating can frequently lead to inefficiencies as they are removed from the source of need and unable to respond.
- Could offer gardening for non elderly at a rate for homes in Midlothian private and rented possibly creating jobs and keeping Midlothian tidy and generating income.
- Look at water use as well. Money could be saved there. Also look at funding schemes that could fund renewables or energy and water savings schemes
- You should be doing this already, right?
- It is important that charges are not increased any more for use of community groups as some are already struggling with the recent increases which could potentially lead to some closing.

- There are some schools open during the holidays for a handful of staff, the cost of janitorial staff, cleaners and electricity for these few staff could be saved by relocating staff in the holidays
- Some groups have managed to take over/negotiate negligible rents for Pavilions, there could money made from these from private rents if they hadn't been taken over by after school clubs and playgroups
- Easier said than done when integrating 2 areas that have different employment contracts, holidays and working ways! Already tried and failed, now trying again I believe which is costing a lot of money to integrate!
- I think bringing people together is a better way of working as staff have the opportunity to meet up to discuss issues for a more cohesive approach.
- Review of management structure?
- lease consider remote working with remote log in to a portal system, Remote Conferencing as way of reducing travel costs and time.
- Review the management of these services not the services. The quality of senior management in Midlothian Council is the problem that requires to be addressed.
- Question 3 is not asking me anything at all. It is asking me to give the council carte blanche to do whatever they like. I would appreciate a real choice.
- Single locations should be distributed throughout the county, bringing jobs to all areas
- Don't understand the questions. How do we manage facilitates? What services can we sell?
- Energy consumption definitely could be looked at. Often in council buildings that have their heating on unnecessarily high!
- What goods and services would you be selling? Good idea in theory but not enough info given
- Easy way to save money to invest in other vital services
- Allow heating to be turned off in individual classrooms offices etc Allow parents etc to paint classrooms etc Look at insulation in school buildings, libraries etc Allow more staff members to lock up buildings
- I believe the council needs to be more out of the box thinking And invest in buildings that can bring a return back in though solar and wall power tec and ground source heat pump's, you need to be thinking more long term and not short term
- There should be no excuse for excess energy consumption. This should be part of any new employee induction, and monitored as part of the annual appraisal. Could some of Leisure Centres host activities more usually held in community venues - bingo, darts competitions, team quizzes, Parent and Baby Groups, OAP tea dances etc
- You could ask one dalkeith to run a new dalkeith cinema / theatre . Could ask community groups to run the old newbattle swimming pool in newtongrange , when the new school opens. Could

ask one dalkeith to run a new Woodburn hub in Woodburn . Could work with edinburgh council to bring railway from Peniculk to millerhill. Work with disabled clubs about transport to schools at night. Maybe companies could sponsor the buses at night.

- Consolidation can be a good thing, but not if it means that this is always done at the expense of some communities. Consolidation can mean specific services on certain sites, not centralisation, which is a different concept. Consolidation could benefit communities with little or no employment or service centres.
- Will the NHS communicate better with partners as currently they do not share information despite it being to clients advantage.
- Previously it was planned in closing Dalkeith public toilets. I'm totally against this. Start charging to pay for a manned toilet e.g., North Berwick and Musselburgh (East Lothian)
- Solar panels on the 6 roofs at Newbyres Village (council work premises?) to save money on our electricity bill. E
- Check out over heated buildings and a range of energy saving exercises such as keeping doors closed.
- Look at lighting and change where possible to low energy bulbs.

General support services

- Pool of 'supply' staff: To reduce reliance on agency staff and save on agency fees
- Skills directory: The Council has a tremendous resource in its staff's skills. These are not always fully employed in their posts. For example, a casual clerical member of staff who would have web-building site knowledge from previous employment, an HR employee with another sort of degree or experience from different employment, or perhaps someone who has skills related to a hobby.
- Do away with Facilities Management and do the job in house, the council have people in place to do the job.
- Cut staffing at Mid House.
- Don't agree with people working from home, very easy to abuse.
- I do not think you can prevent or arrange for staff not to be sick.
- There is significant overstaffing in all government admin areas. The people employed there are very talented and there could be an opportunity to help fund spin off companies (like the university programmes) These people are very useful and could contribute immensely but from the private sector.
- I am afraid that there are still too many occasions when you see 3-4 council workers standing around whilst one person working (and it is obviously a 1-2 man job).

- Not too happy when things are out-sourced to private sector. Generally causes a fall in standards and erosion of workers rights.
- Reduce the cost of pension provision to the taxpayer. Public sector pensions are unaffordable
- Restrict some private services and have more in house contracts
- If the position an employee holds becomes surplus to requirements then the employee should be paid off – as happens in other sectors. More should be done to find out what form of sickness/absence is – stress/mental and reduce salary/payment for long term or habitual sick employees. Home/mobile working is inefficient.
- Substantial savings could be made by improving communications between all departments and local community groups and improving the efficiency levels of senior officers and decision makers within Midlothian Council. Money is not the problem, the Council needs to make serious improvements to their management and working methods. Inefficiency is the main problem.
- Do not agree with home/mobile working as too many distractions for employee therefore reducing production.
- More self reliance, less interference. More onsite management i.e. schools -less central council staff.
- Don't agree with employees working from home.
- Make those redundant using normal business figures. Stop wasting money on not needed jobs. Stop expensive spending, cut high paid people's gadgets.
- I would not like to see temporary/interim positions being promoted.
- Life isn't all about making money. Working long hours, stress, pressure are all negative factors which arrive through ineffective management. Job sharing should be encouraged. Instead of making older workers redundant, transfer their skills. People are not commodities and should not be treated like slaves.
- Maybe top brass at council should take a pay cut.
- Start running the council as if the money was your own and don't waste a penny! Don't just make managers out of your own employees (half the council managers couldn't run a bath)!
- What about cutting back on public servants' expenses, taxi services, office refurbishing (with private showers no less!), etc. That the newspapers report periodically.
- I am not into the internet and online service I just don't like this idea of talking to someone on the screen.

Street cleaning, waste collection and disposal

- charging for garden refuse would result in residents dumping refuse and discourage them even more than at present to keep their gardens tidy. Now that there are alternative ways of recycling, the grey bin could be collected less frequently or another alternative is to provide larger grey bins
- most grey bins seem full in two weeks, we would need bigger bins for this.
- No charges should be made for this service
- stop the royal mail and other companies putting flyers through the doors- that will reduce my paper waste a lot. Waste collection is a very basic service we all need and benefit from. for many it is the only regular service received from the council. It protects the local environment
- Bellmans Road Depot- only vehicles allowed in- not everyone has a car, no sofas or mattresses- no wonder sofas abandoned on Bellman's pathway. Chaotic traffic issues on Bellman's road (especially lunchtimes) parked bin lorries, traffic congestion making it difficult for Nursery School pupils and residents. an accident waiting to happen
- It makes sense to consider dropping the garden waste collection provision, so long as a facility is put in place for those without transport to use the municipal recycling centre. The grey bins fill up very quickly. This is not the kind of service to risk spilling onto the streets.
- Agree to charging for green garden waste if the council would reciprocate by providing free compost arising from the green waste. Grey bin collections could be reduced now food waste bins have been provided. three weekly is sensible, a choice of different size bins should be made available.
- Reducing the frequency for garden waste would be acceptable. However, if you charge for it I suspect some people will let their gardens turn into a real mess rather than pay. My fear is that 3 weekly grey bin collection will increase fly tipping - which we already have a problem with in Newtongrange/Bonnyrigg. Also, 3 weeks of nappies in a bin in the summer will generate a horrific smell!
- We mostly find that our grey bin does need to be emptied fortnightly. Reducing collection frequency unfairly disadvantages those who do not own private transport and may struggle to take additional waste to the tip.
- Possibilities of income generation from the garden waste service (composting etc.)?
- The roadside collection is fine and meeting our needs. I wish more people composted their own waste and put it on their garden beds. The waste collection from common ground is not enough however. There is too much litter on the streets and in the parks. I don't think the council should increase its bins or litter collection in these areas - but I don't see enough/any work by the council on addressing this issue with the public who drop the litter. I don't see people being fined for not clearing up after their dog and I don't see people being fined for dropping litter. If the public saw this actually happening via social media, that might put people off and remind people to take their rubbish home and bin their dog's bags. I wish there was more focused training targeting the people that think this is ok behaviour because it's about a lack of respect for the council's

organisation, the council staff members who clear up the waste and us, the other residents of their area.

- Asking people to pay for brown bin collections will lead to fly tipping which is already a huge issue and the neglect of gardens which is dispiriting for all.
- I don't think charging more for waste removal is a good idea. People on low incomes cannot spare money for this service. People on low incomes tend to be those in most need of incentives to keep their environment tidy and experience the resulting sense of pride.
- More imaginative solutions to waste collection required. Not working effectively at present but very important issue.
- Look at outsourcing the waste collections. Is the service paying for itself? Can cuts be made in staff but ensuring that a full day is worked!
- Experience from Edinburgh suggests that reduced collection frequency leads to overflowing bins, with all the environmental health problems that brings.
- Encourage households to recycle their green waste
- Our streets are a disgrace and we should spend money on improving the cleaning, cut in total the brown bin collection and make available plots for customers to deposit garden waste. The savings need to go on street cleaning.
- What does the paragraph 'what this might mean' mean? What is 'most households have enough capacity to fully recycle'... F1 Garden waste. Will reduced collections or charging lead to more dumping?
- what is not revealed by the statement is the consequences- rubbish piled up awaiting collection. If you are charging for brown bins maybe charge for an extra grey bin for the bigger houses Some compressing device for the bins could be thought of
- Increase charges and offer more ways of generating income i.e. leaf collection in private roads and gardens
- Changing from 2 to 3 weeks for grey bins wouldn't be a good idea- huge build up of waste at festive period for example, or if someone was clearing out their house. Health & Safety issues- i.e. bins blown over in the wind, more rubbish having to be stored in house if bin full
- The county is already suffering due to the removal of free bulky uplifts. there is even more fly tipping than before and reducing the grey bin service will only make this even worse
- More education of the public in the use of what waste goes into what bin. Also I feel that a three week collection will lead to overflow thus a danger to the environment e.g. rodents, gulls, birds, etc
- reviewing the garden waste service by reducing the frequency of collection or charging for it will increase fly tipping and will increase the chances of people caring less for looking after their gardens. gardens are an important part of enhancing the appearance of a community. A garden waste service is very important. Gardening should be encouraged as much as possible, it's

excellent for your mental health, fitness and you can grow your own food. it gives people a purpose, a pride in their community in its appearance and can develop social skills, passing on knowledge, bridging a gap between the elderly and young. for larger families they might struggle to contain waste in a bin collected every 3 weeks.

- We need bigger bins or weekly collections
- I think the current system is really good and should not be reduced further. Garden waste is only collected during the spring/summer months which is appropriate
- The Council would do well to impose fines on those who litter our streets and place waste in the wrong bins. This would generate a not-inconsiderable sum.
- It's not frequent enough emptying normal waste bin never mind making it longer!
- Moving from weekly to fortnightly a few years ago has presumably led to very few problems. Now its time to take it further with 3 weekly grey bin collection.
- Garden waste pickups should not be charged for.
- Educate on the benefits of recycling on the community.
- I think it is unhygienic to reduce the collection particularly for people who have to put in nappies or dog bags.
- Reduce on a trial basis, and assess if people get problems with bins too full.
- This would encourage people to fly tip and dump excess waste through out the community!
- If charges are made for collecting green waste the people may stop using the service and fly tipping could increase. Reducing the number of collections may be ok for smaller gardens but those with larger gardens may need an extra bin
- If charges are made for green waste removal there is a danger that people will stop using the recycling bin and there could be an increase in fly tipping. If the frequency of collections were reduced it may be ok for those with small gardens but not for those with larger gardens, unless there was provision for an extra bin for large gardens
- As long as the bins do not get smaller and then charges are levied for using community recycling sites.
- Rubbish collections are reduced as far as they can be in my opinion. The food waste recycling service is not practical having food waste lying around your garden for a week in a small bin which can easily be knocked over by animals.
- Brown bins could be a monthly service or a ring and collect service. Grey bins need to be fortnightly or monthly. 3 weekly means you'd have blue and grey bins going out at the same time and streets are bad enough with 1 set of bins out

- All households should be provided with a larger blue recycling bin. I often struggle to get all of my recycling into the blue bin and end up having to use the general waste bin or go to the recycling centre if I have time.
- This would only lead to other problems
- No, but wish to applaud works in this sector for current changes to reduce costs. I sometimes wonder if residents would contribute more to this fund if they knew the money being offered was going directly to the service. eg if a street wishes to have more regular green waste collection, it could book-it and pay for it. Option of increased frequency or one-off extras.
- Increase the fines for those caught fly-tipping/littering.
- Reducing the collection of grey bins would require re-education as litter could potentially lead to problems like vermin and disease.
- More to encourage waste reduction and home composting. Normalize good reduce, reuse, recycling habits in society. Penalise supermarkets for creating wasteful packaging.
- I think the bin collection rates are about right at the moment. If you cut back on garden waste collections people will just ask for a second or third brown bin.
- I think all improvement of 3 buckets is a waste of time and money .. One bucket for everything collection 1 a week .. Job done to much nonsense with buckets
- Reduced garden bin collections, once per month
- Grey bins should not be left longer than the fortnightly period. Garden waste could be left longer in the winter months more so than the summer. Could introduce to pay for an extra collection on grey / blue bins should the tenant home owner require. If the council were to extend any collection times larger bins would have to be provided and an extra bin for families.
- We are a household of 3 - we recycle and sort all our waste. We fill all of our bins. To reduce collections will mean more fly tipping by the irresponsible and more visits to the tip by private car for the responsible people - how does this fit with the environmental policy?
- This might encourage further use of the recycling bins and food waste services. I am worried generally though that the development of the Millerhill incinerator will undermine waste reduction efforts.
- Since you have introduced charges I have noticed that fly tipping has become a real problem, I think that introducing charges is counter productive as it costs the council to eventually pick up the waste. It detracts from the beautiful landscape that we have in Midlothian and deters visitors.
- You would need to pick up recycling more often and not provide additional bins for people but this could work.
- Some times bins not emptied in bonnyrigg because van full and gas to dump and runs out of time. Not bins that are full.that is prob. Can't reduce without extra vans or crew Also a nightmare at Christmas anyway. Happy with fortnightly. Seems reasonable

- Active encouragement of local composting of garden waste could off-set disruption/costs due to reduced frequency of collection/charges.
- Reduce the size of standard bin from 240L to 140L like Edinburgh has done. And keep it all 2 weekly.
- I have no personal difficulties with these suggestions but you might need to consider the needs of families who, for example, have children in nappies-- 3 weeks of nappies in a bin in the summertime is an unpleasant prospect.
- Reducing the green waste collection would be discriminatory to those without a car. I have a large garden and no transport so I would NOT be amused if I had to pay for my garden waste to be collected, I don't have children but think of all the nappies in the grey bins that are going to landfill that my council tax is paying for.
- Maybe try collecting recycling weekly before grey bins go to 3 weekly when my blue bin is full I have to use the grey.
- The above is surely a joke!! What else do I pay my council tax for?? Just look to Edinburgh to see how reduced bin collections have affected some areas. Do you really want Midlothian looking like a tip?
- For those with no food waste recycling available three weekly collections of grey bins would not be acceptable
- I think more thought needs to go into this. The reduction in these areas will (in my opinion) see an increase in 'fly tipping' which in turn can be dangerous to car users due to the sites chosen for this activity.
- Option of compost bins and reduce garden waste collections
- Reduce services more and people will fly tip and dispose of rubbish in inappropriate ways causing long term issues with vermin and cost to tidy up!
- Charging for pick ups will just encourage fly tipping which will cost council more Get rid of the recycle points (like the one at Roslin pavilion) not needed so curb side pick ups and they are just a magnet for fly tipping and anti social behaviour
- Disgusting so the amount of rats in Gorebridge are ok ?
- Reducing the collection of the brown bins but wouldn't want to be charged for the service. 3 weeks for grey bins should work if recycling remains the same
- Where I live in Mayfield we don't have any recycling bins or did we get any food waste bins, we have 3 big bins for 8 houses which have around 4 people in if don't more and I think the other houses something have to use them. The bins are always overfill in 2 weeks never mind 3
- I think that there should also be some enforcement of using the recycling bins, this is the only way that residents can effectively use a 3 week service for their grey bin. I am a strong believer in recycling and my grey bin is never even half full at the 2 week collection. However I understand

that this is more difficult for families or households with more than 2 people in it. So providing larger grey bins might be required.

- Being a family of 4, of the grey bin collection was reduced to 3 weekly then a larger bin would need to be supplied, as we currently fill our current bin on a fortnightly collection!
- Reducing the frequency of the green (garden waste) service would only work if the bins are sturdy enough to handle more waste. At the moment they are very flimsy and crack easily. I strongly disagree to paying extra for this service. Reducing the collection of household waste is easier for some households than others. Families with 1 or more children in nappies may struggle with this change.
- It's hard enough with two weeks collection never mind 3 weeks
- What about babies nappies? What about rats? Where do we put our garden rubbish? People will just dump it anywhere they can.
- I think garden rubbish could be collected less frequently but I wouldn't charge otherwise I think you'd find it in the grey bin.
- Reduced bin collection just results in more fly tipping which probably costs more to clean up. Reduce at source - bottle deposit schemes, reverse vending machines
- Agree in principle, the use of wheeled bins on narrow pavements is an obstacle to pushchairs, prams and wheelchair users. Sometimes there is no way past.
- Easily achievable if people correctly recycle , only exception is disposable nappies do fill buckets and maybe exceptions in this case.
- Household recycling could be incentivised by offering some sort of reward scheme for presenting minimal landfill waste. Cutting the grey bin pick ups to 3 weeks would be problematic! Leading to waste being left in bag on the street when bins are full. Who would enforce waste presentation? CEC have Environmental Wardens who do you have? It may end up costing more.
- Productivity could be improved in this area by more analysis of routes and resources. Staff are regularly back at depot early in the day when I see other Council's working into later evening.
- Absolutely disagree that households can cope with more than a fortnightly emptying of the grey bins. I fully recycle everything I can and use the food bins and still my grey bin is full before 2 weeks are out. No change to grey bins please. Instead charge for garden waste as Borders does.
- We are a two person house for now and it will be extremely difficult when we have our baby to store our waste if the grey bin is reduced (maybe look into the real nappies scheme that Edinburgh City has). I can't imagine how larger families would cope. I think the regular green waste collections are brilliant because it encourages people to maintain their gardens during the summer. I definitely wouldn't pay a charge.
- For people like myself who have a huge garden that requires 2 brown bins for the maintenance 9 months of the year I think charging for this is sheer cheek! We pay enough council tax as it is!! As for the grey bin I also have 2 blue bins and fill these every fortnight and my grey bin is still full by

the end of that fortnight. If a 3 weekly collection is going to happen then as a family of 4 one of whom is in nappies will need a larger bin!

- Charging for these services encourages fly tipping. Brown bin collections should not be charged but could be made less frequent. Similarly, the return of one free bulky uplift per year would cut down on the mess we see around the countryside, but costs could be clawed back by charging more for further uplifts.
- I would suggest that if the frequency between collections is increased larger waste bins would have to be provided to accommodate this.
- Any decrease in waste services will result in an increase in fly tipping which will inevitably cost more to deal with. A tax on supermarket packaging may help!
- Maybe give residents some sort of reward for recycling via points based scheme. Discounting council tax at the end of the year? This could be done by encouraging people to take recycling to their local recycling depot?
- In areas where people are more likely to fly-tip then you should keep up the frequency of services, otherwise it would be alright to reduce it a bit.
- As a household who recycles everything possible, it is still hard to not have the grey bins going out every fortnight. Bigger recycling bins would be helpful.
- Reducing bin collection will just result in more fly tipping and vermin
- Litter has increased in Newtongrange and a reduction in grey bin collection will only make things worse.
- Bins are toiling to take amounts in the current situation
- As a mother of a young baby, the very idea of rubbish being collected every three weeks (i.e. the nappies) is at the edge of horrifying.
- Street cleaning is disgraceful, streets are filthy. Suggest you spend money on core services.
- I think if you charge for green waste removal it will increase fly tipping! The green waste is especially important to older residents who take a pride in their garden. Charging them would penalise them for keeping their gardens tidy!
- I would support a 3 or even 4 weekly collection of refuse as recycling reduces the amount of stuff going into the refuse bin. However, since the council is trying to support and encourage recycling and reduction of waste, please do not charge for the garden waste collection. If you do, people won't use it and will fly tip instead or put it in general waste.
- this is ridiculous bins not big enough to contain 3 weeks worth of waste. this will encourage rodents and people fly tipping
- Too many bins mean too many uplifts regardless of reducing further grey bin/green waste... Collect all on same bin run on same frequency!!! Excepting food waste which needs more frequent uplift....

- Even with lots of recycling, the average family will fill a grey bin in 2 weeks. Left for another week you will have disgusting overflowing bins and an increase in fly tipping, which I would assume would work out more costly.
- Might to supply sl bigger bins or ensure that staff don't refuse to empty those with lids that cannot be fully closed!
- We need more bins in Arniston park !!
- Maintain current recycling, composting and food waste collections.
- What about bigger families I am ok
- Glass and general waste to monthly would be fine Smaller bins Standardised street cleaning, public bin emptying across authority in all villages and towns
- Reduced collection of refuse is ok as more recycling should be encouraged but how could any potential charges for collection of garden waste (which presumably gets recycled or reused) be justified if the council is trying to encourage reduction of waste and recycling?
- Put pressure on the supermarkets to reduce packaging and to promote veg and fruit to be sold as in the past from a wholesale box. Butcher meat and fish from the counter and not prepackaged
- Charging for garden waste uplift will encourage people to have low maintenance gardens and penalising those who care about green issues, the planet needs MORE gardens, bees need more plants, our kids need more outside places to play, please don't do this to us. How about charging those who don't recycle, who don't use their blue, red and grey food bin as there is plenty of them? Our grey bin is never full now.
- You need to invest in the same trucks you see in more progress of thinking countries that can handle the rounds with a one man crew because it is fully automated therefore you can cut the staff you need considerably you can have dedicated bays for the bins to be picked up that aren't allowed to be blocked so the vehicle can have easy access make the vehicle electric and you will save on a massive maintenance cost and if the depot you park them at have solar you will have a huge savings in fuel and range isn't a problem because how many of your trucks do two hundred miles in a day because that's the average for a range of an electric vehicle, and you get to save the world ?? . Think long term not short
- I have a small garden and one bin and some of my neighbours have 3 or more brown bins. People should pay for the amount of rubbish they create. We are a family of 4 and I'd prefer to keep a fortnightly grey bucket collection but maybe in a smaller bin like in Edinburgh. This would help more if you were on holiday on your bin day as you wouldn't have 6 weeks of refuge.
- Charging for garden waste would only encourage people to put garden waste in the Grey Bins!
- I already struggle with bin collections fortnightly as the council refuse to provide me with a family grey bin despite being a family of 6, and bin over flowing every fortnight
- You need more wheelie bins if it snows in Midlothian

- In some areas they have historically larger gardens, this is especially true of older council houses. A flat would have little garden waste, but large gardens a lot. It is hard to provide a fair service in this scenario. Has there been a study to ascertain whether fly tipping increases exponentially with the reduction or rising cost of waste collection services?
- Be ok if you give bigger bins otherwise you will increase fly tipping
- Help communities to help themselves (regular litter picks etc)
- Keep doing the great work on recycling: new food waste collection is a great idea.
- The bins issued for food waste are of little use when it is windy and when isn't it. Bins are often scattered, open and contents spilled.
- Charge for dog poo bags.
- Bins will be over flowing if only every 3 weeks
- Requesting an uplift in the rebate rates paid for recycle materials should be investigated.
- Midlothian council could save money by getting rid of the recycling station next to Roslin primary school / pavilion. Thanks to the excellent curb side pickups we don't need these sites. Ignorant people just use them to fly tip and the broken glass is a hazard next to a park and school.

Roads maintenance and street lighting

- our roads and pavements need more money spent as they are in a state of disrepair
- this would be dangerous and irresponsible
- The importance of good roads in summer and winter are necessary
- resurfacing car parks i.e. sacred heart primary- summer break even working Saturday and Sunday and some morning noisy by 7:45 am. Is this warranted when roads are in such a state. Different budgets you say well maybe the time has come to rob Peter to pay Paul
- reducing road maintenance is a false economy and simply shifts the costs to road users in terms of damage to vehicles and hours lost getting repairs.
- street lighting could be reduced, would 'smart' lighting be a viable option (ie light triggered by movement)
- The only thing I don't agree with in relation to winter care, is reducing the number of salt bins. If we have grit bins in our residential streets we can grit our own paths so you won't need the wee tractors to come in.
- Prospect of less gritting in rural areas would greatly affect people of all ages. With no bus service a car is essential.

- It's imperative that roads are kept clear of snow and ice in the winter to allow the Midlothian area to function.
- I rarely see people using the council's salt bins. I don't see why people don't take more personal responsibility for their own streets. If there was a salt bin on all streets and we were told you weren't going to do it. I would like to think that people would meet each other, work together and take responsibility for making it possible for everyone can get out.
- Reducing winter services will lead to further deterioration of the roads and more accidents and claims from people involved in avoidable injuries.
- The roads are in a dreadful state of repair. For years they have been neglected. Stop the continual tempo repairs. If they are repaired correctly the first time the repairs will last longer. Look at WHY the road surfaces are so bad!
- The Council must focus on increasing revenue first, rather than cutting spending first. It must make maximum use of the historically low cost of borrowing to invest now so that the future costs of providing services are reduced.
- Smarter timing is required rather than focus on particular areas: back streets commonly get treated once thaw is in progress.
- Work with interested parties like Community Councils. local farmers to clear streets of snow
- G1 The serious backlog of repairs has not been reduced. This leads to further damage. G2 This would be dangerous. Please see your page 8 about 'public safety.
- Unfortunately this means serious risks to emergency services (we had a child on 26 December so we faced this scenario) Community involvement e.g. training in use of mini ploughs so we can take action locally in partnership is the way forward.
- Leave grit out, communities can do a lot themselves with a little bit of support
- The condition of Midlothian's roads at the moment is a disgrace. Road surfaces are full of potholes and patches. Reducing repairs will just make it worse. As for winter gritting we never see a gritter in our street. we have to phone in and complain before we see this service.
- A friend of mine was seriously concussed and spent time in hospital due to his bike hitting a pot hole. Gritting of paths and roads is extremely important as it can lead to people feeling isolated and increase the chance of the elderly taking risks, walking on icy paths to buy food essentials for example
- It already feels as though some repairs on roads which have been damaged or have pot holes take a long time to fill so please don't reduce this further
- Roads must be maintained to an acceptable standard. Allowing potholes to develop will lead to legal claims against the Council. Reducing the gritting of roads will have the same effect - more accidents for which the Council may be held responsible.
- For me road condition is important and a reduction in standard of roads is not acceptable. Changes to gritting are necessary to save cost and are acceptable.

- I don't feel that these are areas which can afford any reduction in service. The conditions of our roads are not so stellar that they need less attention and maintenance and gritting are safety issues, not 'nice-to-haves'.
- Don't do road repairs or gritting at an overtime rate of pay, if cheaper for winter, place more grit bins for residents to manage locally particularly in areas where there are cul-de-sacs and the grit lorries can't complete them due to on street parking, perhaps work in partnership with large stores in the area to assist in gritting/ clearance of snow within a radius of the store
- Reducing spending on roads would lead to more costs long term.
- Roads are in an awful state as it is and reducing it would only make them more dangerous. Gritting is vital and cutting it could be very dangerous and prevent people from being able to leave their homes.
- The areas being gritted need to be reviewed as there are currently areas needing done in winter that are not covered
- Gritting is undertaken in areas that are vastly populated and normal footfall would clear the snow. Small tractor does not always come round our way.
- Currently the little tractor does not clear my paths and the current grit bin is not always filled to enable residents who clear their own paths to keep the path clear. Why is the tractor only deployed to the paths at the bottom of the Miller scheme when there are houses and paths further up the hill.
- It is already the case that main walking routes to schools and nurseries in the Bonnyrigg area are not reliably gritted or cleared of snow. This poses a real risk of injury to residents and pupils.
- How can you reduce gritting to concentrate more on priority areas when you can't even grit priority areas around schools at present?
- Midlothian is often cut off if we have really bad weather and roads are not cleared or gritted. I have had to miss days at work in the past because roads were not cleared so I couldn't drive to work and no buses were coming to Newtongrange.
- We can't afford to do this. In the long run it costs more to reduce road maintenance.
- This is a false economy and a safety issue
- In Canada it is the law to have winter tyres from November to March. This would help keep traffic moving.
- We have no bus service, if roads are not gritted - because we are not on a bus route! - we can't get out at all.
- The impact of poor road maintenance is potentially dangerous to cyclists.
- The roads in Midlothian, particularly in the Penicuik area, are already worn out to a level where damage is done to vehicles and cycling on them is a horrible experience. How can you say you are promoting commuting and cycling as a leisure pursuit when the roads are so awful that it is

becoming dangerous because us cyclists are being forced further and further into the path of vehicles by potholes and broken tarmac. How can you even consider reducing the cost of road maintenance when the roads are already in such a poor state? The A701 between Gowkley Moss roundabout and Eddleston, the A766 (Carlops Road) are the worst roads I have ever ridden on.

- As a rural area, Midlothian needs to maintain a good snow clearing and gritting service. Maintaining salt bins across the region allows the public to help with this.
- Spend the money on getting people who do the job right the first time. Stop trying to save money by patching up holes in roads it does not work and costs more time and money in the long run. The state of the roads in Midlothian is horrendous right now and yet there always seem to be roadworks causing delays and extending already long commuting times. Get them done right first time!!
- A better turn around on repairing potholes would be good. Overall it's good to see some roads being resurfaced in the area.
- Feel some pavements are neglected as a point of priority. My child near broke ankle on a residential street road was reported months ago and hasn't been fixed. Gritting of main streets and roads and then into the homes and grit bins at winter should always be provided winter maintenance is priority of safety and should be increased where appropriate when appropriate
- you need better pot hole fillers -it is currently appalling-done when weather condition s are bad two days later its all washed oot = WASTE OF MONEY
- Given the amount of development going on in Midlothian - more money for roads is need and several upgrades of existing roads and new roads. There are no sensible options for travelling east to west across Midlothian without travelling through bottle necks or taking a long route along the bypass. The result is no bus service between east town like Gorebridge and Penicuik. It is ridiculous that we have to travel to Edinburgh city to get a bus back out. Serious improvement are required e.g. Roslin Glen and Dalhousie bridge!
- Reduce gritting in car parks for sure, but please maintain footpaths and cycle lanes better please.
- How can you even think about reducing spending on roads maintenance when the roads are in a shocking state already. The council can't even grit priority routes properly it's a total joke to even consider reducing the budget.
- To reduce salting the roads is ludicrous. This is dangerous to all road users. People, regardless of where they live, need to get to work/shops/schools.
- One van just does rubbish job. Roads to school and work vital. Didn't even clear footpaths around school. Awful service
- Seems like a false economy to me. You stop fixing the roads, surely the problems just become bigger and more expensive.
- potentially reductions of spends on these areas could mean an increase in claims against council for accidents and falls etc.

- Everything seems to be done on the cheap and doesn't seem to last, holes are filled and within days the issue reoccurs.
- Forget markings generally most people are not stupid but resurfacing is a must, personally I'm over the moon Stobhill is being done, long over due like a majority of roads if anything more money needs to be invested in our roads. As for Led street lighting this is great as although a big outlay the efficiency and energy savings can be huge.
- The roads are in awful condition as it is, and are treacherous in winter, so this is a definite no in reducing spending.
- Another joke! The roads in Midlothian are poor as it is. As for less gritting during the winter, is that even possible given how infrequent the roads are gritted despite weather warnings!
- the above reductions would be a short term approach which would lead to higher repair costs in the future. Reduction of snow clearing in smaller communities could cause hardship to the more vulnerable members of the community.
- The condition of many roads within Midlothian is shameful. To even consider reducing work in this area is ridiculous. I foresee an increase in claims against MDC increasing if car users sustain damage to vehicles due to lack of maintenance.
- The state of the road network in Midlothian is a disgrace and in Penicuik where I live I have to dodge potholes and very poor road surfaces every day which will cause accidents
- Moved up from Borders 3 years ago and already disappointed with Midlothian ability to deal with snow/ice. Residents should be able to use grit bins to look after areas around their homes, leave council staff to focus on roads.
- As and when the roads need maintained and gritted. No cost cutting can put lives in danger and could lead to more claims for negligence
- The roads are already a state. Dangerous for cyclists. Less maintenance is not an option
- There is never enough grit on the road as it is why take it back further?
- These are fundamentally issues of safety and should not be altered.
- Don't forget the new housing estates recently built. We are always last
- I think road safety is very important. I live within a housing estate just off the main road and although close, I am on a hill and struggle to get out when it snows. If you don't spend then there may be more accidents/deaths which I would not be positive or cost effective.
- How can you possibly consider reducing spending on roads? They are falling apart! Poorly maintained roads cost lives!!
- Encourage local champions to store grit and clear pathways with 'good neighbour' schemes and rewards
- The use of solar energy is a consideration to further reduce power used on traffic light systems.

- The roads are in such a state as it is and you want to reduce maintenance!! That's a vote loser. You should be investing in the roads infrastructure to cope with all the extra traffic to match the massive house build program. MCs transport policy is appalling. Where's the vision for new rail, road, cycle and pedestrianised routes.
- Roads are a disgrace in Midlothian. And in winter you already don't bother with clear some roads and pavements
- If you want to reduce gritting the NHS needs to be prepare to have more people presenting with injuries and some people will not go out so you will encourage isolation. I can't imagine Loanhead having worse potholes than it does now!
- The roads are in a very poor condition, safety is important that means gritting.
- Reducing roads maintenance and gritting? You having a laugh?! Midlothian is pothole central and as for gritting it's non existent! I have said in the past the best thing for the bad weather would be to supply ALL households with a grit bin and a bag of grit every winter - that way no-one can moan about streets not being gritted! It'd be up to the householder to grit outside there house/driveway and the lazy sods who don't should be fined and the money goes back to the council. Obviously the elderly and infirm the council should have provisions in place for them.
- People who live on private roads but pay council tax tend not to get there roads gritted. If people pay council tax there roads should be gritted the same as everyone else.
- The roads and pavements are currently not up to a high enough standard to commit to cutbacks. Similarly, the area is very badly affected when the bad weather arrives, and is quite often not served well enough as it is to be able to make cut backs.
- The roads in Midlothian are already in a dreadful state so to suggest a reduction in spending on roads is incomprehensible. Yet another ridiculous example of how management in Midlothian Council operate.
- More needs to be done in reducing speed limits on certain roads around Midlothian. More lighting required on public paths around residential areas & in public parks.
- It is important to do the potholes, more than the road markings. Maybe local areas could sponsor their grit bin.
- Road maintenance is horrific. Putting patches in here and there is a waste of money as they come out again in a matter of weeks, resurfacing the affected roads completely is needed. The roads needing the winter gritting service on side roads as well as main. It stops vulnerable people getting out of there homes if their street is not gritted. We need more small gritters that can do the side streets.
- To keep people working and contributing positively to society the network of roads and pavements is vital and don't forget the importance for elderly children disabled to get out and about. Also vital to maintain clear and safe access to rural communities

- Without the gritting etc Penicuik would be a no go area over the winter months. The road outside Beeslack High School is shocking with the hole in the middle of the road. I think this should be sorted out asap.
- the state of the roads is terrible as it is and repairs are taking longer to get done
- The roads are already in a poor state; the rural nature of the area means that fewer gritting bins etc is quite unrealistic. Having seen and been stuck in snow and ice in Midlothian, I cannot agree that reducing winter maintenance is a good idea.
- You'll do what you like anyway.
- Maintenance of roads and potholes very important for cycles it's. My friend was concussed and ended up in hospital due to his bicycle hitting a pothole. Gritting paths very important for the elderly so they do not end up trapped in their own home. Gritting of paths so people stay safe from falls especially old and young people!
- Road safety must be a priority, as a cyclist in Midlothian I notice when the roads are not maintained. Midlothian council covers a large geographical area so I understand not all roads are maintained to the highest standard, but reducing the level of maintenance will put safety at risk, leading to larger potholes and poorer surfaces which is bad news for cyclists and other road users. The same goes for gritting etc, I assume the council already concentrates on priority areas, eg gritting and clearing the A7 rather than the many unclassified roads in the region. Where I live there are grit bins for self gritting, these are a godsend in the winter, please don't reduce these as at least we can grit the pavements and road ourselves as the council can't get to everywhere. If these were reduced, again safety becomes an issue with more falls and accidents on icy roads and pavements.
- This will have great implications of accidents possibly death or serious injuries
- Clearing priority areas of snow and ice is all well and good assuming people can get to them. Useless if not.
- Isn't this a bit of a false economy's? The roads are already in a poor state of repair in some areas and reduced gritting etc may not be sensible. Collectively either could lead to more accidents and claims!
- Streamline access to utilities! Or insist that utility companies repair sections of road or pathway rather than leaving a patchwork of different surfaces where frost, salt and traffic erode through.
- If they filled in pot holes the proper way first time round you would save a fortune in having to send them back. Again if manholes were properly done you would not have to dig new roads up to redo them.
- Safety has to be a priority and reduced spending on roads that need maintenance is not a good idea. As a cyclist in Midlothian, safe, well maintained roads are essential. I know Midlothian covers a large geographical area but safety again must be a priority and reducing gritting and grit bins will put safety at risk. Overhead lights on major roadways and newly constructed bypasses are unnecessary and wasteful of energy - especially at 1 o'clock in the morning. What do cars

have headlights for?! If they have to be there because of a European directive, then why can they not be triggered to come on by an approaching car?

- Encourage everyone to take responsibility for clearing snow in their own road (except elderly or disabled people). We live in Scotland - people have to accept we will get snow and deal with it - rather than expecting the Council to do everything for them. Just make sure there are lots of local grit bins and fill them up. Also charge residents if they want their path cleared or if they need grit/salt. You can buy big bags in Tesco but folk don't cos they get it free from the Council.
- Could you look at the side roads around Mayfield, Pot holes As a disabled person living in Mayfield, the side roads, should be the same as main roads
- Reducing gritting in certain areas, especially hilly ones, such as Mayfield/Gorebridge may result in more personal accidents resulting in hospital admittance and the need for precious care services. Older people would be affected and might need food deliveries etc.

Communities and economic development

- These are luxuries we just can't afford. the current spending on this is huge. Essential service should not be provided by the voluntary sector but should be directly by democratically elected governments. Charities are not unbiased
- Review does NOT mean reduce.
- reducing support for the voluntary sector would simply result in the council having to pick up the pieces at greater cost. Reducing support to business/tourism is probably safer, as efforts in this area seem pretty ineffective anyway.
- Grants are often given to companies capable of self funding
- When this document talks about reducing poverty in various parts it would seem strange to reduce a service that provides help and assistance to those in the greatest needs, especially at a time of further change
- I do not think that the council should be funding any external organisation at a time when money is tight.
- Third sector services are already filling the gaps created by cost cuts. Reducing grants will create further gaps and in the long run result in greater costs as children will need to be accommodated or more services involved e.g. speakable educational services.
- I believe that the Welfare Rights Team are a valuable asset to the council especially in the fight to tackle poverty in the community. They brought in 2.5 million pounds in the last financial year and are the holders of the Council's team of the year award. I'm at a loss as to why they have been stated as an example of where to cut spending ??
- I'm not sure this needs to be the council's area of responsibility. It's nice, but I'd much prefer you to look after the other services you run. It seems that you paying out when you've barely got

enough coming in. If a business is going to succeed that's great - but there are other ways of getting money.

- Welfare rights teams are already at crisis level and many in need cannot hope to get it.
- The acute cases of hardship are the only people in receipt of support at the moment and I suspect not all of the many there are in Midlothian. This service needs to be expanded not reduced.
- If local groups are supported less the impact will be felt by the council in the long term on social / welfare / health services. Local groups often work more efficiently than the council as they better understand the local needs and can respond quicker to them.
- Give MORE money to local community councils or at least ask their opinion. They are the ones who live in the area and should know where the help is required.
- The Council must focus on increasing revenue first, rather than cutting spending first. It must make maximum use of the historically low cost of borrowing to invest now so that the future costs of providing services are reduced.
- a strong voluntary sector will support communities and save council money in the long term.
- Midlothian totally fails to recognise the CRUCIAL input of the Voluntary Sector and they deserve nil points for this inept oversight!
- Is there any measurable positive impact of the current services?
- Need to ensure strong reporting of public pound going to external organisations but they are the future- cheap flexible, responsive and community-building. Business and tourism- these activities are spontaneous in the main with limited role for local authority
- Certain voluntary organisations are wasteful e.g. volunteer centre and MVA with a top heavy overpaid staff (paid more than those with national remit), whilst other smaller organisations struggle to get anything - rebalance the distribution
- The Voluntary Sector should be a key (and equal) partner for Midlothian Council. The Voluntary sector on top of delivering highly effective work at a very competitive price, are also able to use any funding secured through Midlothian Council as match funding to attract more funding from outwith into Midlothian. Reductions in grants to the voluntary sector will, without doubt end up more costly when organisations are unable to survive, and gaps form which they filled in delivery which the Council end up compelled to fill.
- As the country has voted to leave the EU what replacement funding will be forthcoming???
- Again the most vulnerable groups are to suffer which will only lead to suffering. Welfare Rights is extremely important in informing people what services they are due. Money which could enhance their way of living. In a world which sees an ever increasing number of complicated forms people need help especially those who are illiterate or have mental health issues. Promotion of tourism and business is essential for economic growth and a stronger happier society.

- Unfortunately there just isn't enough money to go around and this is one of the areas which most people think are non essential
- Money for community groups may achieve good value compared with protecting some office staff in Council organisations. The success of the local economy and businesses is vital for Midlothian to prosper.
- These areas seem to me to be areas where support would be ideal, but not crucial.
- As an active member of Penicuik CAB I am very concerned about any further reductions to our already much reduced grant. Penicuik CAB has a dedicated team of paid workers and volunteers who provide a much needed service to all the people of Penicuik and surrounding areas but in particular to the most vulnerable and most in need in our community. We provide advice on benefits, benefit appeals, employment, debt, bankruptcy, homelessness etc and our early intervention saves the council from having to try and help these people when they reach crisis point. If people can't come to their local CAB where will they go for help?
- Funding to local services such as community centres sports facilities childcare service should not be reduced as they are already reliant on volunteers and local fund raising just to stay afloat, these are vital community services
- Really would not want to see support for such as Penicuik YMCA reduced. It provides vital childcare for working parents
- Using and funding existing resources, such as CAB, would ensure that a high standard of independent and holistic service is maintained while reducing the workload of council welfare rights staff
- Several local groups and organisations provide services that the Council would otherwise have to, making significant savings to the Council even taking grants into account. Some of these grants should be increased, not decreased.
- Reducing services to the most vulnerable in society will result in higher crime. Continue to invest in local groups and welfare rights as these are preventative services.
- I believe cutting such services, most especially the services provided by Midlothian Council's welfare rights team has the potential to create crises in other areas such as housing and revenues. As austerity continues to bite there is likely to be an increasing need for such services, especially by the poorest and most vulnerable members of our local communities.
- Reduced support for business and tourism can be managed effectively to target the right sort of businesses
- It would be a huge mistake to reduce community projects. They are the source of creative solutions and bonding which is integral to a caring society. The council is for people and they should come first.
- We need tourism & heritage jobs for young folk - but need to encourage them into this by providing apprenticeship schemes instead of expecting them all to have degrees.

- All of these are really important funds for civic life.
- Do Welfare Rights and CAB duplicate each other? With legal aid changes might Welfare Rights consider means testing service accessibility?
- Communities need support small groups and businesses need support now more than ever
- given that many people don't know about support from welfare rights I don't see how it can be cut -more info on this would serve people better and FINE benefit agencies for bad practice and reimburse claimants who have been wrongly accused
- Welfare rights? Is this to support drug addicts and alcoholics and leave out elderly who need support. Midlothian council needs to address their priorities.
- As a lone parent who works cutting grants to childcare services would be devastating.
- Third sector organisations in Midlothian provide childcare services such as breakfast and after school clubs. These services are vital for working parents of school age children as not every school runs such clubs on their premises and there is a lack of available childminders.
- It is far more cost effective for the voluntary sector to provide services than the Council, and the loss of many of those services would most likely only add to costs in other ways - i.e. through poorer health, increased anti-social behaviour, etc.
- Keep help for welfare rights
- Reducing funding to voluntary, sport and charitable orgs would undermine your efforts to find preventative approaches in other areas. For example, finding that orgs may receive now could help people remain independent longer or reduce the need for council intervention. Losing this, and cuts to funding places many orgs at risk, will likely result in an increase to council run services.
- Reduction of grants to local groups could have a knock-on impact on costs relating to education, health and social care. Many local organisations provide high value services to vulnerable groups whose benefits outweigh the outlaid costs to the Council. Similarly, reducing contributions to organisations that promote business and tourism would likely cause a drop in revenue both for the Council and for local businesses.
- Grants to local groups and organisations are a tiny part of the council's budget but a massive proportion of the funding that some of these organisations pull in. If you reduce funding even more than you have already done, you will drive organisations into the ground and the services they deliver to communities will disappear. This will then cost the council more to try to plug the gaps-- once again, a false economy. If you rip apart the fabric of our communities-- held together by sports clubs, day care clubs, youth groups, and other voluntary organisations-- what have you got left? A county not worth living in. As for tourism...that which we have is so negligible, it hardly seems worth having a network to promote it. Our towns are so ugly and dull that it's difficult to imagine how the tourist industry can increase.

- I think in the current climate of welfare reform; decreasing wages; part-time/short-term working; the services provided by many local groups and organisations; and by money advice will become more and more essential.
- Some local groups, particularly for the elderly rely on very small grants to provide a vital service. The tourism bus was a waste of money.
- There is no evidence to suggest that the council reducing support for business and tourism would have an adverse effect. Businesses should think smarter to keep costs down.
- Local groups and voluntary organisations form the glue in our society so should be well supported by the Local Authority
- It should be noted that the voluntary sector carry out a range of activities which would otherwise be funded at public expense. Any reduction in this area would almost certainly have a kickback effect financially and consequently is not a prudent move.
- Always support local charities and businesses in Midlothian
- All grants are beneficial but the 1:1 support in welfare rights can help increase funds for people to enhance independence and support safe and warm living.
- Could commercial companies get involved to fulfil their corporate social responsibilities?
- Tourism is major factor in bringing in additional monies. The use of unused council property for tourism could add a revenue stream.
- Could start with pulling the council funded Midlothian bus as there is never a soul on it!
- The voluntary sector in Midlothian delivers more services more efficiently to the people of Midlothian than the council does so to even suggest cutting their already paltry grants is criminal. I would suggest increasing their grants and reducing the number of community staff employed by the council as this would result in a positive outcome for the people most in need of the services volunteers deliver.
- If you make cuts that damage the fabric of community you are damaging the only net that can catch people when even the council itself cannot due to budget cuts. However, you need strong, capable partners in the community, you need to identify and engage with them candidly and on an equal footing.
- This question needs revision post brexit. Funding will most definitely have to be reviewed as it will come from uk
- Midlothian has some of the greatest attractions & green spaces in South East Scotland & needs to be further promoted.
- reducing grants would be detrimental to small communities who rely on this to ensure that they have community uppermost in their mind and looking out for their health and wellbeing and community spirit. If we do not advertise our areas we will loose tourism and money into our area
- Tourism is established in Midlothian already

- Scrap the tourist bus!!
- Local groups should apply for Lottery Funding for their groups.
- Could you look at Mayfield Midlothian, since a bus (29) came off, I have to go to Dalkeith, bring back a bus at weekend to get me to Western General Hospital. How about bringing a sci-fi convention into Dalkeith and Mayfield Midlothian, it was a hit in Glasgow secc. Midfest Reopen the Penicuik. To Millerhill railway line. A better bus service between Penicuik and Dalkeith as Napier College to be opened next to a film studios Loanhead.
- The council moaning at the fact their budget is cut but they are paying £69000 for a tourist bus. Am a bit miffed where is this money coming from.
- Many of the Third Sector organisations provide a good value for money service and contribute greatly to the community. This saves the council money.

Sport and Leisure

- increasing charges may result in less footfall therefore less income. We should be doing as much as possible to encourage communities to use these facilities. If the facilities were more efficient this may increase usage as well
- we want to encourage everyone to be fit, this is an investment in health
- sports facilities are needed by all to avoid ill health and obesity. Must not create extra car journeys by making people travel to centres. Reducing the centres makes them inaccessible to many families and young people due to transport issues
- charge for use of computers and curtail freebies issued to public
- how about reducing the discount given to all Midlothian staff
- Review does NOT mean reduce.
- The word "review" does not automatically mean "increase charges or reduce resources". It should mean a careful consideration of how to achieve balance and best value.
- Midlothian has an extremely high concentration of small sports facilities (particularly swimming pools) for such a small geographical area. I think funding should be consolidated onto a few larger facilities.
- Midlothian building of pools could increase revenue if they considered building a 25metre pool with a good viewing area. Currently east and west Lothian benefits from swimming clubs in the Lothian S holding one to 2 day meets.
- Given the obesity levels in Scotland, increasing fees would be foolish and would also further restrict those in poverty making use of these facilities.
- I agree with you centralising your services in to community hubs - except in Newtongrange where you are not 'centralising' it - but actually removing it from the centre so that the rest of society

that isn't between 5 and 18 has to get in a car and drive to the services at Newbattle High. The services at the centre of Newtongrange, albeit rubbish buildings, make Newtongrange an attractive village to live in. They are what brought us here. I think in the middle of Newtongrange, the pool, library, church, gym could all be replaced by one of your community hubs - BUT with the primary school and not the 'out of town' secondary school. The primary school desperately needs replacing too, as all the other buildings do, so why not make the new community hub here in the centre with a new primary school.

- We are trying to encourage people to join exercise groups. Obesity in our population is to be addressed and having to pay more for it is a disincentive.
- Exercise is so important for all ages. This is not a sensible time to reduce and limit opportunities to use them. Incentives are the only way to encourage people to use these facilities and adds to the concentration on preventative health issues.
- Leisure facilities are vital. Existing failing ones should be invested in to work better. This is a long term investment in people's health and well-being. Charges can be increased for those earning but concessions must continue.
- The leisure facilities require proper management. They are not giving value for money.
- The Council must focus on increasing revenue first, rather than cutting spending first. It must make maximum use of the historically low cost of borrowing to invest now so that the future costs of providing services are reduced.
- stop providing sport and leisure facilities directly.
- Please do a JV on several of your leisure operations as the Private Sector is far more savvy than Midlothian when it comes to running these facilities!
- Will increasing charges result in a lower number of customers? What about GP advice to patients to take up certain forms of exercise? Surely this risks being compromised, and at a time when access to healthcare is diminishing.
- high costs per head compared to other local authorities. Why do we not outsource where costs are less. Other Scottish LAs do this with no marked deterioration. Also private operators are much better at streamlining activities in slender times
- Target need. Encourage community groups to take on assets, we don't need a top heavy leisure services - move it to a stand alone org
- If increasing by 10% the charges then cutting the opening times seems to be to be unfair i.e. our local library times have already been changed now for a while and it is still used by groups and the local primary school. As stated the service has achieved cost cutting targets so more cuts seem a bit excessive.
- I use the Newtongrange Swimming Pool with my family it requires investment in upgrading the pool and its façade. It's a great pool which is used regularly by locals young and old alike. Why not enhance the outside space by creating a community garden, tree planting, pond area. I do not

drive and have young children who cannot walk far. part of the reason I moved to Newtongrange was due to the local amenities. Let's improve on them.

- We don't use the leisure facilities very often as unfortunately are unable to get a space on the toddler classes provided. We use the facilities provided by Edinburgh Leisure and think they are excellent including availability with a good choice of classes with acceptable fees. I accept that Edinburgh council have a larger headcount to base their business plan on but with the number of houses being built around the Dalkeith/Bonnyrigg area it would be good if the leisure facilities were reviewed to support this.
- Other Councils outsource leisure services to the private sector with resultant cost savings. The ski slope is near to Edinburgh and could be closed or handed over to Edinburgh for them to subsidise.
- Leisure centres should be open as many hours as possible to be accessible to as many people as possible. Far from closing during the day (which is when many older people like to use them), I feel that opening earlier in the morning and late at night will attract more working people to use the facilities. I do however feel that many OAPs could afford to pay more for a wide range of services where they receive substantial concessions and concessions could be reduced or means tested in some way.
- Schools may use the centre facilities during school hours so closure would reduce an already diminished period of sporting activity as schools do not have any facility on site, or facilitate sharing for schools (primary and high) with pools halls etc and create expansion of them. Closing facilities could create a travel issue and further cost to parents with children. Invest in improvement to ageing facilities to generate use of them. As per comment above to charge increase- add more tailored membership deals to targeted audiences and increase the fee i.e. for working adults with no children who have more flexibility in the evening to use centres and more disposable income. Concession charges would affect the elderly and so would surely impact other budgets for care at home due to ill health/ isolation and mobility etc
- If prices increase then less people will use services. Better to reduce opening times or close inefficient buildings.
- The prices for Midlothian centres compared with others is already a lot higher by increasing this will make more people use services outwith the community
- Again, this will impact on the poorest and most vulnerable members of our local communities. Access to such services are known to have a positive impact on the health and well being of the individual and the community. More should be done to encourage participation, to adapt services to the needs of the local populations and to encourage inclusion through concessionary means for our more vulnerable members.
- Do not be tempted to sell this valuable resource.
- When old buildings are being replaced, there should be replacements. Eg. Closed Bonnyrigg leisure centre, and opened Lasswade hub. However Lasswade high already had a sports centre, so only one centre for the whole of Bonnyrigg. Now Bonnyrigg has no soft play, no toilets in the park, and the nearest leisure pool is Dunbar. Huge lack of sporting facilities in Bonnyrigg for The

size of the town, and huge lack of football training facilities-why can't the kids train on the grass instead of having to build Astros, then letting them run into disrepair as at King George v park.

- Mayfield leisure centre facilities should transfer to Newbattle when it opens. There should still be some day time opening for activities such as gymteds, but having the centres closed between 11am and 1.30pm may be an option
- It would be far better to find a way to leisure centres work and pay for themselves. Closing them destroys communities and is the resort of a council devoid of imagination.
- Leisure facilities are very important for mental health and to promote healthy lifestyles, which save money on other areas.
- If leisure centres/tonezones were available for longer hours then working people would be more inclined to join and use them.
- Leisure centre and libraries are important and closure in afternoons is ridiculous. Spend more to make more update facilities and improve / newbattle pool is long overdue a refit and it would be extremely beneficial a refit would promote more and new users
- During the quiet time in leisure centres is a time that some families with disadvantages and disabled elements within the family unit use them. Whether it be through the children not being able to go anywhere busy or an individual who struggles within busy environments but still wants to get out and do things
- What about day time use of leisure centres during school holidays or encouraging day time use for the elderly or the infirm. We are meant to be encouraging a healthy lifestyle for people
- Reducing activity will be devastation for health and well being. Already a lot to use for a working family of 5
- Increasing leisure costs and cutting org funding is not going to help you achieve your preventative strategy.
- It is possible that increased membership charges will lead to a reduction of the numbers of members-- so cancelling out any saving for you. However, please don't review your concessionary policies and at the same time try to convince anyone you care about closing the outcome gap.
- Re increasing charges for sports facilities - with an increasing % of the Scottish population now overweight/obese, reductions of hours/increased costs for most sports and leisure facilities looks counter productive - it would further discourage many people from making use of them. However, there could be exceptions e.g. Hillend appears to be heavily used by Edinburgh residents (possibly predominantly more affluent people) - would suggest trying to get a higher Scotland wide grant for to maintain centre for snow sports or increasing charges to non Midlothian residents if possible (e.g. a special Midlothian membership??)
- Some halls (fully lit and air conditioned) lie empty during the day, not a good use of space/money. Midlothian council gym equipment is not regularly maintained so it then gets faulty or past the point of being saved (half of the spin bikes in Penicuik are so rusty and the chains constantly come off, if they had been maintained this would not have happened)

- Public swimming times are terrible on weekdays, cannot take kids after work most days because the pools are not available for public swimming, well unless I finish at half 1 everyday
- I would consider looking at whether Edinburgh leisure could take over the running of services as Midlothian don't seem to be very efficient in running leisure services
- council tax is paid by residents to maintain public services. In addition I pay membership for sport and leisure facilities. Why should I pay more or have the level of service reduced to such an extent that I will have to look elsewhere for these services.
- Have to invest in trying to improve health and mental welfare. This could in fact result in savings elsewhere eg costs of support for elderly. Sports facilities provide important opportunities for younger population in all sorts of ways.
- The idea of increasing costs up to 10% bearing in mind that inflation is at an historical low would be indicative of excessive greed! Similarly closing inefficient (your words) centres would reflect lack of effort by Sports and Leisure management. Bearing in mind the fact that Scotland has the highest level of obesity in Europe more effort needs to be put into the promotion of sports and leisure activities. Perhaps rather than close centres during the day more thought could be put into constructive additional duties that could become part of the centre staff and possibly cut costs elsewhere.
- We need to encourage sport not curtail it. Would reduce obesity epidemic
- Council charges are already higher than some private facilities. It would be worth the council looking at the model used by private gyms
- Lasswade and Penicuik Centres are very useful however if local services in Newtongrange for example were to close with no replacement it would mean a very long distance to travel if you have to use public transport!
- Being able to easily access sport and leisure facilities especially when it is darker nights is extremely beneficial. The health benefits of accessing fitness facilities means a reduction in obesity, improvement in mental health and interests for both adults and children alike. Having these close to communities to easily access is also important. Should they not be there it is likely to have a cost impact on other services within the council and nhs. All the classes I attend are usually full therefore reductions would only cause increased waiting lists.
- Get other people/groups in to hire or use facilities that are underused. Short sighted to prevent older people keeping fit in the daytime
- Penicuik and Lasswade are fine if you live in these areas. Attracting business in the middle of the day would be more advantages and would not discriminate against shift workers.
- If you increase the fees you have to provided early morning classes & not only cater to yummy mummy's with classes at 10am.
- Access to Midlothian Card seems open to abuse and therefore a reduction in income. Processes used in Leisure Centres are outdated and inefficient. There is no link between popular

classes/classes with reduced attendance and the cost v benefit of running classes. Here is no link between customer needs and either opening hours/classes availability.

- You need to understand why centres are not being used before any decisions to close. Spending money to make improvements which would boost usage may increase income.
- A gym membership and going to leisure classes are definitely a luxury so I don't think an extra few pounds a month would make a difference to those who choose to avail.
- Is there any need for a gym to be open until 10pm and if there is no-one in the staff get to finish early and presumably still get paid until 10pm? How many times over 7 days does this happen? Surely 9pm through the week should be the closing time?
- You are losing out on Midlothian people paying to use the gym facilities because of the rubbish gym environment/centres. If you invest in them, you might end up with more people using Midlothian instead of going to Edinburgh Leisure which have top of the line facilities for roughly the same costing as we are paying now for Tone Zone.
- What is far more important is effective management of the facilities currently operated. The management, supervision and direction of staff at the Lasswade Centre is extremely poor along with the position of zero hours contracts for casual staff.
- As our community does not have any fit-for-purpose community facilities I cannot make any relevant comment
- Better swimming facilities are needed in Newtongrange. Will there be a pool at the new Newbattle High that can be used by the public after school hours?
- The community campus at Dalkeith is underused and so inefficient. It is not fair to cut these services which the young and active use when they can.
- Tonezone is already just as expensive as private clubs so much more would see a drop off. Don't you need to protect that income?
- As long as the Council supports the most vulnerable service users.
- Newtongrange swimming pool & leisure centre should remain open
- An increase in prices is probably inevitable and if this can be kept to a minimum then is acceptable. Closing ageing facilities could be a possibility so long as they are replaced with new ones, eg Newbattle pool is in need of repair and is earmarked for closure but will it be replaced locally? Ageing facilities are still used, often by the older population who get there on foot and would not otherwise be able to go to a leisure facility further away. Same with concessions, if these go up the older person on a budget may be priced out of leisure centres.
- closing or putting up prices will mean people will not use and health and wellbeing will go downhill. if closed during the day there will not be enough space in evenings as everyone will be there

- If we want a healthier population less dependent on welfare and social care provision, this is surely counterproductive. The argument for closing leisure centres depends on how inefficient and underused is defined!
- I think it's better to put prices up than closing a leisure. We need leisure centre for our kids to get fit and this should be kept and improved rather than closing. We should invest in this kind of places when kids spending more and more time outside. Sport and possibility doing something locally is a must!
- Replace or upgrade facilities not closure
- If increased charges mean better facilities (or at very least keeping the facilities we already have) then this may be a viable option. Ageing facilities may still provide some purpose, eg within easy reach of those in communities without a car, if they are to be closed, will they be replaced with something better or equivalent. What if the new centre is further away and less convenient?
- Replace ageing leisure centres with energy efficient ones that have progress technology built into them and you will find you are making money off them even when they aren't being used and at best you are not having to pay to power or heat the buildings because they are creating the heat and power the self. Forward thinking. Think long term not short.
- The Council leisure centres are really good but if people don't like them they can go to David Llyods. If people are not using community facilities, then they need to be closed. Could you not use school sports halls for aerobic classes instead? I work so would not use the leisure centre at lunchtime so it would not affect me if it closed. It doesn't say at what age the older people rate applies. This should be 60, and definitely keep it cheaper for young people.
- There is currently no checks (certainly in Lasswade) to ensure people using the facilities have paid and it is common for people to walk in without stopping to pay at reception. I have never been asked for proof of payment. Unless checks are done potentially £k's in income is being lost
- Could a community trust run old buildings that are to close down. I trained for the Special Olympics in Newbattle pool Main Street Newtongrange, could you ask the community if they could run it when the new school opens. The community should be involved
- I take it the new Newbattle school will be used as combined facility as well.
- I think it would be very unfair to close aging sport facilities purely on the grounds that they are inefficient or aged. They might provide a vital service and be the only local place to keep fit. The council cannot have it both ways - want people to keep fit and healthy and then centralise services to make them only available to people who can afford them, rather than encourage the people that need them, who may not be able to afford transport and entry fees and will therefore not use the services. The services then become a class service of choice for the few.'
- Pity there is very limited access now to the green area around the combined school (Dalkeith campus). Heartbreaking to see it unused during school holidays when the policy nowadays is to have kids moving about. The hard court play/ football area seems hardly to be used now – again due to the main gate being locked. Since we residents live in close proximity to this, pity no consultation before the gates were locked, since we're here 24/7 not just at school times. I

believe there was an incident at the school, but surely the expense of employing playground assistants would prevent this. We note the gate is often vandalised – more expense for us.

- Increase charges for over 60's sports and swimming pools cards.
- I'm interested in finding out if there are any plans to create football pitches / play areas for children in Mayfield who live south of Bogwood Road.
- There are currently no areas where kids can play football from Langlaw area up to and beyond D'arcy Road.
- There is an astro pitch at Lawfield Primary but is constantly locked.
- It would be good to get the council's general thoughts on the following area's:
- Is this currently being discussed in council meetings
- Are there any plans to develop area's that could be used for sports / football
- Do you have a point of contact to discuss whether the gates at Lawfield astro pitch could be left open (based on the lack of any grass area to play football)
- (Response given by Tony Malone 07.07.16)
- I would like to suggest Midlothian install some "free to use" exercise equipment into some of the parks in Dalkeith and Midlothian generally.
- On a recent visit to Inverleith Park and the Botanics in Edinburgh I was very impressed by six pieces of mechanical adult exercise equipment in Inverleith Park adjacent to the children's play equipment. It was in great working order, easy to use and appeared to be very well used by people taking the opportunity to do a bit of exercise. It could only be good for the community.
- Close leisure centre earlier, as a paying customer I wouldn't be able to go as I work through the week.
- Many disabled people/ people with learning difficulties need facilities nearby. Travelling further afield may not be possible.
- Some people may not be able to use leisure centre when it is busy.

Travel and fleet services

- I would keep the supported travel for elderly & disabled only. people who have a lot of health problems such as drug and alcohol addiction would benefit from walking short distances and spending their benefits on travel when required
- travel is important to people. Getting out and about improves mental health
- reduce number of council vehicles as it would seem only one workman in each van- this should be looked at.

- Review does NOT mean reduce.
- Reducing public transport affects the most vulnerable, most acutely.
- Taxi card scheme has already been closed to new applicants. Many disabled people rely on this service to get out. The taxi card system should be open again to new applicants
- The ring and go service is a life line for people in rural areas with no bus. Combined with possible reduced gritting I would feel trapped and being penalized for living in a rural area.
- Thought the taxi card had already been withdrawn ??
- Taxi card is a life line to those living in isolated villages and hamlets which are poorly served by bus services. The agreement to access rail services throughout Lothian gives access to Waverley Edinburgh and beyond. Allowing people greater choice experiences and opportunities to socialise. There could be an option to pay a nominal fee to cover admin costs. It's about choices which are denied to the poorer and more isolated in Midlothian.
- The taxi card is a lifeline to those in remote areas of Midlothian council. Introduce the option of a small annual charge for the taxicard. The added agreement to travel throughout Midlothian by train is a boon to disabled people whose circle of friends live beyond Midlothian and giving access to Waverley station and Edinburgh and the range of opportunities therein.
- Disabled people should continue to get assisted travel.
- Increase local bus services and STOP the 'Ring and Go' service. The bus taking visitors around the county should also be stopped immediately. Look at the way the bus companies are charging concessions. They are charging for a single journey even on two or more bus trips per day. They should only be paid for a 'day ticket' when that would be the cheaper option.
- The Council must focus on increasing revenue first, rather than cutting spending first. It must make maximum use of the historically low cost of borrowing to invest now so that the future costs of providing services are reduced.
- We need to look after our disabled and elderly people but do that more imaginatively and effectively
- We are supposed to be reducing car usage. The 'ageing population' might not be able to walk far, cycle or drive cars. How are they going to get around without access to such services?
- voluntary sector is awash with newly retired who can be empowered to help. Some recognition scheme or similar initiative to attract volunteers is good for all parties concerned.
- Our bus service has already been reduced. Also the Midlothian explorer service is never used. Every time it comes through the district there is never anybody using it. It is running empty. there is a saving surely
- I worked as a support worker for 8 years and saw first hand how important the taxi card service was for disabled people using it to access hospital appointments, visits, food shopping, going to the back

- I accept some monies must be spent on providing bus services but this has to be supported by the level of use
- this is a small budget and services are important to disabled and rural communities. Rather take stronger action to the larger cost centres and leave this almost alone.
- These are surely vital public services and should not be subject to cuts just smarter options, encourage and support small business set up to supply affordable reliable transport / Set up more stringent guidelines on taxi card use to reduce unnecessary travel Employee council meetings not with the public perhaps video conferencing options would further reduce travel costs, this facility could be adopted across other parts of the organisation to reduce travel costs
- Disabled people receive mobility funding (if they have disability which affects their mobility). This money should be used for these services. Council can no longer afford to pay for this.
- To remove the taxi card system would effectively isolate members of village communities and have an adverse effect on their health and well being. I strongly disagree with any measures that would reduce or remove this system.
- This is likely to disproportionately affect our most vulnerable citizens and will create significant barriers to participation for disabled members of the community.
- Increase council tax
- Review business travel arrangements first.
- I live in Auchendinny and I am APPALLED at the loss of the bus service to a village with over 500 houses. This forces more people to drive and isolates families. Subsidisation of rural buses is a must.
- Build the footpath along Crawless Road (as was promised when Greenhall High was closed many years ago) so kids at least have the option of walking to Newbattle High from Gorebridge, instead of relying on a coach service.
- More discount should be given for taxis etc to our elderly and vulnerable and those who live without near and frequent travel options
- You just made a commitment to extend the Ring and Go to help lessen the impact of Lothian Buses reducing their services. Would be off to them reduce this service and risk isolating vulnerable people.
- it is absolutely essential that disabled people and people in rural communities have affordable access to services
- The Ring & Go system is a lifeline for my autistic son as it allows him to travel independently for volunteering and for leisure. You could remove the totally unused "tourist bus".
- These reductions would make it more difficult for elderly to stay independent, a stated aim of the Council.

- Interestingly the heading 1. suggests 'reviewing' bus and supported travel grants! Paragraph 3 would suggest that some 'review' has already been carried out since it says 'changes to travel support WOULD reduce travel options' Has a decision already been made on this?
- By decreasing ways to get housebound people outside will increase their needs for home visits from other agencies
- Many rural buses run with hardly any passengers - there must be an alternative e.g. use of taxis with eligible people being given so many free journeys per year
- I have no idea what the taxi card system or the ring and go is!!!
- Reducing travel to disabled users especially would be a ridiculous idea! If anything more money should be spent in this area!
- People who receive pip or dla for mobility should use this towards transport costs as this is what it's been provided for. I do think that taxi cards are useful as often this supports the widely to get out and socialise when they otherwise would be house bound.
- There is a responsibility to support people who already have more problems in getting around
- The taxi card system is closed to new applicants, How many people will this affect. I am confused I was under the impression all buses had to be disabled friendly. I do not know what support is required.
- Focus on staff travel budget. Set a limit and introduce 'no travel weeks'. Spend by management and execs should be reviewed and travel budget slashed. The large national organisation I work for did this and saved millions
- Eh rumours are auchendinny is losing its business service and ring and go is meant to be put in
- I think that tourist bus should go if it already hasn't and more money put into supporting the local bus services especially as a huge number of houses are being built so there will be more commuters to and from Edinburgh.
- The bus service in our community has recently been reduced to every half hour and the service we do have takes more than 1 hour to reach Edinburgh in which many of our residents work. The Borders Rail service from Eskbank to Edinburgh invariably does not run to schedule or does not stop at Eskbank at peak times because it is full due to a woeful lack of carriages so most of our residents, having attempted to use both services and been disappointed or late for work, have reverted to using their cars. How this inadequate service encourages people to use public transport defeats me.
- more education in using public transport should be made available, and less spent on ferrying children around in taxi's to school. This should only be for those with physical restrictions & disabilities.
- The only way round this is to help develop community bonds in the communities where people need the transport and maybe people will give lifts to each other. That means the council really

needs to support the development of intangible (free) things like better community relationships and friendships.

- Not knowing how much they are utilised - it's hard to comment. Perhaps in some rural communities a local community provision could be offered and set up by residents?
- As before, support the most vulnerable people.
- Public transport is already very poor in this area, and if that is my view as a fully able person then I can only imagine how it must be for someone with disability.
- Rural bus services can be a lifeline, if people are to be left stranded by their reduction or withdrawal, how can that be providing a good service?
- Think about access to buses from outskirts of larger towns, worse bus services than villages with ring and go
- People who rely on rural bus services could be left stranded if there is no alternative.
- I wouldn't definitely scrap the mobility car scheme.
- People choose to live in rural areas and that sometimes mean a reduced local bus service. People can order their Tesco shop online now.
- The disabled are always hit first , Could you ask the disabled what they want before making cuts
- I drive to work every day (on the West of Edinburgh) as to take any form of public transport would take a ridiculous amount of time. I am seriously concerned re the amount of traffic on the road, the additional traffic that will be caused by the increase from the new housing developments and how the transport network will cope I would love to see better (any) public transport direct to the west of Edinburgh and clear suggestions on how to improve transport to deal with the upcoming increase in population. E
- Please resurface Abbey Road in Dalkeith: not just a cursory splodge of tarmac to fill one of the many potholes: the eastern corner was resurfaced a year or so ago and is great but the end towards Newbattle is horrific - a car or bicycle will come a cropper one day soon.
- Danderhall population 3000+ one third of elderly and infirm unable to access bus stops on main road left isolated and housebound due to cuts in 2014.-Same population without transport, unable to access the new Shawfair Rail Station as no public transport to station. Midlothian Council you have already cut the legs from a large portion our community-Split Danderhall from the smaller surrounding villages who have a bus service which is not fit for purpose as it does not give them direct access to their doctors, library and shops. You are now asking us to suggest how to make more cuts! Any more cuts and you will be cutting into the bone.!!!
- Parking in Dalkeith is very poor for law-abiding residents. It would seem that many people park on double yellow lines with impunity, causing blockage of roads especially in South Street. I understand there is to be (?) future use of parking wardens but no sign of these. Lidl's car park is often very busy and only allows 90 minutes use, mainly for shopping. Other car parks are busy and have charges above one hour. The pay and display car parks are often busy during the day.

- I just wanted to say if you want to shape the future for Midlothian can I suggest that for Dalkeith can we have Traffic Wardens because you just get people parking anywhere in Bus Stops no Disabled Users in there spaces that's what we need. Also we could do with Gritters in the housing estate for the elderly who struggle to go out In icy conditions.
- Roads are a priority.
- Pollution: to diminish the pollution in our towns that would be possible with less cars in the roads.
- Safety in the roads for all, but we would like more focus in pedestrians and cyclists with lower speed limits, more traffic lights in the roads, etc.
- Cycling paths: clean and safe and to the standard recommended by the UK Transport Department. Keeping the cycle paths clean would encourage more cyclists to use them. And would contribute to have less cars in the roads and so less pollution in the towns and better quality of life.
- We thought that one way to help the Council to save money is if the Utilities Companies repair properly all the holes that they make in the roads.
- Old Eskbank Railway Station to 're-open'.
- A flyover at Sheriffhall roundabout.
- Railway line to Penicuik to re-open.
- A68 road from roundabout to connect into Shawfair (to increase use of park and ride and help with economic growth).
- Rail halt at Heriot with park and ride.
- More cycling infrastructure – like on Eskbank Road now road/ pavement is wider
- Give priority to safe routes to school for foot/ cycling
- Change Eskbank Toll roundabout – not safe
- The traffic problems resulting from the opening of the adventure park within Dalkeith Country Park. The new facility does not seem to have been very well thought through in respect to the impact on the community.
- Have you seen the state of the roads they are shocking.
- Disabled people rely on their bus passes to travel and use local services. Many could not afford to pay bus fares if concessionary passes were taken away. This may lead to people not going out. Tis could lead to depression and anxiety.
- Many disabled people need to use taxis to get about – shopping, hospital appointments, etc.

Parks and open spaces

- have a lesser contribution to the Pentlands than Edinburgh. Grass areas at the moment are looking awful as there is too much rough grass and not enough smaller designated areas. Mayfield Park is a disgrace and unsightly compared to King's Park. If playing fields are reduced then improve the areas that will be used to a higher level.
- Pentland Park is one of the few attractions in Midlothian Charge any vehicle not registered in Midlothian to park at the Pentland Hill car parks. You are right others are using our facilities without contributing. This should not be beyond technology but if so simply issue permits.
- PHS top/back grass area cut too often
- Review does NOT mean reduce.
- Reducing or removing public open space militates against any attempt to create a healthier population, placing strain on health services.
- Need to maximise playing fields to help reduce levels of obesity and sedentary lifestyles
- 1. Explore possibilities for involving communities more in park use and management, e.g. Lambeth Cooperative Parks programme. 2. More tennis facilities to encourage youngsters inspired by Andy Murray.
- Reducing the amount of playing fields would only be acceptable if the money saved was invested straight back into the more used areas.
- Reducing grass cutting leads to deteriorating public areas and depressing landscapes. Underused playing fields are underused because of the condition of them. Suggest laying on transport to the better facilities and providing free use.
- In Germany, the council doesn't cut the grass but plants wild flowers in all small spaces so that the streets are either tarmaced or wild flower meadows. These areas are managed in the same way that you would manage a wild flower meadow, cut twice a year and they attract more wildlife in to the city streets. I would much prefer the emphasis to be on creating more natural land management, rather than clipped grass. Better for wildlife and far better financially for the council.
- Clearly upgrading parks is cost effective. Underused parks may be underused because of the condition they are in. Again we need to encourage and motivate people to exercise so equipment and surfaces need to be cost effective and exciting to use.
- All possible spaces for sports and leisure must be invested in. To close them is a short term solution. Long term people's health and well-being will be badly effected if they are closed.
- The Council must focus on increasing revenue first, rather than cutting spending first. It must make maximum use of the historically low cost of borrowing to invest now so that the future costs of providing services are reduced. Selling off playing fields will only benefit private developers who will then want to build on them, removing yet more of our open and green spaces.

- We have cut far too much costs in this area while not allowing Local Communities and similar organisations to do this for us at a fraction of the price that we pay!
- L1 What upkeep? Paths are eroding. L2 Poor appearance of Midlothian may result. Long grass may encourage an increase in dog fouling. L3 Allotments would be helpful to communities. N.B. Midlothian residents use Edinburgh facilities.
- It is doubted whether the car dependant vogrie park is environmentally or financially viable. Development of cycle routes and walking paths could compensate and release a valuable asset.
- Again use and train volunteers to help with parks and open spaces, Utilise those with community payback orders
- The Pentland Hills Regional Park must not be allowed to run into disrepair. the hills are an iconic part of Midlothian's history. As for the survey we were never asked to participate. Our family uses the Pentlands frequently. One of the members is an honorary ranger
- If you cut grass less often wild flowers grow more readily which is advantageous to bees and other wildlife also creating a more attractive environment. Create allotments instead or community gardens or more popular leisure facilities such as skate parks
- Reducing the frequency of grass cutting will give the wrong impression to those residents themselves fail to maintain their gardens - if the Council can't be bothered why should I? Removing playing fields is Council speak for concreting-over our green spaces - this must not be allowed to happen.
- Parks and open spaces are important to me but some savings could be made.
- In Penicuik, I feel that our parks are not particularly well maintained as is, and we have already lost green space to artificial pitches and football grounds. Using the playing fields better rather than getting rid of them is best for the community. The other option could be to make some areas of land available for community groups to create green park or recreation spaces of their own.
- Don't know what you mean reduce playing fields? and do what with them build on them? and remove green areas for children. "Pitches" do you mean football or site? as green areas are used by a wide range of people for a wide range of sports as with sports facilities, rationalisation of facilities will then cause overcrowding and overuse and possible exclusion due to inability to book or use them
- Plant trees in some of the unused playing fields. This would improve environment, be easier to maintain and would ensure we retain adequate green areas.
- Rather than close underused sports playing fields the council should be exploring ways in which such spaces could be used to encourage participation by vulnerable groups. If we wish to close the attainment gap surely the council should be considering such initiatives and demonstrating to local populations that they are, as they claim, wholly committed to addressing the sorry state of affairs as they currently stand.

- Reducing grass cutting and playing fields really depends on locations chosen and needs further public study
- Grass cutting is not done too great to be honest. I remember when the grass was cut and collected so that the parks looked tidy, not now the grass is left behind, kids playing football on the pitches can't play properly because of clumps of grass and the amount of grass that ends up in cars and houses is ridiculous.
- Change grassed areas to create wildflower meadows which require less upkeep in the form of grass cutting but promote biodiversity and retain visual amenity
- Closing playing fields and parks to balance to books today will mean these facilities will be lost forever resulting in the loss of green spaces in Midlothian. These need protecting
- we need our green spaces for the children to play
- Instead of removing underused facilities, perhaps their availability needs to be publicised more so that people are aware of them and when they can be used and for what purposes.
- Some areas cut by the council are in private developments and have been taken over from developers. Surely local residents should be contributing to this?
- Parks and sport fields are essential for a healthy lifestyle. Back to this preventative strategy you mention earlier. This makes it seem that prevention is not a serious strategy.
- Instead of removing sports playing fields you should be seeking wherever possible to move these into community management. Green deserts could be given to communities to be made into allotments or gardens, urban farms or orchards. Why would you waste good land on rough grass to be filled with dog waste, litter and broken glass? You want to turn Midlothian into a concrete suburb where people never go out to walk or play? You want our kids to get even more overweight? Once again, please consider the knock on impacts.
- I believe that the Pentland Hills Regional Park could be used to attract more people into Midlothian therefore some contribution would be required; reducing the number of grassed areas that are cut regularly if carefully chosen and managed could potentially be of benefit to wildflowers and wildlife (Scottish Wildlife Trust etc could provide guidance on best times to cut); as the population of Midlothian is increasing it is important that the number of playing fields are not reduced - income may be able to be increased by making them more available to local groups.
- Reducing grass cutting just encourages lazy dog walkers to not pick up their poo then children run through the 'wild meadow' and stand in the poo, an issue in every community
- Midlothian parks are great I think the same investment should be continued
- The more of this I read the more I think the council are having a laugh!! Rough areas, reduced bin collections, closed leisure facilities. This town, is coming like a ghost town!

- Surely no more losses of playing fields!? How does that fit with other major concerns for our society, namely anti-social behaviour of some young people, health issues caused by obesity and many more!
- It might have been prudent to give the public completing this survey an idea of how much the contribution to the Pentland Hills Regional Park actually is! Otherwise how can we assess what is reasonable? Reducing grass cutting to an 'acceptable' standard! Who's 'standard' will this be? Yours as the payee of the bill or mine as the viewer? Visual standards are important as to how visitors view the area. Re my previous comments on obesity, reducing the playing areas only exacerbates the problem.
- Plenty of people from Midlothian use flatterstone etc As a regular hill runner I know cos I see them
- It is ridiculous that Midlothian bears the brunt of the cost of maintaining the Pentland Hills Park - this should either be nationally maintained or the cost shared with Edinburgh
- As long as there's local communication before some of these happen it will work. If residents know that an area is going from a perfectly cut area to a long grass area then it works. Let people know the justification for it before it happens
- Instead of turning areas into 'rough grass' areas, maybe a small investment into turning areas into wild flower areas would be better. They wouldn't need to be cut and is also more environmentally focused.
- Could sports clubs contribute to grounds upkeep? Could some grass areas become orchards/meadows or allotments? Hire out for small amounts to people or community groups, promote healthy eating and living.
- Grass is environmentally friendly is all-year-round surfaces friendly?
- It would depend on what the 'closed' ones would be used for? Too many houses being built in Midlothian now - soon there will be no countryside. I'd like to see some of the underused sites be passed to the community - get local kids involved as there is now nothing to do for kids between 10-16.
- The reason certain playing fields are underused is down to lack of maintenance. Maybe if there was a properly managed maintenance programme in place these fields would be fit-for-purpose and used more regularly. I have witnessed on a number of occasions council staff arriving in our local park area, sitting in their vans reading papers for an hour or more, then driving off without doing any work whatsoever. I have reported this to the council but still it continues to happen. I would suggest some form of monitoring may help.
- Midlothian looks scruffy with uncut grassy areas. Also makes picking up dog mess a monopoly when you end up standing in another dogs mess while picking up your own!
- Don't reduce the number of grassed areas cut regularly without letting the community know. Some people love riding their lawnmowers and the community could take over in some areas. DO NOT remove any playing fields. As you have said the population is increasing and young people

and active people need somewhere to play. Cutting people off from enjoying themselves outdoors, at low cost to themselves is one of the WORST things you could do.

- Pride in an area comes from its surroundings. If you Remove green space what will you put on it - more housing which will contribute to overload of services? Look after and treasure the green space, instead of rough grass why not plant trees or create wild life havens rather just calling it 'rough grass' might get your desired response
- Midlothian is a beautiful county and I would not want to see conditions of the green spaces deteriorate.
- Perhaps the local authority should consider why a relatively small number of people from the area use the Pentlands before shutting off the funding.
- yes allowing some grassed areas to go wild could be ok so long as the ones that are cut are well maintained and safety is not an issue, eg long grass surrounding or overhanging footpaths and other access areas. Reduction in sports fields is not a good idea, however under used they are. Underused suggests they are still used to some extent. Lack of green open space causes issues with young people having nowhere to play and clubs etc having no facilities to do outdoor training. What would the ex sports fields be used for? More housing? Yes that would get money in for the council but at what cost to the local amenities and facilities?
- Removing under-used pitches, that depends on how you define under used. And by remove, does that mean you can sell them off, in which case please no.
- Create meadow fields rather than grass to remove some areas having to have regular grass cutting Meadow fields are pretty and great for children and dogs to run around in. Improve the play parks and seating/picnic benches similar to that found at the Meadows, Edinburgh... More children and parents/grandparents would use them
- Play facilities should not need to be referred to as being 'for disabled children', accessible play equipment should be standard as it is great for everyone to play on.
- Reduction in green open spaces, even if under used could lead to a slide into developing these areas for housing etc. Access to green space is essential in communities.
- Could it not be up to local communities to get together to keep up grass areas tidy in their locality? They should pull their weight just as much as the council. Why is it that everyone expects things to be handed to them on a plate? It could be a shared responsibility.... Such as litter picking. We need to generate a sense of shared responsibility and pride for the place we live in. I.e. Midlothian
- Review the school grounds to allow use by other organisations. Until very recently all Penicuik / Beeslack school grounds had were football pitches, there were none for other sports. Making the schools use the local rugby club, it was only a month ago that a new pitch was put in @ Penicuik HS what about Beeslack?
- Definitely close facilities if they are not used - but don't build more houses on playing fields! Uncut grass is good for insects and wildlife.

- Get companies to sponsor fields ,so kids could go out to play
- I think a Council that keeps its green spaces and improves on them, whether they are playing fields or parks, will in the future be seen as having had great foresight. All the evidence for wellbeing suggests that green areas and access to them has a significant impact on mental and physical health, as well as helping wild life habitat. There are many brownfield sites that can be used to build more houses, lets think green and environment.
- Having lived in Mayfield for 40 years this is the first year where cuts seem to be made to the lovely open spaces and the verges being regularly cut. I was assured (by council official) it wasn't cuts and he did come to inspect the mess but warned f future cuts. There has been a lot of negative comments from my fellow dog walkers so hope this was a 'one off'! The grass cutting has always been top notch.

Environmental health and trading standards

- this is essential and the spend is small
- Review does NOT mean reduce.
- Again the assumption here is the Review means cut. It doesn't. You should review the services, but you might need to enhance them
- Statutory public health affects the most vulnerable and least well off. They cannot afford private sector companies.
- Prevention is better than cure. Prevention is the cure. What price on services which save costs further down the line. Deprived areas are the most in need and the least able to afford costs of going private
- Unsure of the implication of this proposal. Environmental health must be protected and maintained at high standards.
- If the private sector companies are the cheaper option they should be used.
- We should not be privatising any more services. The Council must focus on increasing revenue first, rather than cutting spending first. It must make maximum use of the historically low cost of borrowing to invest now so that the future costs of providing services are reduced.
- Long live the private sector!
- no brainer- carry out the function as cost effectively as possible
- waste disposal depending on what it is should be undertaken by the firms involved
- If the councils have joined in partnership surely this will generate savings due to better practice, suggest you consolidate all council areas for Environmental and trading standards and take a multi lateral approach

- This seems to cover a very disparate range of topics, some of which could be reviewed but others should not be.
- Do not think it is appropriate for health issues to be addressed by private sector who are motivated by profit and are not independent.
- Midlothian council may need to facilitate the use of these private companies for vulnerable people who find it difficult to contact services in the 1st place
- Again how can I comment on a question that has no meaning. Are you asking whether I think we should reduce funding or increase it????
- Some of this could be outsourced to private companies, but it still has to be paid for and quality assured.
- Reviewing services e.g. joint services with East Lothian Council, worth looking at - however, these services are essential and would not like to see them reduced.
- Again, without knowing which services it is wrong to ask people to give an opinion on such limited information. This negates the value of the survey!
- Again I would suggest that savings could be made by taking a serious look at staffing levels and the efficiency levels of these staff.
- I think this is a really important area - it still needs to be prioritised.
- Are you going to tender 'fairness' to a private sector company so that people need to pay for it and can only have it if they can afford it? Housing standards - the council should do, and environmental crime, animal health and welfare and consumer credit, and contaminated land.
- Quite important to maintain a correct amount of spending on environmental crime and the things listed as part environmental health and trading standards, not sure how you can introduce charges for this?
- happy to pay for private pest control etc (already do) as this does not seem to me to be an "essential service", I'd rather the roads were maintained and streets lit.
- You have to focus on the statutory and casualties may have to be nice to do or advisory roles
- My friend had a wasp nest removed and it was only something like £10 from the Council and £100 from Rentakill. Maybe put the prices up a little bit? Even £15 is not too much for most people.
- Have a look at community groups as well

Planning and building standards

- we must protect our natural heritage or Midlothian has lost all its value. Such a small spend anyway.

- Review does NOT mean reduce.
- If developers have to endure longer waiting times, that is a good thing and would give the public more opportunity to do proper scrutiny. Anything that will place barriers in the way of further development in Midlothian is to be welcomed. We should, however, retain advice on how to maintain and protect our environment.
- end paying 'retainers' for advice on biodiversity and archaeology but pay for advice as and when required
- No. We need experts in the planning department in these areas. We can't allow development to go unchecked for our history and wildlife/biodiversity to not be considered in the process.
- Businesses are coming to Midlothian en mass with a knock in effect on public services. GP practices, schools, transport, local shopping and infrastructure are all suffering from the influx. Planning should demand that promises made to communities by housing estate builders wishing to get backing to build are not allowed to reduce them after permission has been granted.
- A short-term gain. Long term we would lose the taxes that new business would bring to the county. Biodiversity and archaeology are both investment in areas that could bring more tourists to Midlothian.
- Planning has already been significantly cut. Further staff cuts are likely to be counter-productive. The Council must focus on increasing revenue first, rather than cutting spending first. It must make maximum use of the historically low cost of borrowing to invest now so that the future costs of providing services are reduced.
- biodiversity is not a optional extra but essential legacy for the future
- We can make planning far more customer friendly and far more efficient.
- the exceptional pressures on Midlothian's heritage assets in recent years does not suggest a free for all would be good in the eyes of future generations. Enforcement in conservation areas is already weak
- Archaeology and biodiversity are vitally important for preserving what's left of our ever-decreasing green spaces. For a Council with an oak leaf as its logo I find the suggestion of ending agreements to secure expert advice laughable.
- when our community wanted (and was entitled under statutory rules) to receive biodiversity advice from Midlothian Council, none was available. MC may as well therefore cut any budget for this service.
- Don't know that I can comment on these areas on this brief outline as don't know what the process involves
- Cuts in this area would result in financial losses for the council.
- Midlothian Council should be investing in the rich historical landscape it has inherited; these are areas which could, in future, be capitalised upon by the council to the benefit of local populations.

- Doing what you need to do to preserve and enhance natural heritage and biodiversity should not even be a matter for consultation or discussion about budget cuts. Protecting our environment and ensuring its sustainability should come first, always.
- I do not think these services should be cut for reasons given in 3. Is this another service that potentially could be pooled with East Lothian?
- If it's a choice between a 'historic' site being lost or a leisure centre being lost I'm sorry historic site, it's you!
- Why would we even consider ending expert advice on matters of archaeology and biodiversity? NO! This idea should be dismissed immediately for the very reasons you have stated in paragraph 3 above
- We need something in place to stop people building how they want and making unsafe changes to existing buildings
- This should be the responsibility of one of the many national 'expert' agencies
- Applications could be prioritised in terms of what they might bring to the area (jobs) or what might be lost (green belt)
- This is an area more money needs to be spent not less as the area grows it puts this section of the council under more pressure
- If the council want to deliver on the development plans for the county it needs to invest in the planning dept not make cuts
- A vast improvement in communication between planning staff and local communities regarding planning applications is required. The current system does not address the impact major development applications have on communities. Communities need to have a bigger say in planning decisions and an input as to how developer contributions are used by Midlothian Council.
- BIODIVERSITY is the most important way we can fight global climate change. We need increased biodiversity to stabilise the environment. Not to recognise that is not to recognise what we as humans are - we are not consumers in a mall that will endlessly please us - but we are part of a biological network and system and unless we respect that then we are poisoning our own future at its roots.
- As before Midlothian is a beautiful County and we do not want to see it deteriorate.
- Given the approvals currently provided to developers, the question has to be asked as regards any value being given to areas of historical or natural interest in any event.
- The environment may be damaged if experts are not there to advise on loss of habitat etc.
- Charge more for these services - particularly planning and building regulations. And scale charges so they are more for developers

- I don't know enough about point 2 to have formed an opinion. I may agree or disagree if I knew more
- Building must be done well, to a high standard, and with sensitivity to existing sites which should be preserved, eg special habitats etc.
- More Eco housing please
- Think very carefully about building huge new housing developments with no infrastructure to support them: there are huge estates esp. around Dalkeith with nothing to bind them: no shops or bus services. Protect the green belt!
- To improve Midlothian we need to stop building houses. Too many of our Schools and Doctors are struggling. To make money you need to appeal to more people instead of building houses upon houses why not build a big shopping District with big names then people come spend money and also go to different places in Midlothian.
- Doctor surgeries are over flowing with patients and turning away people cos you keep building new houses everywhere.....and you really find the need to be cutting services and upping prices.
- Environment: preserving the natural beauty of the county.
- No more new housing developments without new schools.
- Stop building more and more houses everywhere. We are losing all our lovely countryside to house a population of people who do not in the main work in Midlothian or shop in our shops. They sleep here, send their children to the overflowing schools, register with the over full doctors but add nothing to the community except more grass verges to cut and more bins to empty. It is time the Council tried to manage to cope with the existing populations demands without adding extra burdens.
- Maybe stop wasting money on houses that are not build on safe ground and have correct contracts with finish dates on them instead of finishing the Gorebridge hub when you feel like it. Think you need to start at the top of the council instead of everyday duties that need carried out. Council are needing to be investigated.
- I would like to see the council's private car park in the grounds of the old DHS removed and something built for the young kids who have nothing in Dalkeith as crime and anti social behaviour is on the increase.

Council Tax

- give leeway on charges if property is for sale
- not if the owners are ill or in hospital
- Local councillors should have rejected the Scottish governments proposal to take £1million from Midlothian to fund other places. this also reduced the education power of local government

- empty homes are already paying. Can't charge them more when they are not using services such as water, waste collection.
- happy to pay higher council tax but expect council to ensure that they collect tax from all households.
- All attempts to take council tax from Midlothian and apply it elsewhere should be resisted.
- Any landowner who doesn't look after their property and allows it to fall in to disrepair should be changed as much as possible, with the bill increasing each year the property is left alone. Empty, abandoned properties are the blight of our villages.
- People who have improved their houses to prevent heat loss etc should not be penalised for trying to save the energy and other potential things that improve our environment should not be penalised. Those living in large houses are in the fortunate position to make decisions about paying more council tax or downsizing.
- More money would be raised if the Council REBANDED all houses in the county and made the bands expanded.
- The Council must focus on increasing revenue first, rather than cutting spending first. It must make maximum use of the historically low cost of borrowing to invest now so that the future costs of providing services are reduced.
- Press for government to introduce a local income tax so that all who benefit from council services help to pay for them, not just house owners.
- We should increase all bands and do a review of the bands. Create a I band!
- No No No!!!!
- I am in a band C house and already pay £140 per month, I can't afford any more
- I am not adverse to paying an increase in council tax if I can see the difference that it makes to the council services roads, cleansing etc.
- Willing to support an increase in council tax but not at 3% as this is higher than inflation and if you work for public sector the highest pay rise you will get is 1% so the rise should be restricted to 1% as that is fair
- The Council already struggles to provide services and a small increase in Council Tax can only be a good thing.
- My business rates have increased by more than 20% since 2007 whilst Council Tax has been frozen. Its time Council Tax caught up. Re Bands E-H paying for education I understand some of the funds raised will go outwith Midlothian. If correct, I find that absolutely outrageous and call upon our Councillors to take that up with the Scottish Government and recover those funds.
- Increasing charges to 200% for a house that is using no council services seems bizarre and surely indefensible?!

- Should have a couple of easily definable conditions on increasing empty housing CT, e.g. not doing it if owner is caring for someone else. Also depends on definition of long term. If someone is posted overseas for (say) 3 yrs and renting out their home would be a risk for a well-defined reason, it would not be fair to increase CT.
- Chase those people who don't pay their council tax
- We should surely be using the legal department to chase those people who do not pay their council tax and that may bring in more money
- Only support rise if Midlothian uses the extra cash generated
- Council tax increases should be kept within the county though!
- Review benefits. I'm entitled to no discounts yet someone I know gets 1,,600 per month in benefits and also gets discount on council tax and rent. I don't earn 1600 per month.
- Revise council tax to a local income tax. Charge home owners for service to their home eg bin collections. Do not charge home owners for services that should be paid out of a central fund.
- Re-evaluate the banding of properties. Presently there is much inequality with new builds being placed into high bands, where older housing (despite having a high value) are on lower bands. A 3/4 bedroom family home should not be band H! Conversely nor should it be bands C!
- It should be a 100% charge
- Re assess the council tax bandings for local authority housing in line with there current value. This would generate more than enough revenue for better services within Midlothian.
- Increases in Council Tax must be spent in Midlothian Only, not other parts of Scotland
- Council Tax is not a fair or progressive system. Perhaps instead of moaning about wanting to increase council tax, local authorities should be more pro-active in helping to design and deliver a progressive taxation system through which people on higher incomes pay more and those on the lowest incomes are not proportionately hit worst.
- Review internal systems and procedures to maximise efficiency savings.
- I agree that the charge should be increased for long term empty homes, however, I would like to see certain flexibility e.g. so that people are not penalised if renovation work takes longer than foreseen
- Support increase in tax as described, but all of the extra money raised should be spent in Midlothian and no proportion should be syphoned off to Scottish Government!
- It is ridiculous to think to 'penalise' owners of empty properties. Has any thought gone into why they might be empty? Who comes up with these ideas? Interestingly there is no mention that of the extra £1.7 million gained by the proposed council tax increase for local services (your words) that we in Midlothian are to receive only £700,000! So we are to pay more to subsidise others outwith of Midlothian! Has any thought actually went into reducing rates charges on empty shop

premises to encourage business into the area. Or, is it preferable to have long term empty shops creating a very poor opinion of town centres?

- Review of council tax needed overall. Unfair divide between new builds and existing buildings. I pay more in a new build than people in established properties worth double mine
- There have been enough new homes built in Midlothian generating thousands more in council tax. No increase is required
- Agree with increase but only if it stays in Midlothian
- Higher council tax on second homes?
- it would cost more to monitor empty housing that the income would generate
- Currently paying almost the highest rate of council tax & all I get is my bins collected. Need to reevaluate the bands for older houses rarer than hammering people moving to new builds in the area.
- Nobody likes paying more council tax but if it's raised and spent wisely then the council may find support for this.
- More than happy to pay 3% more as long as the money is well spent.
- The legislation has been in place for years that allows the increase in Council Tax on empty properties, I cannot understand why this has not been implemented already. The processing of information is heavily paper based - bills, contact with customers - surely it would be more efficient to implement more online facilities for customers.
- I won't be able to afford an increase in council tax.
- council tax is dear enough!!!!!!!!!!!!
- Council tax has stayed the same for years and the services have declined.
- People who pay the highest council tax already receive the minimum services where those who pay less council tax receive a better service
- There is now a divide which is not fair in that bands E to H see an additional rise between 7.4 and 22.5% yet below this is frozen. Yet the expected demand is the higher bands are penalised for education which is not balanced considering the majority of those requiring the education will most likely be from the lower bands. Another example of continued taxing the mid class to the point of breaking! How can above inflation rises be sanctioned that far outstrip rpi wage reviews! Total discrimination and no equality.
- I agree with the increase but do not agree with the amount of income being snatched by the Scottish Government to pay for their vanity projects. Any increase in revenue gained by an increase in Council Tax should be 100% retained and spent in Midlothian.
- Services are barely acceptable at the moment. Why would I want to pay more when services are constantly being clawed back?

- Charge more for empty homes, and for empty commercial space, and charge landlords extra tax for having more than one property and put that in a pot to improve housing standards for council houses with mould and damp.
- This will affect those who are actually working again and paying taxes and struggle to keep up with raising cost of living. They soon will be better off being unemployed and on benefits
- Is this on top of the Scottish Governments proposal to increase the higher tax bands?
- It is unlikely that a 3 per cent increase will help with the budget shortfall anyway. Perhaps the local authority should reconsider borrowing so much for capital projects to try and mitigate loan and interest charges in future.
- Disagree with bands e-h increase should be for everyone.
- Fees are only ever going to go up and yes I would support a small increase in council tax if it means that other services are maintained and not cut, eg street lighting and maintenance. Yes please charge for long term empty houses.
- Increase the council tax by more than 3%, cuts are too deep
- Why would you want me to agree to a 3% increase when you are trying your best to cut services. You cut services and increase council staff payouts and wages. You give them big redundancies payouts and then reemploy them in a different role.
- All bills go up, if it means maintaining standards of essential services
- I would be happy to pay a tax increase for essential services, I want to live in a well kept area that includes roads and park areas.
- Can we look at the old Roslin Hospital and make it flats for homeless people?
- It is not good for houses in communities to be empty long term, except in exceptional cases. Absentee landlords should be discouraged. Don't mind paying extra for Council service
- Scrap the council tax and introduce or raise income/local tax. Monies straight from wage is easier and can surely be fairly done.
- Council tax should be raised by at least 3%. To increase wages that support the services, which should happen, is unsustainable if the tax does not increase too.
- Freeze the council tax and some things have got to give.
- If no rise in Council Tax, results are surely cuts everywhere.
- I do believe that Midlothian Council do themselves no favours by not highlighting the fact that they have had huge budget cuts from Central government, and would be heavily financially penalised if they attempted to raise Council Tax to make up any shortfall. About 70% of the Council's budget is from Central government grants.
- Raise council tax to improve schools including wrap around childcare.

- I believe these measures could have been partly avoided if the Council tax was not frozen for so long. Even 0.5% or 1% rise per year would not have been harsh
- I would pay more council tax if I knew where the money was going if it was to help the schools, the care services and the disabled.
- An increase in council tax is long overdue so persuade the Scottish government to stop penalising councils that wish to do so!
- I blame the SNP as they reason the council are in this position is due to the freeze on the council tax and them continuing to cut their budget and the longer this continues to happen the services will continue to suffer...
- A lot of people are paying council tax & factor fees on top. Does anyone think it should be more when you are paying both?? Ridiculous!

- **Community Safety**

- Risk if there are further cuts to Police and Fire?
- Review does NOT mean reduce.
- Reinstate the Midlothian Police Community Action Teams, funded from the reserves if necessary.
- provision of community safety services and their effectiveness should be continually under review
- The decision to stop funding the Midlothian Police Community Action Teams was a mistake.
- Sharing resources saves money but must be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure the public are not finding a reduction in effective services.
- Co location means more remote services to parts of the community. This means services take longer to arrive which is a real problem at the moment without considering reducing the locality services.
- Co-location implies yet further centralisation of police facilities. Experience of the last couple of years suggests that will reduce the quality of the services provided. The Council must focus on increasing revenue first, rather than cutting spending first. It must make maximum use of the historically low cost of borrowing to invest now so that the future costs of providing services are reduced.
- Sharing resources and responsibilities with other councils should be a priority
- Yes pull your finger out!
- I'm concerned about antisocial behaviour and crime levels following the removal of the funded police officers.

- As there are no manned police stations in our vicinity or partly opened at certain times I don't see the need for extra measures. fire station must be kept intact for faster response times. Ambulance service is also in need of a review of response times
- We have suffered regular house-breaking last 2 years in our area and any cuts in this area may affect us hugely. I would prefer CAT to be retained and if anything increased.
- Don't think the funding to community action teams should have been stopped, reduced if it was needed to provide savings as there are few enough Police on the streets as it is
- I do not want to see an overall reduction in what is provided by these services. If there are ways of providing the services more efficiently, fine, but not a reduction of them.
- There is an urgent need for a review of community safety provision with the aim of providing a more joined up approach as the current provision, in my experience is disjointed and inefficient.
- Heard rumours of a Stobhill Road "super depot" shared with police, fire and ambulance. Seems like a good idea.
- co-located partnership etc -don't understand this clumsy English
- If other potential partners are voluntary orgs or charities they may be unable to partner with you as a result of funding cuts you suggested.
- What does co-location mean?
- Concerned about the decision to stop funding of CATs. These teams have carried out very valuable work in dealing with drug issues etc and it is unlikely that Police Scotland will have the CATs' close knowledge and understanding of their communities.
- I find it sexist and ignorant of the facts to have the heading domestic abuse followed by (violence against women) I would MOST strongly encourage the author of this comment to do their research and think more holistically before producing such a statement. More importantly why did the 'proof' reader not pick up on this? More police on the streets might help reduce crime as we are all aware that the introduction of Police Scotland has been a major faux pas!
- These other agencies need to share the cost and responsibility - surely that is what community planning is all about
- Zero tolerance approach to crime may get more results, e.g. Littering is often alcohol cans and bottles in the countryside, meaning drink and drugs driving, more random testing would reduce crimes
- Violence against men is on the increase
<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2010/sep/05/men-victims-domestic-violence>
- Anti social youth behaviour is a big issue in Gorebridge and the Police seem inadequately resourced to deal with the growing issue. It needs addressed with an increased presence or quicker response as any issue that occurs is not dealt with quick enough.
- Makes sense.

- 1 - this doesn't really make sense to me what it would mean on the ground. The best way to reduce crime is to encourage strong community relationships and family relationships.
- Joining up services and communication is always a good idea
- It's not really clear what the wording in question 1 means: Change to a co-located partnership for community safety with other partners??
- Again co location could be to one of the more disadvantaged areas within the county to spread employment, rather than centralise to areas that already have lots of services.
- It is very important to ensure that hate crime is a priority.
- It is important to ensure that equalities work continues – e.g. Midlothian People's Equality Group; educating the public about equality, tolerance and acceptance.

Housing and homelessness

- why are garages underused especially when there is little or no parking available on the streets
- this would save money long term
- no developers
- just lease the garages. I have never seen an advert for one or seen them offered
- The sites should be offered to the communities for sale first.
- allotments should be provided but Midlothian Council consistently ignore requests or if a response is received the reason given is 'there is no demand' (bizarrely). New housing estates could give some land to allotments which would benefit the community
- Encourage the use of allotments so that the less affluent can experience the benefits of growing vegetables and eating well.
- Allotments are badly needed in Midlothian. Where at one time the mining communities had productive gardens. In these days of food banks and lack of money for healthy eating people need opportunities to grow and cook their own food. A family opportunity to share and learn to be self sufficient in some aspect of their lives.
- Increase Council rents to reflect the rents in private rental houses. Spend money on 1 & 2 bedrooms apartments. Families earning £30k SHOULD NOT be in a council house. Tenants should sign an undertaking to move out of Council houses when the total income for the house exceeds £30k.
- The Council must focus on increasing revenue first, rather than cutting spending first. It must make maximum use of the historically low cost of borrowing to invest now so that the future costs of providing services are reduced. Using council garage sites for additional council housing could be a low cost way of addressing the housing waiting list and increasing the council's revenue.

- Explore ways of reducing dependency on homelessness support via community led initiatives (see comments on Social Care)
- This department needs a crow bar under it!
- The garage suggestion is a no-brainer
- garage sites for Midlothian council new build sites only
- I support the use of any unused buildings to provide housing places.
- Tenants on good salaries should be paying market rents. Council should be charging at least the same as other Councils but subsidising those who need housing and are on lower incomes.
- Allotments would be most welcome esp in Penicuik!
- Increase rents? what % population of rented council accommodation is for people on benefits who have their rent and council tax paid for? Increase the cost of garage leases Would chose allotment option above to encourage greener self sufficiency, and would be less direct council maintenance
- Agree with selling under-used garage sites as long as these are not at give-away prices to developers and the result does not cause car clutter-parking on streets, making road travel less safe.
- Use garage sites for car parking which is insufficient in Midlothian Look at allocation of council homes, only way people get a house is to declare themselves homeless. Council tenants to contribute more to rents and upkeep of their properties, they already pay significantly less
- Homeless people shouldn't be put into purchased houses or unused houses. For a start there should be no Unused homes underused or unused homes mean homeless people or working families or individuals still on a council list awaiting a home
- Selling the garages to the public to alleviate the cost of repair to the council.
- I have never understood when there is office space available and it has not been let for ages why it can't be turned into flats?
- Assuming that people placed into homes are adequately supported to ensure that they have food and heat, and that they can maintain their tenancies, yes, that seems a fair suggestion. By all means if there are garages or other buildings sitting vacant, put them to alternative uses. Regarding this questionnaire... Does Midlothian Council not refer to the Standards for Community Engagement when wording its questions. I've rarely seen a more jargon heavy questionnaire. You're asking people to help you with a very serious set of problems, but you're presenting them with questions that many people either won't understand or which they may completely misinterpret. You are guilty of double-speak-- using the word review when you probably mean cut. You are presenting people with stark options: pave over or neglect our green spaces, destroy the fabric of our communities, pull away things like music from the people who most need the joy that they bring. Obviously it's easy for you to say that these are choices foisted upon you by Westminster and/or the Scottish Government, but it seems like over many years

now Midlothian Council has utterly failed to either find creative solutions or to effectively give local people credit or support for finding their own solutions. You have undertaken review on review on review of staffing and service provision but when do we get to see how much money this has actually saved. What has been the cost of this continual restructuring? What is the cost of the holes you leave in our communities and who will pay for this? Why do you knock the most disproportionate cuts onto the community sector-- already a 33% cut over the current 3 year phase, when Midlothian Council's own services have not been hit as badly as that? And you'd cut the 3rd sector even more? We don't see Midlothian Council's well-paid executives lining up to take a reduction of hours or cuts in pay to maintain services-- as many people in the voluntary sector are doing.

- When I have tried to rent a garage you can't get through to anyone at the council. The systems and process you operate are inefficient
- Agree that B & B accommodation is undesirable for many reasons, but choice of houses to be purchased must be assessed carefully for cost effectiveness and also the impact on the individual community in which the properties are sited. Transport and social amenities for those being placed in a purchased house have to be assessed. Social and geographical isolation will not benefit someone already vulnerable
- How are the public made aware that there are council garages available for lease? I don't remember ever seeing this information readily available anywhere! If we don't know about it they will remain unleased!
- Reducing the bill for subsidised private accommodation. Building more council home needed
- A home is the foundation of every part of life, good quality affordable housing is a priority for everyone. Buying up empty properties (compulsory purchase?) for reuse could provide more housing stock
- Privatised maintenance services
- Garages could be converted to one bedroom studio accommodation and used as Homelessness stock
- Houses available should go to families not the single unwashed with a drug habit who is now homeless because their family has had enough of them!
- If people put into temp accommodation can't give something back by way of paying their way in rent/council tax. They should be made to assist with their local communities for example, clean up parks & streets of rubbish etc. Until they find work. Far too many people are getting an awful lot for free while those of us who work hard are the ones paying for it
- 1 - is okay if the facilities are safe for people, and have privacy. 2- you can't ask both these in the same question. Developers will use the sites to build luxury homes and that won't help solve the homelessness. Why can't you ask clear questions? Don't sell land to developers, keep it and have council houses on it.

- The use of bed and breakfasts for homeless is unacceptable as this accommodation is usually poor quality and unhomely being at the poorer end of the market. Will developers be interested in the unleashed garage sites, and in fact is more development needed.
- Hostel accommodation should be provided for the homeless.
- Use council garage land to build accommodation to help house homeless people
- Allotments would be nice, but would people use them properly? I don't think the garage service is promoted enough cos I don't know anything about it. Maybe the unemployed or community service people could help with renovation and learn new skills?
- Sometimes council tenants are placed in emergency accommodation, e.g. a flat, and then moved on after a certain period. If the person is a good tenant and likes the flat/house why not let them stay in that one, rather than moving them on. This seems a bit unnecessary as they still need a house to live in.
- Get compulsory purchases made on empty houses.
- Enforce rent limits on private lets.
- Help disabled homeowners keep their properties in good condition.

Income generation/ money saving

- A staff incentive scheme to encourage money saving ideas from those who work within the services should be encouraged/ introduced.
- Evaluating the potential of existing services to expand to generate income. One example would be Refuse Collection. This service calls regularly on every address in Midlothian. Could it be contracted – for a fee – by external agencies to deliver something else at the same time as bins are emptied?
- The material from the brown bins to be composted and sold back to residents as compost. Possibly delivered to order at the gate on collection day. In a scheme operated by some municipalities in Switzerland, where compost is available for people to collect themselves from municipal depots.
- In Romania certain services are only available on subscription. This might apply to some extra services.
- Maximising use of Council premises/spaces: “Midlothian, car boot sale centre”: use of school playgrounds for regular car boot sales to build up regular custom.
- Midlothian Council’s Unique Selling Point(s): proximity to Edinburgh and its large tourist trade. Create an attractions bus route starting in Edinburgh and taking in and stopping at most of the sites. Spin-offs for the hospitality trade.

- “Midlothian for family cycling”: creating enough ‘joined up’ safe cycle tracks for people to enjoy whatever age.
- “Midlothian, incomparable walking”: walking circuits for all abilities and different lengths taking in the best Midlothian has to offer.
- Making the most of Midlothian’s existing facilities: For example music festivals, light festivals, outdoor exhibitions etc... in parks and country parks. Attracting sporting events. Promoting indoor events like bridge/chess/scrabble tournaments, etc., Street markets and events.
- No cuts to parks, libraries, floral displays please. Could money be generated by putting paid entertainment into our green spaces? e.g. children’s activities and charge for them?
- Employ ‘re-charge officers’ whose role is to claim back monies owed – e.g. rent, tax, rechargeable repairs
- Severely cut reliance on external contractors
- Increase apprenticeship schemes in council workforce: new, enthusiastic employees on training wages
- Amalgamate services with other councils e.g. legal, cleansing, any jobs which aren’t location dependent.
- Perhaps you should think about trying to run the Council like any other private enterprise and stop trying to fleece the residents for a very sub-standard level of service? If this was any other business it would have been made bankrupt years ago. Services have been cut left, right and centre - especially for Pensioners. I would love to see where the money actually goes! - Maybe you should hire an outside consultant to assist you with ideas and accounting rather than conduct a futile Survey Monkey campaign via FB!
- I agree, I've never read so much *****, run your business better!
- Less councillors.
- Could some of the services for example community safety be consolidated between East & Midlothian councils thus maximising resources. I know Edel Ryan is the partnership manager for both councils so could a team be set up providing a coherent service for both areas. This way the resources and associated costs could be shared and a vital service retained.
- Sharing with other authorities.
- Serious qualifications and reservations apply to many of these ideas e.g. buy more services from the private or voluntary sectors may be a good way of making savings but it’s not a good idea if the service quality deteriorates as has happened in the social care sector.
- Services to be bought from voluntary sector not private sector. Council should become a commissioner of services rather than providing services which creates a conflict – build community capacity.

Group Responses

Midlothian People's Equality Group

Fairfield House, Dalkeith, Thursday 2 June 2016

Attended by Kenneth Lawrie, Chief Executive and Mary Smith, Director of Education, Communities and Economy

The Chief Executive outlined the purpose of the campaign and the budget challenges and other pressures facing the council.

Questions and contributions from the group

A. A member of the group asked if the council intended to be more open and transparent in its approach. The CE reiterated that the council was seeking and welcoming ideas and contributions from the community as part of the consultation and that more detailed options would be put out for consultation over the summer. These would ask people what they would think if we did 'X,Y or Z' to a particular service to save money.

B. Some people are having to pay more for care support packages, which is proving to be expensive. Mary Smith confirmed that yes, we are having to increase charges. But the council was also looking at other options for saving money to help protect frontline services. The low levels of usage for some leisure facilities was given as an example of an area that needed to be addressed.

C. The difficulty of getting young people engaged in the life of their communities and the running of community facilities and groups, was also raised as an issue. It was suggested that this contributed to the lack of usage for some libraries, leisure and other community facilities. This was noted as a difficulty that the council and some voluntary groups were trying to address.

D. The way council repair teams operate was raised as an issue with the suggestion made that efficiency and productivity could be improved if workmen carried the basic spare parts in their vans, rather than visiting homes, and then saying that they would need to leave and come back again because they didn't have the parts to do the job. It was noted that this was an issue Scottish Gas addressed several years ago by kitting out their vans with the parts and tools that would most likely be needed to complete a job.

The CE said he accepted that there were areas of working practice that needed to be challenged and that the customer and their requirements should be the council's primary focus. He suggested that in many services, the council employed great people but that we need to do more work in some areas to improve and raise the quality of the service provided. He emphasised that Shaping our Future was not just about cuts – it was also about doing things in better ways.

E. It was suggested that the recent child protection case in Fife was a reminder of the care that needs to be taken in looking at cuts in local government spending. Mary Smith emphasised that we have never been an authority who exported our problems to other areas and care provision was provided on the basis of what produces the best outcomes for our children. It was possible to make savings but this would not be done where it put children at risk. She said that it was important that, when considering service changes and proposed savings, we carefully consider the unintended consequences of specific actions.

F. It was noted that ethnic minorities make up 10 per cent of the Midlothian population which is quite high compared to some areas. Support from volunteers and voluntary groups works well for them, whether it's learning English, exchanging information and knowledge or providing practical support. The CE agreed that volunteers were sometimes a better solution than the council providing that kind of support and that more needed to be done to enable volunteers and voluntary work. The CE acknowledged that a balance needed to be struck between what the council can do and what the community is best doing itself.

G. Concern was also raised that STEM (Services in Training and Employment in Midlothian) had been done away with and jobs that a number of people had in the community had been lost. Mary Smith acknowledged that this service had been reorganised but that lifelong learning and employability remained a key focus of the council's work under the new structure.

H. One of the group said that although she was originally based in Midlothian she had been put in B&B in Edinburgh for 22 months due to lack of accommodation for the homeless locally. Although she appreciated that accommodation may not always be available locally for homeless people she considered 22 months to be an unacceptable time and that the cost to the council of providing B&B accommodation here and in other areas must be considerable.

The CE accepted that this was a problem and that the council was trying to provide more homes, as well as reducing costs and its dependency on B&B, which was not a great solution to a serious problem. Mary Smith added that the Council had a duty to house homeless people but that the Edinburgh B&B solution was possibly the only one available at that point. She advised that Pentland House had now been re-opened to provide accommodation for homeless people.

I. Councillor Pottinger (group member as council equalities champion) advised that this was volunteers' week and that Midlothian, as a close-knit community, punched above its weight in terms of the amount of volunteering that goes on locally. He said that he was a big advocate of the voluntary sector and that it often had the ability to act more promptly than the statutory sector in providing solutions locally.

J. The CE concluded the meeting by advising that a second phase of the Shaping our Future consultation would be launched over the summer with more detailed options being presented for service changes and possible savings.

Midlothian Federation of Community Councils

15 June 2016, Newbattle Community Centre

Attended by Kenneth Lawrie (Midlothian Council Chief Executive)

Kenneth introduced the Shaping Our Future consultation. He explained that this was part of a dialogue with the public on how the Council will look in the future. He referred to the consultation materials that had been sent out in advance of the meeting and explained the funding pressures and the need to transform services to meet the needs of future generations. He explained that the performance and financial situation of the Council was generally good and that significant improvements had been made in areas such as health and social care integration and children's services but went on to say that the Council needs to continue to be ambitious for Midlothian and its communities.

Kenneth outlined the financial context and that Midlothian would have to save up to 10 million pounds annually for the next few years. He explained that unlike the NHS local authorities were not protected from budget cuts. He explained the relationship between public bodies and the importance of taking a holistic and preventative approach through the community planning structures.

The Council had already made substantial savings by reducing management and back office costs, reducing property overheads and savings from a range of other services. He went onto explain that more savings will be required, but the exact figures for 2017/18 and beyond were unknown because the Scottish Budget and local government settlement for future years had not yet been announced by the Government.

Kenneth explained that Delivering Excellence was about a need to focus on what services matter most to the public. He explained that transformation work alone will not be enough to bridge the budget gap and very difficult decisions will need to be made. These decisions could include reducing services, increasing charges, raising eligibility criteria, sharing back office costs regionally and reducing the Council's property costs by closing buildings

Feedback

A. R thanked Kenneth for his input and commented that people are going to have to think 'out of the box' in order to make the difficult decisions needed. R felt that the Council and communities need to work together to come up with the most effective solutions.

B. H emphasised the importance of openness and transparency in public service and the need to engage at an early point when decisions are being made. H illustrated his point with an insurance claim against Network Rail that the Council was going to pursue but found that he cannot find any further information on this because of financial sensitivity. He said that he found that most of the Council officer's are open but thought the public need to challenge decisions that are not shared because they are deemed as sensitive.

C. R spoke of the In It Together group in Mayfield and Easthouses where there is a commitment of openness between the community groups and the Council. However, he said in previous situations including attempts to close Mayfield Leisure Centre and Newbattle Community Centre Council staff had apparently been briefed not to share this information with the public. He felt this eroded the trust of the public towards the Council and created an 'us and them' sentiment.

D. Kenneth accepted that previous consultations in relation to implications of building the new Newbattle Community High School Centre could have been handled better but said that the Council had learnt lessons and that communities need to be informed and involved in decisions that affect them.

E. H thought there is room for improvement in the relationship between planning and other Council departments. He felt there was a missed opportunity to attract a Road Bond in the landfill operation in Tynewater, under section 86 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984. He also referred to a planning decision in Fala where the community wanted a family to renovate a property but the application was rejected by planning. H felt that a more joined-up approach between Council departments is needed.

F. Kenneth agreed that a joined-up approach between departments is crucial and it is a priority that the Council's management team had been working on. He went on to say that there needs to be greater interplay between spatial and community planning. He explained that decision making in planning and licensing is complex, in part because of the quasi-judicial nature of these functions. He explained that the Shawfair Development provides an exciting opportunity to develop a joined-up spatial and community planning approach.

G. E reflected on his experiences of Gorebridge. He felt that previous attempts to close the library and community centre with no community consultation led to a feeling of mistrust between the Council and the community.

H. Kenneth agreed that community engagement is very important. He went on to explain, in light of budget restraints, that it is important that communities and the Council think creatively about the services that can be provided under one roof. He referred to the new Paradykes development in Loanhead where a primary school, leisure centre, health centre and library are all being collocated.

I. R thought that a key part of Council provision is access and this needs to be carefully reviewed when making changes to services.

J. M spoke of the importance of libraries as more than a resource for just accessing information. In her experience she found that library staff had excellent people skills which enabled them to build relationships and promote social inclusion. She also thought that libraries help connect disadvantaged groups to services and have a key role in promoting early learning. The group agreed that libraries provide an important service.

K. Kenneth spoke of Customer Service Point that had been trialled in Mayfield and how important it is for libraries to evolve and offer an interface between communities and public services.

L. A reiterated the importance of meaningful consultations. She felt that the consultation on the Local Development Plan had been disappointing for those involved in Damhead. She felt the consultation had raised expectations that communities would have genuine influence on the outcome and was disappointed that the consultation responses were only published 11 months after it commenced, and that the responses did not lead to any changes in the Plan. She accepted that responses had been sent to the Reporter for independent review. She felt that the process led to a feeling of community disempowerment.

M. T agreed with A, and reported that Gorebridge Community Council put a lot of effort into responding to the consultation and they felt their response was ignored. T also raised the Council decision to relocate Stobhill Recycling Centre with no community consultation. He also queried why Council responses in the local press always refer to "a Council spokesperson" and why names were not attributed to comments.

N. B reiterated that consultations need to be meaningful and be designed in a way that changes can be made as a result of feedback. In terms of local press coverage B reviewed a year of coverage in the Midlothian Advertiser where communities had tried to influence Council decisions. Of the 29 relevant articles he identified there was only reference to one occasion where the newspaper had attributed a change as a result of community feedback. B felt that the planning structures should be

more open and transparent. He went onto explain that with the Dalkeith Town Centre regeneration proposal there was discussions with the community but he had not seen any evidence that this had led to any change.

O. Kenneth said that the proposals were still being worked up but that there had been significant community engagement in the Dalkeith Town Centre plans. He went onto say that he would welcome greater community involvement.

P. B felt that there was an opportunity, with the forming of One Dalkeith Development Trust, for the Community to play a key role in improving Dalkeith.

Q. H felt that the Planning Committee should involve a wider group of stakeholders. He pointed out that of the Local Authorities in Scotland it was only Clackmannanshire and Midlothian whose committee is exclusively made up of elected members.

R. T felt that the Council should invest more money in the deprived areas, mostly on the Eastern side of Midlothian. Kenneth agreed with T and made reference to the area targeting approach of the Council.

S. R reiterated the need for a joined-up approach in the Council, and also greater community involvement in Community Planning processes.

T. M acknowledged the difficult decisions that elected members need to take and emphasised the importance of quality training so they were adequately equipped to make these decisions.

U. R emphasised the need for communities to work with the Council, especially in the challenging financial context where tough decisions are needed. He thought that Community Councils sometimes went to the press as a last resort when they felt they are not being listened to by the Council. He thought that in the future it would be better if there could be more collaborative working.

Midlothian wide Neighbourhood Planning group

Tuesday 23 August, Lasswade Centre

Attended by Kenneth Lawrie (Midlothian Council Chief Executive)

Kenneth Lawrie introduced the context to the consultation exercise and conversation. Handouts were distributed which detailed where the council gets its funding from, how the money is spent and the budget pressures and increases in demand for services. There are considerable changes and uncertainties including the Scottish Government will allocate a one-year budget to local authorities for 2017-18; A budget statement will be announced by the Chancellor in November; the uncertainties of Brexit are with us for some time; Scottish Government are considering changes in Education and there are Council elections in May 2017.

There is a £36M gap over the next four years and the council will have the option to increase council tax, which has been frozen for the past seven years. By increasing council tax this would reduce the gap to £25M.

Neighbourhood planning is a valuable route for engaging with communities in this debate and for finding possible solutions. The key questions include:

- Are people prepared to pay more?
- Cutting back, doing things differently, generating income and improving services is the cornerstone of the debate
- Are there services that the Council should stop providing?
- Community Empowerment Act – How should the Council conduct its business
- How can Midlothian Council adopt a business approach, a can do attitude and be prepared to take risk and try new things out. This requires strong and creative leadership.

Summary of points raised in discussion

- Midlothian Council should explore all opportunities for raising revenue including Setting up an Energy Company or a Public Utility Company which could provide heat for homes and generate income by selling to the grid e.g. solar panels could be installed on schools and council buildings. An Income Generation Unit should be established to explore options and build a culture of entrepreneurialism.
- Set up the Midlothian Lottery. Kenneth agreed to approach legal services to clarify whether this was possible, how it would work in practice and the level of income that could be generated.
- Scottish Governments ambition is for 1% of council budget to be spent through PB. There is a potential of PB and Midlothian Lottery working together.
- Reduce £6.6M loan charges
- New housing should be designed for keeping people at home, take a long term view of what houses should look like
- Role of churches in community development work and addressing poverty is to be commended. Moderator of Church of Scotland is to visit Midlothian.
- Shawfair with 5,500 new homes and built around the railway station provides a unique opportunity but there are challenges to ensure that the infrastructure and services are embedded at the planning stages.
- To engage people in the debate an interactive game should be developed on the impacts of increasing or reducing funding.
- Learn and build on initiatives like the Hearing Aid battery replacement service which is delivered by volunteers.
- Midlothian Council requires a corporate policy on the use and support of volunteers.
- Protecting green spaces for local communities and for young people.

- Can an element of Developers Contributions be distributed through a PB approach?
- Midlothian Council is targeting revenue to improve outcomes in order to raise attainment levels in Midlothian's poorest communities
- Libraries were recognised as providing a safe public space and librarians commended for their welcoming attitude and communications skills
- Councils are becoming increasingly irrelevant as they are being stripped of their power. What future role do local authorities have in the democratic process? If education is transferred out of local authority control what will councils be left doing- picking up the rubbish!! Although this is a view that was expressed by a member it could be a key area for future discussion at Midlothian wide meetings.

Health in Mind (Orchard Centre Services)

Discussions on Shaping our Future were held at sessions throughout the year and a joint response to the Choices for Change survey was submitted on behalf of Orchard Services service users. Individual responses from service users also feature in the Health and Social Care section of this report.

Forward Mid

Group response to Choices for Change consultation

Health and Social Care

- B1. Reduce the demand on social care by developing preventative approaches within communities, to support people to live independently for as long as possible.

Agree.

However, the demand should not be reduced by increasing social care charges or charging for social care services which are currently free.

- B2. Increase charges for personal care and housing support.

Strongly disagree.

Beginning this financial year, 2015-2016, Midlothian Council increased the charges for home care by 4.9% and 5% for other services – excluding telecare which was increased by 86%. Although there was no increase in charges in the previous year this increase is still far higher than the rise in inflation. Midlothian Council will say that this increase is brings charges into line with surrounding local authorities. What it will not say is that the amount that is taken from disabled people's income, after they have reached the set threshold, is 70% – much more than any of our neighbouring local authorities – in fact, the 6th highest social care 'tax' in Scotland.

- B4. Introduce charges for transport to day centres and day services.

Strongly disagree.

In the introduction to this consultation Midlothian Council states it will:

- prioritises the most vulnerable and those in most need (supporting our most vulnerable children and adults)
- focuses on prevention and early intervention
- encourages independence (assisting and empowering people to live healthy, independent lives)

Introducing charges for these services will not support vulnerable children and adults – charging is not being preventative – charging will not assist and empower people to live healthy, independent lives – charging will do the exact opposite. A recent study by Inclusion Scotland showed the 48% of disabled people live in poverty. Many of these people rely on these services – it is often the only way that they can participate in society. Charging will lead them to a life of isolation exacerbating any health problems or conditions they may have resulting in higher costs for the Council and health services.

Forward Mid believes that social care should move from creating dependent clients to sustaining citizenship and empowering disabled and older people to take an active part in the life of their community. Any increase in charges, for non-residential community care will prevent this from happening.

Getting the right support to live good lives in the community is about fulfilling the human rights of disabled and older people. Increasing charging for social care will force people in Midlothian to trade off the right to have nutritious food or to be warm and secure in their own homes or for help to get out of bed in the morning.

Any increase in charging for care will have a negative impact on other services such as health. People declining, or not being offered, social care are more at risk of using emergency health or other crisis services. Evidence suggests that up to 10% of service users decline services because of charges depending on the type of service, the intensity of support and the costs.

The relationship between “health” and “social” care is increasingly recognised. Poor social care will lead to poor health. Poor health care will make good social care very hard. The distinction is based on outmoded values and approaches; therefore, charging for one and not the other is an unnecessary barrier for the future of proper Health and Social Care Integration. Furthermore, human rights should not be affected by which organisation, NHS or local authority, social care gives you help or support.

Disabled people in work are only allowed a £20 disregard before their earnings from work are taken into account. This means that working disabled people in Midlothian who need care and support pay 70% of their already taxed income to the local authority as their contribution towards care costs. Finding employment is hard enough for disabled people but increasing this punitive tax could mean that, after deducting personal expenses, going to work could make them financially worse off.

This barrier to work send a clear message that disabled people are not allowed to achieve any aspirations they may have with a life of poverty being the default setting.

Access to all social care services is through an assessment of need using an eligibility criterion which focuses increasingly on risk assessment. Decisions on which services should be provided tend to be based on what will help a person maintain themselves in the community without coming to any harm. There is a danger that charging selectively for services may lead a person to opt out of that aspect of support thereby undermining the whole care package.

Charging for community alarms and call services should also be discontinued not increased as proposed if an individual is assessed as needing these services and meets the eligibility criteria. These particular services relate directly to those of the NHS. Their primary use is to prevent serious injury thereby saving the NHS money by reducing the need for hospital admissions.

The Scottish Government's document A National Telehealth and Telecare Delivery Plan for Scotland to 2015 (SG 2012) noted under Key Achievements:

'Around 44,000 people (including over 4,000 people with dementia) received a telecare service as a result of the national Telecare Development Programme between 2006 and 2011, helping to expedite 2,500 hospital discharges and to avoid 8,700 emergency admissions to hospital and over 3,800 admissions to care homes. The external evaluation also highlighted the improved quality of life experienced by both service users and carers.'

On 5th March 2013, at the Scottish Parliament, the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing and Jim Elder-Woodward OBE Convenor of the Scottish Independent Living Coalition joined with Derek Feeley Director General of the NHS in Scotland and Councillor Peter Johnstone CoSLA's spokesperson on Health and Wellbeing to sign a Vision for Independent Living.

<http://www.ilis.co.uk/uploads/Vision1.pdf>

The Vision sets out that independent living is the right thing to do for disabled people, for public services and for society and indeed, for the economy. It talks about how human rights are at the heart of this agenda and how we need to work together to get this right. The following statements are excerpts from this vision.

Independent living means "disabled people of all ages having the same freedom, choice, dignity and control as other citizens at home, at work, and in the community. It does not mean living by yourself, or fending for yourself. It means rights to practical assistance and support to participate in society and live an ordinary life."

These rights to independent living are enshrined within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Human Rights Act 1998, and the Equality Act 2010.

It is right for the individual - to be free from prejudice and discrimination; and to participate within society as full, and active, equal citizens.

We will work to make all our outcomes inclusive of independent living principles and practices, so that disabled people can participate in society and lead an ordinary life, on an equal basis to that of other citizens, and be a part of Scotland's future development as a country of equal opportunity and quality of life for all of its citizens.

Our overall objective is to deliver real choice and control for disabled people in all areas of life, and all parts of Scotland, ensuring their dignity and respect at all times as full, and active, equal citizens of Scotland.

Increasing community care charges for disabled and older people, charging for transport to day centres and day services diminishes the chances of this vision ever be truly realised.

It now seems to be the default position for local authorities and the Scottish Government to save money by introducing charges for disabled people's services that were once free, by cutting services for disabled people or by increasing charges for these services – at a rate well above that of inflation.

Disabled people are disproportionately affected by these proposals – more so than any other citizens living in Midlothian. Surely the Council can find savings elsewhere instead of constantly attacking the human rights of disabled people by introducing these punitive measures.

Midlothian Financial Inclusion Network

Response in the form of a letter dated 14 November 2016 to Kenneth Lawrie, Chief Executive

Dear Mr Lawrie

I am writing on behalf of the Midlothian Financial Inclusion Network to express our concern in relation to the Council's consultation "Choices for Change". The consultation asks consultees whether a review of advice services provided by the Welfare Rights team should take place and qualifies this with a potential outcome of a reduced welfare rights team only dealing with the more acute cases of hardship.

The Trustees of MFIN are surprised by this question as the Council has already commissioned a review of advice services which is currently being undertaken by Alan Cunningham. A review of the Welfare Rights service forms part of this review which we trust will consider all commissioned services as well as those that are grant funded.

We appreciate the stark choices being faced due to budget constraints but have grave concerns as the "consultation" will be used as the basis for reductions in services to our vulnerable communities without indicating the comparatively small savings to be made against the budget as a whole. We are of the view that a reduction in advice services at a time of welfare reform, increased use of Foodbanks and such economic uncertainty will undermine the Council's priority of reducing the poverty gap.

Cowan Court Tenants' Meeting

Tuesday 12 July 2016. Eibhlin McHugh, Director of Health and Social Care attending.

Eibhlin introduced herself and explained that she was there to talk to the group about the Shaping our Future service review. As well as wanting to improve services, the council must also make financial savings in lieu of Scottish Government funding cuts and Eibhlin wanted to know where the group thought changes could be made.

A number of tenants voiced their worries over cuts to the council's care support workers. There was a strong feeling that the council should employ more care support workers rather than pay for external agency workers who don't provide as good a service.

One tenant also thinks that there should not be any cuts to road or pavement budgets as the pavement at the end of Eastfield Drive is in need of repair following work to remove tree roots from underneath it.

Overall the group thought it impossible to improve council services with a reduced budget.

Eibhlin thanked the group for their input which will be submitted along with the other responses from across Midlothian. Individuals were encouraged to fill in their comment cards if they didn't want to speak in front of the group.

People First Dalkeith Group

A group response to the Choices for Change survey was received from the People First Dalkeith group and the additional comments received as part of this response have been incorporated into this paper and the main findings report.

Communications and Marketing
Midlothian Council
25 November 2016