

## **Midlothian Council 29 June 2021**

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# Midlothian

## A Great Place to Grow

Midlothian  
Community Planning Partnership

**Single Midlothian Plan  
2021-22**

## COMMUNICATING CLEARLY

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# SINGLE MIDLOTHIAN PLAN 2021-22

## The local outcomes improvement plan (LOIP) for Midlothian

### VISION

By 2030 Midlothian will be a carbon neutral area with a sustainable green economy, built and natural environment; where working in partnership with residents, community organisations, public service agencies and businesses we will have reduced inequalities in learning, health and economic circumstances over life; both between Midlothian residents locally, and between Midlothian residents and Scottish averages.

This vision is summarised by the statement:

## “Midlothian – A Great Place to Grow”

### PURPOSE

Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) draw together public sector assets, activities and resources, together with those of the voluntary and private sectors and local communities to deliver a shared ‘plan’ that uses an evidence based approach to drive improvement in meeting the differing needs of local populations. CPPs need to have clear performance measures and make demonstrable improvements in people’s lives, by reducing outcome gaps within populations and between areas, promoting preventative approaches that reduce demand for public services, and working with communities to increase their influence in decision making and managing their own needs.

### PROCESS

The Midlothian CPP undertakes an annual data collection exercise, gathering together key available published data about the Midlothian area. The [Midlothian Profile](#) is produced by the Community Planning Research and Information Group, and is used by the CPP as the starting point for an annual “Strategic Assessment” of Midlothian. Due to the global COVID pandemic in 2020, the profile was not fully updated but this plan uses the latest data available wherever possible.

A [Strategic Assessment](#) is a review of statistics, followed by a review of the political, social, economic, technological, environmental and legal (PESTEL) changes either currently or in the next immediate period affecting the area, followed by an assessment of the level of impact (business risk) that these are likely to have on the communities of Midlothian. The shared planning cycle of the partners is as follows:

Annual revision of the Midlothian Profile:	March - April
Revision of the Strategic Assessment:	April – June
Public engagement processes:	July – September
Drafting of budgets and one year priorities:	October – December
Achieving formal approval of plans and budgets:	January – March

Again due to the COVID Pandemic the annual updating of the Strategic Assessment was not fully completed, but each thematic partnership has undertaken a version of this assessment process sufficient to develop the 2021-22 plan. The proposed priorities have been submitted to public engagement (Citizens Panel and youth engagement processes as well as stakeholder focus groups/ events) and the annual CPP planning day involving 126 stakeholders took place in a digital format providing assurance that the SMP 2021-22 complies with the expectations of the Community Empowerment Act 2015.

## “Map” of the CPP 2021-22



### STRUCTURE

The full structure of the CPP including

- remits
- membership of each thematic group
- governance documents
- sub groups
- sub group action plans

is all available on the Midlothian Council website at: [Community Planning web pages](#)

In addition the following documents can be found:

- Community Empowerment Act guidance
- Community asset transfer and participation request guidance, the council's asset register
- A listing of contacts for and details of community accessible buildings by community council area and local community directories
- Links to the 16 Community Councils
- Neighbourhood locality outcome improvement) plans and profiles (where in place and up to date)
- The 2019 Midlothian area data profile
- The Midlothian Joint Strategic Assessment 2019
- Child poverty action plan report 2019-20
- Link to NHS Lothian strategic plan
- CPP Board minutes
- Citizens panel survey reports
- Allotments, Food and Growing strategy 2020-2030
- Link to the CPP Facebook page

- Volunteering policy of Midlothian Council
- The Corporate Parent strategy and a link to Midlothian Champions Group of care experienced young people
- Community Action on Climate Change Federation of Community Council's report
- Midlothian Biodiversity action plan
- Performance reports for the CPP and themes within this, including the statutory Community Justice, Adult Health and Social Care Integration Joint Board, and Getting it Right for Every Midlothian Child (Children and young people) annual reports

## **AREA TARGETING**

The CPP is aware that for many years there has been a significant statistical gap between the life outcomes for residents living in some parts of the County and the average outcomes for Midlothian and for Scotland as a whole. These areas have been identified nationally by Scottish Government using 7 sets of statistical data about living circumstances known as the Scottish Indicators of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

Examples of the gaps include poorer levels of employment; lower wage rates; lower average life expectancy and greater concentrations of people who are elderly or disabled; poorer access to physical amenities such as shops, health care, public spaces and play facilities; lower than average qualifications; higher levels of crime.

In Midlothian there are three communities within which there are concentrations of statistics which place parts of these areas in the top 20% of SIMD (i.e. most deprived). These communities are Dalkeith Central/Woodburn; Mayfield/Easthouses and Gorebridge. The CPP has therefore set a shared target of closing the gap between the life outcomes experienced in these parts of Midlothian, and the average life outcomes experienced by residents across the County.

Each of these areas must now by law (Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015) have a "Locality Outcome Improvement Plan" in which local residents have been actively engaged in creating the content with public bodies; responding to local needs and aspirations. The CPP's Neighbourhood planning arrangements developed plans with residents of Dalkeith/Woodburn, Gorebridge and Mayfield/Easthouses, however the Dalkeith area plan is now out of date and being reviewed. A wider review of Neighbourhood planning has been delayed by the COVID pandemic but has been agreed by the CPP board as a priority for action. This review will take account of the following:

- Rights of communities to develop 'Place Plans' under the Planning Act 2018
- Place Standard guidance
- Participation request rights for community bodies under the Community Empowerment Act 2015
- Community led town centre master planning piloting in Mayfield
- The COMPACT principles of partnership working with the third sector
- The Food and Community Growing Strategy under the Community Empowerment Act 2015
- Community Asset Transfer rights
- Local commissioning plans on the Integration Joint Board
- Local policing plans

The 2020 SIMD has identified a datazone in Loanhead which now falls into the top 20%. In addition SIMD data indicates that there are individual features of other areas that fall into the top 20%, notably in terms of crime indicators and qualification level indicators.

## **LEGAL POSITION**

In 2015 an Act of the Scottish Parliament was passed into law, significantly affecting the operations of the CPP.

### **The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act (2015)**

- CPPs have been made statutory (required by law) and new duties have been placed on public sector partners to play a full and active role in Community Planning. The Act makes clear that Community Planning is the process by which public bodies must work together and with community bodies to plan for, resource and provide services which improve local outcomes in the local authority area;
- The Act confirms that the role of a CPP is to prepare a plan for improving local outcomes, in consultation with community bodies and others. These outcomes are to be consistent with the national outcomes determined by the Scottish Ministers under Part 1 of the Act;
- The CPP must publish the plan, monitor progress being made and report annually on progress;
- The Act extends the list of key partners to include a wider range of public authorities, including Scottish Natural Heritage, Further Education Colleges, Skills Development Scotland, and the integrated joint boards for adult health and care (IJB). Individual partners now have a legal duty to work collaboratively and to take into account the plan when setting their individual priorities, and to commit resources to delivery of the plan and report to the CPP on their contribution;
- The Scottish Government expects that all public sector organisations engage with communities and support their participation in setting priorities and in the design and delivery of services. Community bodies must in turn ensure that ensure they are open, inclusive and truly represent their communities;
- Where an appropriate community body, or a group of bodies, believes it could help to improve the outcome of a service, it is now entitled to make a request to a public body that delivers that service, asking to take part in a process to improve that outcome. The public body must agree to the request for dialogue unless there are reasonable grounds for refusal. If it refuses the request, it must explain the reasons;
- If a community body proposes to deliver a service itself, the public body will need to decide whether the community body has an appropriate corporate structure and the capacity to take on that role;
- The Act makes amendments to the community right to buy, making it easier for communities to define their community in a greater variety of ways. It gives the initiative to communities to identify unused public property they are interested in and places a duty on public authorities to agree to the request unless they can show reasonable grounds for refusal. Community bodies are able to approach public authorities for detailed information about a property they are interested in before making a formal request. There is more information on the [Community Asset Transfer](#) page on the Council's website.

### **EQUALITIES**

The Community Planning Partnership is fully committed to ensuring the legislative requirements placed on all public service delivery agencies in the Equality Act are met. The partners have in place processes for equality impact assessment known as an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to monitor the potential impact of any changes in service planned individually or jointly. The impact assessment of this plan is published on the community planning pages of the Council website.

### **THE PLAN**

The CPP undertook an engagement process in 2018/19 reviewing the core priorities for the 3 years to 2021-22. Taking into consideration evidence about the comparative quality of life of people living in Midlothian, where it is clear that less well-off residents experience poorer health, have fewer or no choices in how they use low incomes, and where there is a proven relationship between these factors and their learning; the top priorities for 2019-22 are:

- **Reducing the gap in learning outcomes**
- **Reducing the gap in health outcomes**
- **Reducing the gap in economic circumstances**
- **Reducing carbon emissions in Midlothian to net zero by 2030**

### **Safer Midlothian**

In line with national guidance on outcomes and indicators, the Midlothian Community Justice Partnership has agreed 40 communication and engagement actions to take forward across Midlothian in line with the Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan 2020-23.

The 2020 consultation process included a variety of engagement types including focus groups and surveys with service users in the justice system, community engagement through public surveys, a large scale community justice event in partnership with Community Justice Scotland, and maximising the use of Midlothian Community Safety and Justice Partnership (CSJP) social media pages. The engagement processes again highlighted the views of young people and that their safety in the community was a matter of concern to them. In 2020/21, The Getting It Right for Every Midlothian Child (GIRFEMC) and Community Safety and Justice Partnership Board within the CPP will jointly consider additional actions to support children and young people. This will build on the existing core of services such as the Mid and East Lothian Public Protection Unit, Children's Services, Schools' guidance, pupil support and behaviour management systems, youth work practice, adult health and social care work on addiction, youth justice service, the criminal justice social work team, police, fire and rescue, road safety staff, NHS staff in child health, the work of voluntary organisations such as women's aid, victim support and others who support young people affected by crime and violence.

The decision by Midlothian Council to cease the Council's community safety staff team as part of its budget cuts in 2018/19 but to continue to provide significant additional funding to the Police service (13 police officer posts are funded by the Council) has resulted in a review of the service level agreement with the Police regarding the duties of these posts. Some secondary schools now have a Police officer located on site and young people engaged with in the development of this 2021-22 plan welcomed support from Police officers in school and in community settings.

### **Climate Challenge**

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 provides the legislative framework for climate change action in Scotland. It sets out mandatory targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 42% by 2020 and by 80% by 2050 to support the transition to a sustainable low carbon economy, and defines annual emissions targets from 2010 to 2050. In 2018, the Climate Change (Scotland) Bill introduced proposed changes to the Act. It raised the Government's ambitions in respect of future emissions targets to 70% by 2030 and 90% by 2040 and introduced a new target for Scotland to reach net-zero emissions by 2045.

The annual CPP planning day in November 2019 focused on climate and sustainability issues. The elected members of Scottish Parliament and of Midlothian Council (and all other Councils in Scotland) have declared that a "Climate Emergency" exists and that this must be addressed by collective action to reduce carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions as part of the international effort to reduce the level of global temperature rise that is affecting the world's climate and ecosystems.

The CPP board at its January 2020 meeting agreed to make meeting the Climate Emergency target of '*Reducing Midlothian Carbon emissions to net zero by 2030*' a priority in its shared partnership work. The Board has set up a Climate Emergency partnership, built from and replacing the existing sustainable environment partnership grouping to focus collective effort on meeting this commitment.

### **Child Poverty Act**

Midlothian's Child Poverty action annual report 2020 sets out Midlothian's commitment to achieving the Scottish Government's vision of eradicating child poverty by 2030. The three drivers for achieving this are:

- reduce the cost of living
- increase income from employment
- increase income from social security and benefits in kind.



In Midlothian, the number of children living in poverty is 25% (measuring poverty relative to the rest of society, and defined as the proportion of children living in households with equivalised incomes below 60% of the median (middle) UK income in the current year) which is above the national average of 23% for Scotland. Leadership on this topic is shared between the Getting it Right for Every Midlothian Child (GIRFEMC) and Improving Opportunities for the People of Midlothian (IOM) thematic Boards, recognising that child poverty is a function of adult income levels.

## **SUMMARY OF SMP 2019-22 Outcomes:**

### **COMMUNITY JUSTICE**

#### **3 YEAR OUTCOMES**

- Communities improve their understanding and participation in community justice
- Partners plan and deliver services in a more strategic and collaborative way
- People have better access to the services they require, including welfare, health and wellbeing, housing and employability
- Effective Interventions are delivered to prevent and reduce the risk of further offending
- Life chances are improved through needs, including health, financial inclusion, housing and safety being addressed
- People develop positive relationships and more opportunities to participate and contribute through education, employment and leisure activities
- Individual's resilience and capacity for change and self-management are enhanced

### **COMMUNITY SAFETY**

#### **3 YEAR OUTCOMES**

- Fewer people are victims of crime, abuse or harm
- People feel safe in their neighbourhoods and homes
- Communities take a positive role in shaping their future

### **SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

#### **3 YEAR OUTCOMES**

- The local economy is more productive and inclusive
- Sustainable town centre regeneration is visible
- Midlothian Science Zone has developed, benefitting the local economy and community
- To be an 'earth friendly' partnership, resource aware and committed to working to support Scotland's net zero carbon ambition by 2045 (2030 in Midlothian)
- More social housing has been provided taking account of local demand, including specialist housing
- Homelessness has reduced and people threatened with homelessness can access appropriate advice and support services

### **IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **3 YEAR OUTCOMES**

- Poverty (including child poverty - shared with GIRFEMC) levels in Midlothian are reduced
- Health inequalities are reduced and the health of people in Midlothian is improved
- The public is informed and engaged in service development and delivery

### **GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY MIDLOTHIAN CHILD**

#### **3 YEAR OUTCOMES:**

- More children are safe, healthy and resilient
- More children and young people receive timely and effective support when they need it
- There is greater equality in learning

- More care-experienced children and young people receive timely and effective support when they need it

## **ADULT HEALTH AND CARE**

### **3 YEAR OUTCOMES**

- People are able to look after and improve their own health and wellbeing and live in good health for longer
- People, including those with disabilities/long term conditions or who are frail, are able, wherever possible, to live independently and in their own home
- Health and Social Care have contributed to reducing health inequalities
- Unpaid carers are supported to look after their own health and wellbeing

### **ACTION PLANS FOR 2021/22**

The priorities and actions for 2021/22 set out under the 5 themes of community planning are designed to improve life outcomes for the people of Midlothian. These one year priorities are intended as steps towards achieving the three year outcomes and long term vision of the partnership.

## **GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY MIDLOTHIAN CHILD (GIRFEMC)**

### **Priorities for 2021-22**

- Increase support to children and young people affected by domestic abuse, parental alcohol or drug misuse
- Increase the range of alternative services on offer to children and young people requiring support for their mental health
- Increase the proportion of children and young people who feel safe in their homes, communities, schools and online
- Reduce the educational attainment gap

## **COMMUNITY SAFETY**

The Local Policing plan sets out in detail the contribution being made by the Police to the safety of the public of Midlothian and is available on the [Police Scotland website](#). The priorities below are shared by all CPP partners.

### **Priorities for 2021-22**

- Reduce violent crime
- Reduce substance (alcohol and drug) misuse
- Reduce domestic abuse and protect women and girls
- Educate people regarding speeding, drink driving and responsible parking

### **COMMUNITY JUSTICE Priorities for 2021-22**

- Support people to attend school and/or gain qualifications
- Support people to reduce/manage drug use
- Work with young people to reduce early anti-social behaviour
- Help to improve family life and parenting skills
- Support people with mental health issues

## **SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

### **Priorities for 2021-22**

#### **Economy**



- Maximise opportunities for inward investment and funding to the area
- Place based economic development approach to support the regeneration of Town Centres
- Work with Midlothian employers to understand skills needs and provide local employment opportunities
- Driving forward inclusive economic growth by working in partnership with stakeholders, and ensuring business community benefits in the supply chain to maximise opportunities for local people

### **Housing**

- Increasing the supply of affordable housing in Midlothian
- Revise Midlothian Council's Housing Allocation Policy to address the backlog of homeless households already in temporary accommodation, and reduce the time taken to house homeless households in the future
- Seek alternative models of temporary accommodation to end the need for bed and breakfast accommodation
- Ensure homeless households are supported to access a wide range of housing options, including the private rented sector
- Develop a 'housing first' approach in Midlothian to house homeless households with complex needs
- Develop and implement a Homeless Prevention Strategy

### **Climate**

- Place the Climate Emergency and Midlothian Council's Climate Emergency Declaration at the centre of the replacement Midlothian Local Development Plan, and its development strategy and policies, so that the new plan facilitates promotion of carbon neutral development, mitigation of, and adaptation to, the effects of the Climate Emergency

## **IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE IN MIDLOTHIAN (IOM)**

### **Priorities for 2021-22**

- The number of households in poverty across Midlothian is reduced
- The number of children living in households in poverty is reduced
- Participation measures for young people over 16 increase
- The qualification levels of people in Midlothian increases
- The number of people who are economically active increases
- The annual turnover of third sector organisations and volunteering rates increases
- Health inequalities for people in Midlothian are reduced

## **ADULT HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**

### **Priorities for 2021-22**

- People are able to look after and improve their own health and wellbeing and live in good health for longer
- Develop approaches to prevent or address isolation and reduce the detrimental impact on physical and mental health
- People, including those with disabilities/long term conditions or who are frail are able, wherever possible, to live independently and in their own home
- Health and Social Care have contributed to reducing health inequalities. For example Work with Midlothian Financial Inclusion Network (MFIN) to maximise income of people who are vulnerable or at particular risk of inequalities
- Unpaid carers are supported to look after their own health and wellbeing
- Multi-agency teams are supported to work in an integrated way and address the workforce challenges including recruitment and retention of health and social care staff
- Engage with communities effectively. This includes implementation of the Engagement Statement and specific programme with CPP partners to foster asset-based community development approaches to work with communities

- Work with partners, including communities, to design the Strategic Plan for 2022-25

## 2021-22 ACTION PLANS

The following sections set out the work of the five thematic partnerships, beginning with a summary of the most recent strategic assessments and then the detailed action plan for 2021-22

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### ADULT HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

#### 1. MIDLOTHIAN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP OVERVIEW



Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership serves a population of 91,340, and is responsible for services that help adults live well and get support when they need it. Many voluntary sector and independent providers work with the Partnership to deliver its objectives. The Partnership is governed by the Integration Joint Board (IJB) and is also a thematic group of the **Midlothian Community Planning Partnership**.

#### 2. OUR VISION

The IJB agreed a new vision and values in December 2020:

**Vision:** People in Midlothian are enabled to lead longer and healthier lives.

**Values:** Right support, right time, right place

#### 3. UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES

- **Prevention:** People should be supported to have more responsibility for their health and wellbeing. Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) wants to deal with the causes rather than the consequences of ill health wherever possible
- **Independence, Choice & Control:** People should be able to manage their condition and control their support. The HSCP will support people to live independently at home and promote the principles of independent living and equality
- **Support the person not just the condition:** Support/treatment should consider what matters to people, key issues affecting people's life as well as supporting them to manage their condition
- **Recovery:** People should be supported to recover good health and independence as far as possible
- **Coordinated Care:** Everyone who provides care should be working together
- **Local:** support should be provided as close to home as possible and people should only go to hospital if they really have to. Much of this support is provided by families, neighbours and your local community. HSCP will work in partnership with unpaid carers, volunteers and communities.
- **Public Protection:** People should feel safe at home and when using services in their community

- **Equality:** People should not be disadvantaged due to their being part of any of the 9 protected characteristics populations, affected by poverty or caring responsibilities. The HSCP will do everything it can to reduce health inequalities and respect people's dignity and human rights in the planning of health and social care
- **Evidence based decisions:** Services will be commissioned based on identified need. Staff will listen to people who use services, and the people who care for them, working together to develop the services that are right for them
- **Quality:** Provide the highest quality health and care services, with a very strong emphasis on improving the quality of services, responding to user feedback and internal and external audit

#### 4. Consultation and Engagement

Communication and engagement is fundamental in helping the HSCP to provide the right support, at the right time and in the right place.

The Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership's Engagement Strategy for 2020-21 sets out:

- whom it will communicate and engage with;
- the methods of communication and engagement;
- when it will communicate and engage; and
- guidelines for effective communication.



#### 5. Our Key Successes in 2019-20

The Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership Annual Performance Report provides a sense of the breadth of the work of the Partnership. With the help of facts and figures, case studies and feedback from our communities, the report highlights some key successes over the previous 12 months.



The 2020-21 Annual Report will be available in July 2021.

The Report will be published online at <https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/mhscp>

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic brought many challenges and much disruption to the Health and Social Care Partnership, its partners and the communities it serves. There was increased anxiety and pressure on many service users, unpaid carers and staff. While challenges may have changed over 2020, they will continue into 2021.

As a Partnership, the top priority was the safety of patients, clients, communities and staff. In response to the situation it was important to be innovative and support clients effectively and safely during this time. Staff continued to see people face-to-face where this was clinically essential, but in order to reduce face-to-face contact, where feasible, teams made a number of changes to how they delivered services throughout the pandemic.

As well as managing changes to existing services, the Partnership provided care and treatment to people who had contracted COVID and their families. It also provided support to partner agencies around changed provision, infection control and other requirements, including the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) and staff testing. In addition, COVID related services had to be established, often at short notice as the pandemic escalated, such as the COVID Testing and Assessment Hub at Midlothian Community Hospital. Many staff across the Partnership were redeployed to other roles, assisting in care homes and PPE centres.

Partnership staff were very involved in the work of the Midlothian Care for People Group where members of the Community Planning Partnership and other partners coordinated a humanitarian response as a result of the UK moving to lockdown on 23rd March 2020. Statutory and voluntary sector partners sought, as far as possible, to provide essential services to the whole population and particularly to those most directly affected by the imposition of lockdown. The Midlothian Care for People Group had to operate in a complex environment keeping abreast of new guidance and rapidly changing projections of need, whilst also keeping in close touch with policies and activities at national, regional and council level.

## **6. Our areas of activity 2021-22 - example activity only**

### **1. LONG TERM CONDITIONS**

#### **Cancer**

- Work in partnership with Community Pharmacies to increase the 12 week smoking quit rate through their services
- Implement the new 'Improving Cancer Journey' to provide support to people after a diagnosis of cancer, including MacMillan welfare rights support

#### **Respiratory Disease**

- Reduce rates of smoking and support people to maintain a healthy weight
- Strengthen partnership working with Community Respiratory Team and Scottish Ambulance Service to support people at home

#### **Neurological Conditions**

- Support people to live in their own homes by helping to explore housing options
- Work with the Astley Ainslie hospital to explore ways to deliver in-patient and out-patient services locally

#### **Stroke**

- Reduce rates of smoking and support people to maintain a healthy weight
- Reduce hospital discharge delays resulting from housing needs

#### **Diabetes & Obesity**

- Support adults to maintain a healthy weight, especially those with pre-diabetes, e.g. through increased weight management services
- Work collaboratively with other Partnerships in south east region of Scotland to increase services to tackle type 2 diabetes

#### **Sensory Impairment**

- Improve awareness and understanding of sensory impairment among staff
- Raise awareness at hearing aid clinics, dependent on COVID regulations. Funded by HSCP budget and volunteers

#### **Palliative Care**

- Strengthen choice and control through Anticipatory Care Plans, Power of Attorney arrangements and Adult Carer Support Plans
- Improving services by consulting with families and staff

## **2. SERVICE USERS GROUPS**

#### **Older People (65+)**

- Work in partnership with Red Cross and GPs to support frail people
- Train more Ageing Well volunteers and provide a wider range of activities
- Strengthen systems to reduce numbers of people being delayed in hospital e.g. Flow hub

#### **Mental Health**

- Reshape community based mental health support and services
- Review programme to improve access to psychological therapy

#### **Physical Disability**

- Contribute to the re-provision of Astley Ainslie Hospital including strengthening community based services
- Continue to strengthen the provision and accessibility of information about services and supports

#### **Learning Disability and Autism**

- Build on the creative new approaches to day service design and the more individualised and community based models of support that have developed in response to COVID
- Build 8 flats in Bonnyrigg and renovate Primrose Lodge in Loanhead for three people with Profound and Multiple Learning Disability and additional respite for two people
- Trial Principles into Practice, a draft framework that offers practical guidance and evaluation measures to improve the planning and delivery of support for young people (14-25) who require additional support as they make the transition to young adult life
- Update 'Autism Supports' the interactive guide to autism support and services

#### **Justice Service**

- Providing people on Community Payback Orders with recognised qualifications through Unpaid Work staff becoming registered trainers
- Run a Caledonian group work programme in Midlothian for men from Midlothian, East Lothian and the Scottish Borders

#### **Substance Misuse**

- Work with partners to promote evidence based educational interventions for young people including "Problematic Risk Taking Document" and Core Messages resources
- Recruit an additional peer worker to increase the role in treatment and support services of people with lived experience

## **3. RESOURCES**

#### **Primary Care**

- Train all practice reception staff in signposting and Mental Health Support

- Support 4 nurses to complete Advanced Nurse Practitioner Training programme and four pharmacists to become independent prescribers

### **Support to Unpaid Carers**

- Work with partners and HSCP staff to increase the early identification of carers and the offer of Carer Support Plans
- Work with partner agencies to promote the Carer Positive Scheme to large employers in Midlothian
- Improve respite provision, work with carers to find ways to enable breaks from caring (respite or short breaks), and develop Adult Carer Support Plans with carers – aiming to find ways to reduce the impact of caring during the pandemic restrictions

### **Hospitals**

- Pull community teams together (such as Discharge to Assess, Hospital at Home, and Rapid Response) under the Home First Approach in Midlothian
- Investigate options for providing services locally in Midlothian premises including Midlothian Community Hospital
- Work with the national redesign of urgent care to implement local pathways to support the redirection of patients from the emergency department and shift the balance of care

### **Workforce**

- Enable all staff to work in a more person-centered way with a stronger focus on 'what matters to you', prevention and, where appropriate, recovery
- Develop and implement forward-looking workforce action plans for each service area

### **Communities**

- Support community champions to work with local groups around Type 2 diabetes
- Continue to have a focus upon the three areas of deprivation in Central Dalkeith/Woodburn, Mayfield/Easthouses and Gorebridge

### **Third Sector**

- Continue to develop stronger working relationships both operationally and in relation to service redesign
- Explore different opportunities for shared learning and service design opportunities with third sector and other partners during the pandemic

### **Housing and Property**

- Plan the development of a range of extra care housing schemes to support Midlothian residents to be cared for within Midlothian. This includes 39 flats and 8 bungalows due for completion in 2021
- Train staff on Housing Solutions to support them to have earlier conversations about housing

### **Technology Enabled Care (TEC)**

- Consult and engage with patients with lived experience to design services
- Connecting health and social care data to help us understand the needs of the population and the effectiveness of services. Develop infrastructure to allow us share data between health and social care
- Embed technology into service design and delivery e.g. computerised cognitive behavioural therapy and new build houses

### **Some cross-cutting opportunities (identified at CPP workshop)**

The following themes were highlighted at the CPP development sessions. They will influence service planning and review in 2021-22:

- A stronger focus on prevention, linked to health inequalities and impact of COVID (section 8)
- Working with CPP partners to foster asset-based community development approaches to work with communities – coordinated and led by communities
- Genuine community engagement. Midlothian Community Engagement Statement to be approved 2021
- Public mental health - focus on wider prevention of mental illness and promotion of mental health across the life course. This links to strong communities, good work and a valued role, a decent income, green space and positive relationships
- Challenging stigma – a barrier to accessing services and other support
- Digital enhancements to service development and community resources (while also being attentive of barriers to digital inclusion)
- Good conversations - an evidence-based approach to support people to identify their own health and wellbeing outcomes, based on their strengths and assets. Wherever someone makes contact they are welcomed by a 'what matters to you' response and an understanding of the social circumstances of someone's life

## **8. Our Challenges**

### **Covid-19 Pandemic**

Covid will continue to influence how the HSCP delivers core services, works with partners and communities and develops the workforce. In addition, the Partnership will adapt to deliver Covid related services, such as vaccination clinics.

### **A growing and ageing population**

We are the second smallest local authority in mainland Scotland but the fastest growing. This will continue to pose challenges for health and social care services whilst also changing some local communities. As people live for longer many more people will be living at home with frailty and/or dementia and/or multiple health conditions. An increasing number of people live on their own, and for some this will bring a risk of isolation.

### **Higher Rates of Long-Term Conditions**

Managing long-term conditions is one of the biggest challenges facing health care services worldwide, with 60% of all deaths attributable to them. Older people are more susceptible to developing long-term conditions; most over 65s have two or more conditions and most over 75s have three or more conditions. People living in areas of multiple deprivation are at particular risk with, for example, a much greater likelihood of early death from heart failure. They are also likely to develop two or more conditions 10-15 years earlier than people living in affluent areas.

### **High rates of mental health needs**

Many mental health problems are preventable, and almost all are treatable, so people can either fully recover or manage their conditions successfully and live fulfilling healthy lives as far as possible. The incidence of mental health issues in Midlothian, while similar to the rest of Scotland, is a concern. Living in



poverty increases the likelihood of mental health problems but also mental health problems can lead to greater social exclusion and higher levels of poverty. People who have life-long mental illness are likely to die 15-20 years prematurely because of physical ill-health.

### **Our services are under pressure**

People place a high value on being able to access effective health services when they need them. People expect to receive high quality care services when these are needed whether as a result of age, disability, sex, gender or long term health conditions. Yet there are a number of pressures on our services.

#### **Financial pressures**

Financial pressures on public services are well documented. There is no doubt that we need to do things differently: the traditional approach to delivering health and care services is no longer financially sustainable.

#### **Workforce Pressures**

The Covid-19 pandemic has and will continue to influence the demand for, and deployment of, the health and care workforce for the foreseeable future. Recruiting nursing, care, allied health professional and medical staff will continue to be a challenge. Mass vaccination programmes and other large scale recruitment programmes related to COVID 19 have increased pressure on already stretched resources. How the workforce interacts with people has also changed with an increased use of digital or telephone appointments.

The Scottish Government has requested that IJBs develop a 3 year Workforce Plan no later than 31st March 2022.

**Unpaid carers** fulfil significant, valuable and wide-ranging roles within Midlothian communities, helping to keep people with care and support needs within our communities. During the pandemic many people have become carers for the first time, or seen changes to their caring role, resulting in them providing significantly more care for their elderly, sick or disabled family, friends and neighbours. Through this period Community services supporting carers have continued to offer a range of support, including digitally and by telephone, though services supporting the person they provide support to may have been reduced e.g. respite and day services, resulting in an impact on carers. It is essential that we work to reduce the significant pressure and impact of caring that carers report feeling, by continuing to explore innovative options to enable support to be given to both carers and the cared-for, and for there to be opportunities for breaks from caring leading to caring being more sustainable. We are constantly looking for ways to offer respite and support to reduce the stress and impact of caring.

#### **Acute hospitals**

Acute hospitals are under huge pressure due to unsustainable demand and financial restrictions. We need to invest in community based and work with carers' alternatives that will minimise avoidable and inappropriate admissions and facilitate earlier discharge. By treating people closer to home, or in their own home we can support admission avoidance and improve patient outcomes.

### **9. Health Inequality across Midlothian**

Health inequalities are the unfair and avoidable differences in people's health across social groups and between different groups.

The Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership is increasing the focus on prevention and early intervention, planning service delivery according to greatest need where appropriate, and working to ensure our workforce understands inequality, its impact on people's health and wellbeing and how services should respond to this.

The Scottish Government describes emerging evidence that the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis are affecting some groups disproportionately; they are more likely to be infected with the virus and to experience poor health outcomes, and in some cases, death. There are also concerns about the widening of economic inequalities with some groups more likely to experience unemployment and poverty. These are arising from the direct and indirect effects of contracting the illness, as well as the lockdown measures put in place to control spread of the virus.

We work with our Community Planning Partnership to draw together our assets, activities and resources, to reduce health inequalities and improve the health of people in Midlothian.

We have strong local communities in Midlothian and we harness the strengths they can bring to improving health and wellbeing. Voluntary organisations, volunteers, neighbours and extended families are all vital to helping people who are vulnerable to stay safe and well. Active, supportive communities are fundamental to a good quality of life for people vulnerable through age, illness or disability. It is important in addressing the harmful effects of social isolation which can lead to poorer physical and mental ill health and an increased risk of hospital or care home admission.

People affected by poverty and social disadvantage have poorer health and are more likely to die at a younger age than their neighbours with more resources. People also experience disadvantage through gender, sexual orientation, social position, ethnic origin, geography, age and disability.

Domestic abuse is also linked to inequalities. Although being female is the key risk factor for experiencing domestic abuse, not all women are equally at risk. Factors such as age, poverty, economic dependence, disability, homelessness and insecure immigration status can heighten women's vulnerability to abuse or entrap them further.

People living in some communities are more likely to be living in poorer health and to die younger with higher rates of cancer, stroke, diabetes and heart disease. People with disabilities are more likely to have lower educational achievements, higher rates of poverty and poorer health outcomes. Unpaid or family carers are more likely to experience emotional stress, anxiety, and fatigue. The impact of caring for others can significantly impact on their own physical, mental, and emotional health and wellbeing, as well as finances and relationships.

## **10. Sustainability of Health and Social Care Services**

The delivery of integrated care is fundamental in providing sustainable adult and social care services.

- We are working to develop efficient, effective and sustainable approaches to supporting our service users against the challenges we face
- We are promoting healthy lifestyles and supporting people to manage their own health and live independently

## **11. Climate Change Emergency**

Public services have an [important role in shaping the climate change agenda](#), both in terms of protecting communities from the adverse impacts of climate change and in supporting a transition towards more sustainable living.

The Health and Social Care Partnership is committed to work in partnership and play its part in Midlothian Council's Climate Change Strategy and NHS Scotland's Climate Change Emergency Commitments.

While an exploration of Green Prescribing options is underway, a stronger focus on the broader ambition is required by the HSCP, working across the Community Planning Partnership.

## 12. Financial Strategy



The Midlothian IJB Financial Strategy articulates, in financial terms, how the strategic plan will be delivered whilst also outlining the measures that will be taken to reduce its costs and ensure that the IJB fulfills its responsibilities to the Midlothian population within the financial resources available. The [2019-22 Financial Strategy](#) was approved in September 2018, and a 5 year action plan in June 2019. The budget for Midlothian Council Adult Social Care services is managed directly by the Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership, and details of the delegated funding to the Midlothian IJB will be available after February Council.

## 13. Performance Reporting

Performance reports are presented to the Midlothian IJB and Midlothian Community Planning Partnership to monitor a core suite of national outcomes and data indicators monitoring change across the system of health and social care and to support the delivery of our strategic priorities. We have a legal requirement to publish an Annual Performance Report.

The HSCP is developing a new approach to evaluating outcomes for service users and carers. Measuring the contribution made by each service is complex and requires a combination of hard data and more qualitative information. The approach now being introduced involves the development of Outcome Maps at each level of the organisation. A new software programme, *OutNav*, makes it possible to capture and link a wide range of evidence for evaluating progress with each of the stepping-stones in these maps.

Reference Code	Adult Health and Care 2021-22						Ownership
	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline	Previous trend data	Team
<b>Isolation – Develop approaches to prevent or address isolation and reduce the detrimental impact on physical and mental health</b>							
	Strengthen both formal and informal approaches to addressing isolation. This will involve working with voluntary organisations; local communities; and improving information about community resources	31/3/22	The number of older people using local services, facilities and activities through participation in 1:1 or group sessions	830	825	2017-18 825 2018-19 861 2019-20 tbc	Planning Older People MHSCP
<b>Physical Activity - Contribute to the implementation of a local strategy by working with older people, people with disabilities and those at greatest risk of inequalities</b>							
	Deliver Weight Management Programmes to help address and prevent obesity and type 2 diabetes	31/3/21	Number of people referred to Weight Management Triage	200	109	2015-16 109 2016-17 172 2017-18 159 2018-19 215 2019-20 tbc	Public Health/ Dietetics
	Work with Ageing Well to support older people	31/3/22	Total number of people attending activity groups hosted by Ageing Well each year	20,000	22,000	2018-19 22,000	Ageing-Well

Reference Code	Adult Health and Care 2021-22						Ownership
	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline	Previous trend data	Team
						2019-20 tbc	
	Work with Midlothian Council Active Choices to support people with longer term health needs including Mental Health	31/3/22	Number of people attending activity groups hosted by Midlothian Active Choices (MAC)	10,000	10,280	2018-19 10,280 2019-20 tbc	MAC, Sport and Leisure
		31/3/22	Number of people attending one to one sessions with Midlothian Active Choices	950	900	2017-18 1,556 2018-19 984 2019-20 tbc	MAC, Sport and Leisure
Workforce – Support teams to work in an integrated way and address the workforce challenges including recruitment and retention of health and social care staff							
	Deliver bespoke training plan for the cross sector Scottish Government trauma training programme	31/3/22	Number of people participated in level 1 awareness training	200	0	new	L&D MHSCP
	Increase skills and knowledge of the CPP workforce in Midlothian in relation to suicide prevention	31/03/22	Number of people attending suicide prevention training (Safe Talk or ASIST)	120	tbc	2019-20 tbc	Mental Health Lead MHSCP

Reference Code	Adult Health and Care 2021-22						Ownership
	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline	Previous trend data	Team
			Number of organisations with representative(s) attending suicide prevention training	10	tbc	2019-20 tbc	Mental Health Lead MHSCP
Financial Inclusion - Work with MFIN to maximise income of people who are vulnerable or at particular risk of inequalities							
	Deliver Welfare Rights service to people with health and social care needs	31/03/22	Number of people supported with cancer	250	250	2017-18 240 2018-19 316 2019-20 tbc	Welfare Rights Team
		31/03/22	Number of people supported with mental health needs	250	140	2017-18 253 2018-19 360	
		31/03/22	Amount of household income gained by the Welfare Rights Team	£3m		2016-17 £2.8m	

Reference Code	Adult Health and Care 2021-22						Ownership
	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline	Previous trend data	Team
						2017-18 £3.4m 2018-19 £4.4m	
	Work with Red Cross to support people who are frail to access financial support available to them	31/03/22	Additional benefit income to Midlothian residents identified as frail	£150,000	£150,000	2019-20 tbc	Strategic Planning MHSCP
<b>AHC – Health Inequalities - Develop a programme of work across agencies to reduce health inequalities in Midlothian</b>							
	Work in partnership with Community Pharmacies to increase the 12 week quit rate through their services	31/03/22	Increase the 12 week quit rate in Midlothian Community Pharmacies	Increase to Scottish average – 19% (2019/20)	13% (2019-20)	13% (2018/19) 14% (2017/18) 16% (2016/17) 16% (2015/16)	Public Health HSCP

Reference Code	Adult Health and Care 2021-22						Ownership
	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline	Previous trend data	Team
	Deliver a holistic health assessment to people undertaking Unpaid Work Programme	31/03/22	Number of people on Unpaid Work Programme attending at least one appointment with a nurse from the Health Inequalities Team (HIT)	10	4	2019-20 4	Community Health Inequalities Team
	Contribute to Housing First for people with multiple and complex needs. This includes people who have a range of experiences including childhood and early years trauma, mental ill health, addictions as well as time spent in local authority care or prison. Housing First recognises that a safe, secure home is the best base for recovery and for addressing any other life issues	31/03/21	Number of people supported through Housing First, receiving a service from adult health and social care	10	tbc	2019-20 tbc	Planning Officer MHSCP
	Deliver specialist employment project for people with mental health issues	31/3/20	Number of people in employment following intensive intervention	6	tbc	2019-20 tbc	Mental Health Lead MHSCP
AHC – Engaging Communities							
	Work closely with local Libraries on the Midlothian Libraries Bibliotherapy Programme ‘Braw Blether’	31/3/22	Number of people who engage with the service	100	tbc	2019-20 tbc	Mental Health Lead MHSCP



Reference Code	Adult Health and Care 2021-22						Ownership
	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline	Previous trend data	Team
	Effective and engaged dialogue with community members around local services and approaches that support health and wellbeing	31/3/22	Number of consultation engagement events across the service areas e.g. older people, carers, learning disability etc	5	5	NEW	MHSCP
	Work with Community Planning partners, in particular community & third sector partners to identify opportunities for integrated working that supports people to stay healthy and independent	31/03/21	Number of Voluntary Sector Forums	2	3	3	L&D MHSCP
<b>AHC – Support people to live at home</b>							
	Train frontline staff on Housing Solutions to encourage earlier conversations about housing - focusing on staff who are often the first point of contact such as podiatrists practice nurses, and district nurses	31/03/22	Number of staff trained	80	50	2018-19 tbc	OT Team Leads, MHSCP
	Voluntary sector and Primary Care collaborations to support people identified with mild frailty in order that they are able to stay well at home for longer	31/03/22	Number of assessments for home adaptations by Red Cross Link Workers, as part of mild frailty assessment	40	tbc	2019-20 tbc	Strategic Planning MHSCP

Reference Code	Adult Health and Care 2021-22						Ownership
	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline	Previous trend data	Team
	Deliver support for carers that is personalised and builds on people's strengths and what matters to them	31/3/21	Number of Carers receiving 1:1 support by newly commissioned carer support services (Starting July 2021)	500	tbc	2019-20 tbc	Planning Carers MHSCP
			Number of Adult Carer Support Plans completed by newly commissioned carer support services (starting July 2021)	500			

## **COMMUNITY SAFETY AND JUSTICE PARTNERSHIP**

Community Justice is the prevention of offending and supporting people to stop re-offending. It is the collection of individuals, agencies and services that work together to support, manage and supervise people who have committed offences, from the point of arrest, through prosecution, community disposal or custody and alternatives to these, until they are fully reintegrated into the community. Local communities and the third sector are a vital part of this process which aims to prevent and reduce further offending and the harm that it causes, to promote desistance, social inclusion, and citizenship.

Community Safety is essential to the quality of life of people in Midlothian. It is about ensuring everyone has the right to live in safe and secure communities, feeling safe and with reduced incidence of crime. The Partnership aims to support and manage offenders in the community in such a way as to reduce re-offending and arrange services so that offenders may access and use them. The Partnership's key aim is to ensure Midlothian is a safe place to live, grow up, work and visit. To achieve this aim the Partnership works towards the following outcomes:

- Fewer people are victims of crime, abuse or harm
- People feel safe in their neighbourhoods and homes
- Our communities take a positive role in shaping their future

The Community Safety Team was disbanded at the Council budget meeting on 12th February 2019. As such there was a review of all roles and responsibilities linked to the Community Safety Team. Co-ordination of the Community Safety and Justice Action Plan and Performance Indicators will continue. Community Safety partners will strive to ensure that Midlothian is a safe place to live, work, visit and grow by providing the local indicators to highlight improvements in safer communities.

### **Key Strategic documents**

The Midlothian Community Safety & Justice Partnership (CSJP) produces a three-yearly Strategic Assessment, which is a forward-looking and predictive document that provides an assessment of current local need. The assessment provides detailed analysis on the links between social and economic factors and reoffending, and presents an intelligence picture of community justice issues and challenges in the area. The assessment is produced primarily from analysis undertaken by the Midlothian Partnership Analyst with information gained from a wide variety of data sources, from both within and out with the CSJP including open source research in addition to internally recorded data. We will continue to make use of community justice analytical capacity in determining need and evaluation of current services, as well working with partners to deliver on and service the requirements of the national strategic outcomes improvement framework.

The Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan (CJOIP) 2020-23 has been developed in response to the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 which came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. The Act brought planning for reducing offending and reoffending back to a local level where decisions can be made by people that know their area best. Using the detailed analysis and data capture contained in the strategic assessment, in addition to consultation and engagement with members of the public and community bodies, the second Midlothian Outcomes Improvement Plan is set to be published in April 2020. The plan sets out how the partnership will utilise systematic and collaborative approaches to deliver on the common structural and person-centred outcomes referred to as "nationally-determined outcomes" in the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016, which are common across Scotland and applicable at a local level.

## Priorities

### ***Community Justice***

The National Strategy for Community Justice highlights a strong evidence base that identifies the underlying causes of offending behaviour and those factors that can be a positive effect on attitudes and prevalence of future offending known as criminogenic needs. The complex needs that services support have been identified as Health, Education and Training, Availability of Suitable Housing, Mental Health, Relationships with Friends and Family, Employment, Substance Misuse, Financial Difficulties, and Attitudes to Offending. Priorities for the Midlothian Community Justice Partnership take into account the supports stated above and align to nationally determined outcomes:

- Communities improve their understanding and participation in community justice
- Partners plan and deliver services in a more strategic and collaborative way
- People have better access to the services they require, including welfare, health and wellbeing, housing and employability
- Effective Interventions are delivered to prevent and reduce the risk of further offending
- Life chances are improved through needs, including health, financial inclusion, housing and safety being addressed
- People develop positive relationships and more opportunities to participate and contribute through education, employment and leisure activities
- Individual's resilience and capacity for change and self-management are enhanced

### ***Community Safety***

Consultation on community safety priorities was carried out through the citizen's panel in October 2020.

Priority areas identified by respondents are outlined below.

- Reduce substance (alcohol and drug) misuse (78%)
- Reduce violent crime (78%)
- Reduce domestic abuse and protect women and girls (75%)

Further, the views of young people were heard through the Community Planning Day in November 2020, which replicated the views of all respondents above, with the exception of road safety, specifically "educate people regarding speeding, drink driving and responsibly parking". This was regarded as a high priority for young people in Midlothian and therefore will be included as a priority area in the community safety 2021-22 chapter of the SMP.

### **Local Policing Plan**

Police Scotland is a core partner in the delivery of Community Planning in Midlothian and under the terms of the Community Empowerment Act shares a new statutory duty to facilitate community planning with Scottish Fire and Rescue, Scottish Enterprise, NHS Lothian and Midlothian Council. Police Scotland has a legal duty to produce a local policing plan, which is available on the [Police Scotland website](#).

### **Local Fire Service plan**

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is a core partner in the delivery of Community Planning in Midlothian and under the terms of the Community Empowerment Act shares a new statutory duty to facilitate community planning with Scottish Enterprise, Police Scotland, NHS Lothian and Midlothian Council. The Local Fire and Rescue planning cycle was amended to match the 3 year cycle of the Single Midlothian plan. The current plan can be found here <https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-area/east/east-local-plans.aspx>

Ref Code	Community Safety and Justice 2021-22						Ownership
	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	2020/21 Target	Baseline	Previous trend data	Lead Partner
Community Safety Priority 1: Reduce Violent Crime							
	Work with partner agencies to prevent violent behaviour, manage violent offenders and develop a programme of interventions to reduce levels of violent crime	31/3/22	Number of violent crimes recorded by Police	Continuous improvement	18/19 64 3yr avg 69	15/16: 56 16/17: 74 17/18:68 18/19:64 19/20:	Police Scotland
Community Safety Priority 2: Reduce Substance (Drug and Alcohol) Misuse							
	Undertake a range of communication and engagement activity regarding responsible alcohol consumption	31/3/22	Reduce the number of (all) alcohol related hospital stays (patients per 100,000 population)	Continuous improvement	18/19: 433.0 3-yr avg: 504.1	13/14: 545.2 14/15: 587.7 15/16: 563.0 16/17: 537.8 17/18: 541.6 18/19: 433.0 19/20:	MELDAP (data source ISD)
	Develop substance misuse services to reduce immediate harm, future harm and promoting recovery		Increase the average weekly attendance at Horizons Cafe	75 per week	18/19:75 3yr avg: xx	15/16: 65 16/17:? 17/18: 70 18/19: 75 19/20:	MELDAP
Community Safety Priority 3: Reduce Domestic Abuse and Protect Women and Girls							
	Raise awareness of Violence Against Women and Girls with services and communities	31/3/22	% of repeat referrals to MARAC within one year	Within expected level for population 28%-40% (Safe Lives)	2016/17 41% (46)	17/18 33% (25) 18/19 33% (35) 19/20:	Violence Against Women Delivery Group (VAWDG)
			Number of domestic abuse incidents recorded by the police		18/19: 1160 3yr avg: 1039	16/17: 978 17/18: 979 18/19: 1160 19/20:	Police Scotland
			Proportion of men who successfully complete the Caledonian programme who do not			18/19: 100% 19/20:	Justice Social Work

Ref Code	Community Safety and Justice 2021-22						Ownership
	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	2020/21 Target	Baseline	Previous trend data	Lead Partner
			have any crime reports completed for domestic abuse in the following 12 months				
	Equally Safe Priority 4 'Men desist from all forms of VAWG and perpetrators of such violent receive a robust and effective response'. Action for a pathway group to be initiated between CJ and WAWG to take forward priority 4	31/03/22	Development of Pathway and action plan	Pathway and action plan developed	n/a	n/a	Community Justice/ VAWG
<b>Community Safety Priority 4: Road Safety</b>							
	Educate people regarding speeding, drink driving and responsibly parking	31/03/22	Consult on and deliver a Midlothian road safety plan consult on and deliver a Midlothian road safety plan	Road safety action plan published	n/a	n/a	Road Safety, MC
<b>Community Justice Outcome 1: Communities improve their understanding and participation in community justice</b>							
	Ongoing engagement with local communities and business through social media - good news stories regarding CPOs and unpaid work beneficiaries	Mar 2021	Number of combined followers on CSJP social media platforms (Facebook and Twitter)	Increase by 5%: 841	801	17/18: 541 18/19: 801 19/20:	Community Justice
	Plan and deliver a seven day period of community justice mass advertising campaign focusing on case studies. This will highlight the link between education/training /employment, health inequalities, substance misuse, housing, positive attitudes, relationships and involvement in offending	31/3/22	7 days of CJ campaign completed	Campaign completed.	Nil	Nil	Community Justice
	Set up a standalone input on community justice in the quarterly Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership Newsletter	Mar 2021	CJ input in every Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership Newsletter	Inputs published	Nil	Nil	Community Justice
	Publish a Community Justice E-learning toolkit for all Council staff	Mar 2021	Percentage of relevant partnership staff completing e-toolkit	20%	Nil	Nil	Community Justice
	Redesign and develop measurable outcomes	Mar 2021	Analysis of evaluation forms from	80% of	Nil	N/a	Justice

Ref Code	Community Safety and Justice 2021-22						Ownership
	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	2020/21 Target	Baseline	Previous trend data	Lead Partner
	for beneficiaries of Unpaid Work Projects, and market online application form for unpaid work		beneficiaries of unpaid work. Increase positive feedback from beneficiaries	feedback from beneficiaries is positive			Social Work
	Review and renew the Communication Action Plan for 2020-2023	Dec 2020	Communications Plan 2023-23 produced and signed off by Community Justice Board	Plan published	Nil	Nil	Community Justice
	Commitment from the Partnership to co-produce where possible	Mar 2021	Level of involvement of partners and service users in planning and delivering services	A level of co-production in all new ways of working	Nil	Nil	Community Justice
<b>Community Justice Outcome 2: Partners plan and deliver services in a more strategic and collaborative way</b>							
	Commitment from CJ partners to participate in self-evaluation using the Care Inspectorate template	Dec 2020	All statutory partners engage in the self-evaluation process by attending a workshop or completing an evaluation form	70% of partners engage.	2019 - only 2 partners attended self-evaluation workshop.	n/a	All
	Develop a shared vision for all partners	Dec-20	Vision developed and clearly communicated	Vision designed and signed off by the CJ board	Nil	Nil	Community Justice
	Review membership and operation of Community Justice Board and Working Group	Jan-21	Qualitative data from partners	Review completed	Nil	Nil	Community Justice
	Develop the Alcohol Problem Solving Court in Midlothian building on working relationship between health, Justice services and third sector agencies	Dec-20	Number of assessments requested by the court	TBC	Nil	Nil	Community Justice
	Encourage Midlothian Community Justice partners to support the Y2K 180 Project by delivering relevant input	Mar 2021	Level of CJ partnership involvement in Y2K 180 project. Positive feedback from service users of the 180 project	4	Nil	Nil	Community Justice/Y2K
<b>Community Justice Outcome 3: People have better access to the services they require, including welfare, health and wellbeing, housing and employability</b>							
	Launch ALISS database of services for	Sep 2020	Number of Midlothian searches	Tbc	Nil	Nil	Community

Ref Code	Community Safety and Justice 2021-22						Ownership
	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	2020/21 Target	Baseline	Previous trend data	Lead Partner
	Midlothian to raise awareness and understanding of the range of community-based services that are available		carried out on ALISS				Justice
	Publish free booklet - Community Justice directory for Midlothian	Nov 2020	Free booklet published, distributed and marketed online	Free booklet published, distributed and marketed online	Nil	Nil	Community Justice
	Implement 'Housing First' in Midlothian	Dec 2020	Number of individuals in tenancies receiving a package of support	TBC	N/A	N/A	Housing
	Build stronger links with Department of Work and Pensions, Welfare Rights and Skills Development Scotland and ensure better access to their services by creating drop-in clinics at Number 11	Dec-20	Clinics set up at Number 11	3	Nil	Nil	Community Justice
	Continue the No 11 Practitioners Forum and develop a protocol	Dec-20	Protocol developed and implemented	Protocol developed and implemented.	Nil	Nil	Community Justice
	Create / develop an automatic referral process to third sector support agencies with a focus on males aged 18-26 with mental health and substance misuse issues (who are on CPOs)	Oct -20	Number of referrals to the No. 11 Practitioners Forum	80% of relevant individuals on CPOs referred to Number 11 Practitioners Forum	Nil	Nil	Justice Social Work/ Community Justice
	Develop the Fresh Start worker's role within the wider justice context	Mar -21	Fresh Start worker involved in increased partnership working - qualitative  Number of people taking up the Fresh Start service	Increase by 10%	tbc	Feb 2020: tbc 2017/18: 5	Change, Grow, Live
<b>Community Justice Outcome 4: Effective Interventions are delivered to prevent and reduce the risk of further offending</b>							



Ref Code	Community Safety and Justice 2021-22						Ownership
	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	2020/21 Target	Baseline	Previous trend data	Lead Partner
	Redesign exit questionnaires for all individuals on Community Payback Orders to gain feedback on the service delivery of the justice team	Dec -20	Annual analysis of completed questionnaires with findings used to inform future service delivery	Questionnaire redesigned	Nil	Nil	Justice Social Work
<b>Community Justice Outcome 5: Life chances are improved through needs, including health, financial inclusion, housing and safety being addressed</b>							
	Develop new ways to engage with and support younger people in substance misuse treatment services	Mar -21	Number of young people supported across Midlothian in substance misuse treatment services	tbc	tbc	tbc	MELDAP
	Increase the range of substance misuse treatment and recovery interventions available for individuals and their families delivered through Number 11	Mar 2021	Number of new interventions being delivered at Number 11	tbc	tbc	tbc	MELDAP
	Develop the role of peer workers, volunteers and other MELDAP services within Number 11	Mar -21	Number of peer workers and volunteers contributing to service delivery within Number 11	tbc	tbc	tbc	MELDAP
<b>Community Justice Outcome 6: People develop positive relationships and more opportunities to participate and contribute through education, employment and leisure activities</b>							
	Implement the programme designed by Recruit with Conviction	Dec -20	Number of representatives from relevant businesses (including Midlothian Council HR, Business Gateway) who attend recruit with conviction training.	3	Nil	Nil	Community Justice
	Use Midsafe money to fund a youth project with specifics around supporting parents and family relationships.	Jun -20	Evaluation of project after one year	Positive evaluation of project	TBC	TBC	Community Justice
<b>Community Justice Outcome 7: Individual's resilience and capacity for change and self-management are enhanced</b>							
	Develop the SPRING service. Specifically develop 'Stepping Stones' and the 'Next Steps' phase of SPRING	Mar -21	Increase the number of referrals to SPRING service for women	Increase by 5% each year	18/19: 24	18/19: 24	SPRING
			The number and percentage of women who attend Spring Service	Increase by 5% each year	18/19: 45	18/19: 45	

Ref Code	Community Safety and Justice 2021-22						Ownership
	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	2020/21 Target	Baseline	Previous trend data	Lead Partner
			initial appointment who go on to engage with the service for at least three months  Number of women engaging with the Next Steps phase	Increase no. of women engaging with next steps phase			
	Review and develop the structured programme Stepping Stones to incorporate elements of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Decider skills, in partnership with psychological therapies	Mar-21	Feedback from women that demonstrate positive change for individuals	Qualitative – feedback from women	n/a (new programme)		





## **GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY MIDLOTHIAN CHILD (GIRFEMC)**

**NHS Lothian and Midlothian Council have a shared statutory responsibility for delivery of the GIRFEMC plan, which is the three year Integrated Children's Services Plan in Midlothian.** The Children and Young People's (Scotland) Act 2014 continues to provide the statutory framework for the delivery of children and young people's services. The GIRFEMC Board is fully committed to realising the children's rights approach to all of our work and ensuring that we embed the principles of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child. A focus on reducing inequalities has been strengthened with the production of the Local Child Poverty Action Report, as part of the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017.

Alongside the legal duty on these two public bodies, the voluntary sector and other community planning partners have a key role in the development of all aspects of the plan. The three-year outcomes for 2020-23 and priorities for action during 2021-22 have been directly informed by the views of 570 children and young people, 1000 adults (through the citizens' panel), and over 200 staff across Midlothian. The planning process is evidence based, using a data profile of Midlothian which is updated annually, performance information and a strategic assessment process which is led by the GIRFEMC Board.

### **Our three year ambition**

By the end of 2023, we aim to have achieved the following outcomes:

1. More children are safe, healthy and resilient
2. More children and young people receive timely and effective support when they need it
3. There is greater equality in learning
4. More care-experienced children and young people receive timely and effective support when they need it

### **Our priorities during 2021 - 2022**

The GIRFEMC plan identifies four **priorities** for action in 2021-22:

1. Increase support to children and young people affected by domestic abuse, parental alcohol or drug misuse
2. Increase the range of alternative services on offer to children and young people requiring support for their mental health
3. Increase the proportion of children and young people who feel safe in their homes, communities, schools and online
4. Reduce the educational attainment gap

### **GIRFEMC Structure**

GIRFEMC has four sub-groups that manage the overall GIRFEMC programmes and report into the GIRFEMC Board. These are:

1. Mental health strategic sub group
2. Vulnerable Children and Young People including the Champions Board (care experienced young people, elected members and staff)
3. Equity and Inclusion sub group
4. Early Years (including the Early years expansion group and the Play strategy group)

Much of the activities across the five Thematic Groups contribute towards *Getting it Right for Every Midlothian Child* and the details of these are captured in relevant plans. For example, the Child Poverty Working Group reports to the *Improving Opportunities for the people of Midlothian* (IOM) Board and so is only referenced here, rather than repeating these actions within the GIRFEMC Action Plan.

The Midlothian Third Sector Children's Services Network supports all of the sub-groups, to ensure that the services and priorities of the third sector inform and influence the work of GIRFEMC.



Diagram 1: Interconnections between Groups

### Actions following Midlothian's Community Planning Partnership Joint Inspection

Between February and March 2020, the Care Inspectorate completed a joint Children's Services Inspection in Midlothian of services for *children and young people in need of care and protection*. The following grades were awarded:

- Leadership and Direction – **GOOD**
- Impact on Families – **GOOD**
- Impact on Children and Young People – **GOOD**

- Improvement in the safety, wellbeing and life chances of vulnerable children and young people – **GOOD**

The Inspection identified these priority areas for improvement:

1. Children being able to access specialist services to help them recover from trauma
2. Raising educational attainment and reducing the number of care experienced children and young people being excluded from education
3. Reducing the variation of outcomes and experienced for care experienced children and young people excluded from school
4. Improving outcomes for all care experienced children and young people

Working collaboratively with partners in health, police, education, SCRA and the third sector, an action plan to meet the areas identified for improvement has been developed.

### **Key achievements up to October 2020**

*The full year's performance will be reported in June 2021.*

### **Supporting vulnerable families during COVID**

The Children, Young People and Partnerships directorate of the Council, including education, children's services and Community and Lifelong Learning (CLL), worked together and shared resources during school closures to make sure that all vulnerable families were supported. A directorate-wide gatekeeping process was introduced to review referrals for families in need and provide appropriate supports including 1:1 youth work, places at early years and school hubs. The Council worked in partnership with Midlothian Sure Start and after-school clubs to provide similar support during the summer holidays. Over summer 765 children from 599 families attended early years or activity hubs.

COVID has had a profound impact on poverty in our community. The board acknowledges that addressing child poverty alone is not far reaching enough. As such we recognise the need to strengthen the collective planning across the council and partners to address poverty. It has been agreed that the need for a joint strategy will be escalated to discuss with the Corporate Management Team (CMT).

### **Foster Carers and Adopters**

The Council currently has 44 foster carers who look after 54 children and young people and are therefore at capacity and working hard to support vulnerable children and families. Some have converted into adult carers to support Continuing Care placements. Though a number of foster carers also retired during 2019/20 we have been fortunate to replace many of our fostering population. COVID-19 has had an impact on our ability to recruit in the way we normally would however the team are using available technology and have already ran a number of preparation groups. Our foster carer input has been excellent during the pandemic and despite a number of anxieties, they continue to accommodate children as well as help and support family contact. We have had instances of foster carers testing positive for Covid-19 and though the team and workers have been in daily contact, the families have rallied round each other.

### **Adoption and Permanence Planning**

Despite the impact of the pandemic, Midlothian Council continued to run a permanence service. The Care Inspectorate did an unannounced visit in February 2020 and the service received a very positive report, where the evaluative Grades awarded were all 'Good'. The Care Inspectorate commented on the quality of our own internal mechanism for recruiting adopters (and foster Carers) and asked that this be continued.

### **Continuing Care**

A number of foster carers are being converted into adult carers so that they can provide Continuing Care. We continue to strengthen our systems and processes for this and to date we have 29 young people in Continuing Care.

### **Residential Care Homes**

Our residential homes continue to provide residential care for up to 9 young people with one emergency bed. Our residential care staff have proved to be excellent during the pandemic and have gone above and beyond to support our most vulnerable looked after population.

This includes working longer shifts, covering locum cover to reduce the footfall into our care homes and in some instances leaving their own family environment to provide the level of care, all of which is commendable. Learning and development sessions for the staff have included a focus on adapting a Continuing Care approach for young people aged 16 and over, and in developing a robust trauma approach base when working with traumatised young people whose behaviours manifest through challenging and risky actions. This has resulted in a more confident staff team as well as more settled young people.

### **Kinship Care**

Midlothian's Kinship Carers continue to be a key resource for children and young people who can no longer remain with their parents and we currently have 69 children placed in kinship care. Children's services remain committed to supporting kinship carers both financially and emotionally to ensure that all placements are offered the right support when needed. This was borne out in the recent increase in allowances which was also awarded to Kinship Carers. The PACE statistics for 2018/19 illustrate that the majority of children (70%) who are unable to live with their birth parents, were provided with a secure and stable setting through a kinship arrangement. This is in line with our policy direction to secure children within an extended family arrangement wherever possible.

### **Youth Justice Strategy**

The Midlothian Youth Justice Strategy, 2020-2022 has been signed off by the GIRFEMC Board and will now be rolled out across all partner agencies. We continue to strengthen the positive links and networking with the Centre for Youth and Criminal Justice (CYCJ) and the



Scottish Government to focus on priority themes, which include advancing the whole system approach, improving life chances and developing capacity.

### **Mental Health**

The Midlothian Children and Young People's Mental Health Strategic Planning Group was established in August 2020, to direct the strategic planning, development and delivery of community mental health and wellbeing supports and services in Midlothian. The Midlothian Early Action Partnership (MEAP) and the Community Supports Framework funded activities are recognised as key contributors to this strategic work. The Strategic Planning Group have the responsibility of ensuring a strategic plan is taken forward and will provide a progress report to the GIRFEC Board on a six-monthly basis.

### **Raising Attainment**

This is a key improvement area identified as part of the findings from the recent joint Children's Services Inspection. In order to progress this area of work a further sub group has recently been established which will report to the GIRFEC board. This group will ensure that all the work undertaken across the community planning partnership is set out in a plan with identified actions to take forward. The strategic planning group shall have the responsibility of ensuring the plan is taken forward and bringing a progress report to the GIRFEC Board on a six monthly basis.

### **Income Maximisation Project**

Midlothian Council is working in Partnership with Penicuik Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to improve the financial circumstances of families supported by the Children and Families Social Work teams.

A dedicated Income Maximisation Worker based at Penicuik CAB will work with and receive referrals from Children and Families Social Work Department and work primarily with families where children are on the child protection register or are looked after. The Income Maximisation Worker is developing a wraparound service through liaison with mental health projects, family support, AIM HI Project, specialist debt/money advice worker and linking with local organisations such as Health in Mind, VOCAL, Sure Start and Changeworks. The worker will aim to increase household income and improve the quality of life for the family, ensuring families experiencing difficulties are able to access the service.

### **Family Group Decision-Making (FGDM)**

A pilot is underway, to empower families and meet the recommendation set out in a number of policy documents which include recommendations of the Independent Care Review. The pilot commenced in October 2019 and currently consists of 0.5 FTE manager and 1.00 FTE social worker. To develop the various policies, systems and processes we established a steering group and were fortunate to have members of the City of Edinburgh's FGDM be part of the group. Due to relative small size of the service in Midlothian we have

had to look at the areas that the service is able to focus on. We have chosen to concentrate our efforts on the following areas:

- Pre- birth Family Meetings- all pre-birth children with a social work plan have the right to be offered a family meeting
- Children aged 0-5 who have been referred for Initial child protection case conference
- Emergency family meetings and those on the cusp of care

To date, the FGDM Service has received 43 referrals which will include support to remain at home, to explore kinship options and sustain the kinship placement. Out of these referrals 13 did not proceed, though the rest involved family meetings or significant pieces of work – this statistic is comparable with other FGDM services.

### **Independent Reviewing Officers**

The Reviewing Team continue to use the Quality Assurance Framework to build and support robust quality assurance processes. We currently have the equivalent 1.8 FTE Independent Reviewing Officers. We previously increased the FTE of the team on a temporary basis to take account of the 'Looked after' at home population. Given the current climate we have deemed these positions as 'remote working' which had reduced the level of travel and through doing so increased capacity within the existing team. However, this is an area we will continue to monitor.

### **National House Project**

Midlothian Council Children's Services successfully applied to the Life Changes Trust for funding that enabled us to bring the National House Project to Midlothian. The House Project (HP) adopts a ground-breaking approach in enabling care experienced young people leaving care to achieve successful independence. The Project was co-designed with young people from the start and works on cooperative principles through which adults and young people in and leaving care work together to refurbish properties that become their homes and build a long-term community of support. The project started on 1 July 2020. A Project Coordinator was appointed and 2 keyworkers are also in post. 10 young people will be identified for cohort 1.

### **Hawthorn Family Learning Centre**

Hawthorn Family Learning Centre was a key part of providing support to vulnerable families during lockdown and over the summer period. Over an eighteen week period, Hawthorn supported 121 children from 63 vulnerable families. Hawthorn gained approval from the Care inspectorate to temporarily change their registration to provide support from birth to 16 to ensure families could be supported together. As a consequence of the ongoing need for family group and sibling support, Hawthorn has now had a permanent variation approved to provide day care for children from birth to the end of primary school. While some of Hawthorn's normal activities and groups remain on hold due to COVID restrictions,

nursery placements have resumed and a number of families who were supported during lockdown have remained at Hawthorn. Hawthorn has also started providing 3-5 placements as part of Early Years expansion. Given the new experiences prompted by COVID, Hawthorn has sought further feedback from service users, staff and partners and is in the final plan for redesign and review. This will be shared with senior executive with a view to the formal review recommencing.

**Midlothian Resilience Art Project:** This was a collaboration between Educational Psychology Service, Children's Services, Communities and Lifelong Learning along with the Health and Social Care Partnership. The project aimed to build resilience among young people by getting them to explore how they coped during COVID. The project was open to P1-S2 pupils across the Local Authority who were asked to submit a painting, drawing, poem or short piece of writing about their feelings during the pandemic and how they managed. Hundreds of submissions were reviewed and art and written work from more than 150 pupils across Midlothian was displayed in Dalkeith Country Park, across other Council buildings and online.

### **Related plans**

A number of the other Community Planning Partnership thematic groups, such as the work of the Child Poverty Working Group, and the 'Learning and Development in our Communities' plan feed into the work of GIRFEMC. Child Poverty reduction targets and actions, and the learning and development actions are led through the Improving Opportunities Midlothian (IOM) Community Planning Partnership Group.

A joint sub group of IOM and GIRFEMC is delivering on the Child Poverty Act requirements, and is well established. Annual reporting is in place. Poverty proofing the school day was successfully piloted with the support of the Communities and Lifelong Learning service by 11 primary schools in the priority areas 2018/19. Work continues to develop poverty proofing in all Midlothian schools. The Child poverty action plan focuses on 3 key drivers:

1. Increasing family income from employment
2. Reducing costs of living
3. Ensuring correct income from social security and benefits in kind

The current ***Learning and Development in Our Communities*** plan has 5 outcomes; namely that by the end of plan period there will be evidence of:

- Increased voice of learners and citizens influencing improvements in learning and development in our community
- Young people, adults and families being supported to improve their life chances through the development of skills for learning, life and work
- Partnership working having increased the number of young people securing and sustaining positive destinations and developing their careers
- Services being more responsive to the needs of equalities groups
- Sustained resources for community learning and development activity in the current

difficult funding climate

The GIRFEMC plan is also complimented by a separately published **Midlothian Corporate Parenting Strategy and Plan 2020 -2023**, which sets out the following priorities:

1. Improve the health and wellbeing of our looked after children and young people
2. Improve access to alternative, permanent families where possible
3. Establish local housing and accommodation options for care leavers
4. Increase opportunities for looked after children young people and care leavers to access quality education, training and employment
5. Increase opportunities for looked after young people and care leavers to know their rights and develop confidence, using fun and innovate method
6. Improve the types of supports offered to looked after young people and care leavers who are involved with the criminal justice system

Midlothian's GIRFEMC plan is further complimented by the **Violence against Women and Girls Improvement Plan** which is set against the National Equally Safe strategy and identifies the following priorities for children and their families affected by domestic abuse:

1. Our society embraces equality and mutual respect and rejects all forms of Violence against Women and Girls
2. Women and girls thrive as equal citizens: socially, culturally, economically and politically
3. Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people
4. Men desist from all forms of Violence against Women and Girls and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response

The **East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Improvement Plan** sets out the following priorities;

1. Manage risks of children and young people placing themselves or others at risk
2. Improve multi-agency chronologies to improve risk assessment, planning and intervention
3. Develop tools for early identification and assessment of neglect

### **Strategic Assessment Summary**

Due to the global COVID 19 pandemic, the normal annual strategic assessment based on the Midlothian data profile was not able to be undertaken during the year. The key impacts of Covid were assessed jointly by partners including community councils and third sector agencies at the annual CPP development day in November. This highlighted the following:

#### **Impacts on learning**

- The need to improve Wi-Fi throughout schools to support learners as connectivity

not good in some areas, especially important for employers who wish to interact remotely

- Mental health as a key issue, with the need for signposting in communities, help for young people to connect with each other, promotion of information and self-help guides from organisations like Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Midlothian Young Peoples Advice Service (MYPAS), promoting these more widely to schools and parent councils
- Student voice on mental health and wellbeing was seen as important, with the need to encourage and develop peer support networks in schools
- The pandemic has exacerbated issues that were already there for protected characteristic groups. For example, those with learning difficulties have found it particularly difficult to see each other face to face and more support was required for this group as well as those on the autistic spectrum
- More widely it was acknowledged that not all young people can engage digitally and those that cannot due to lack of access or cost find it difficult not having social interaction. It was noted that social interaction is essential in learning, both for young people and adults
- There was a need for reassurance from colleges and universities that qualifications gained during this period will not be viewed differently as exams suspended
- Lack of work experience and volunteering opportunities was having an impact particularly on young people in terms of their CV's. Young people want work experience back as soon as possible. It was suggested that learning providers and employers look at more outdoor opportunities for work experience and volunteering as possible solutions, as this would also have positive impact on mental health
- There was a demand in some communities for outdoor shelters and spaces for learning and socialisation in town centres. There were suggestions that an expansion of outdoor teaching space for learning would be helpful if this could be funded
- Young people want to be involved in making decisions on how we move forward. We need to make communication easier for all to understand e.g. use of language and mediums to engage
- Digital has given some people a chance to engage when they haven't before, for example increase in parent council meetings attendances
- Some children and young people cope better in smaller groups due to learning needs so working in bubbles helped them feel safer. Need to learn from the blended model moving forward although there are challenges for those who cannot connect digitally
- Digital exclusion is still an issue for many – affordability, connectivity, access to devices etc. Some took the view that internet access should be a basic right for all supported by public funds. There was a need for ongoing support for those who struggle digitally including one to one and digital classes and this is especially true for those with learning difficulties, parents with literacy issues, those for whom English was a second language and older people

## Impacts on employment

- As furlough arrangements end unemployment will rise and more adults will be competing for employment, many of whom will be overqualified
- Young people with no work experience will find it harder to enter work.
- Young people with additional barriers such as a disability will find it even harder to enter work
- The Young Person's Guarantee and the Kickstart programme have been introduced and it will be important to maximise the uptake and success of these measures for Midlothian's young people
- Learning disability and autism services – the aspirations of many people with learning disability or autism are to get into work. Challenges around supported employment – need for minimising face to face contact, competing with other groups, need to make sure most vulnerable people are not left behind
- Qualifications that match local demand will be important
- Population growth means that it is unlikely people living in Midlothian will all be employed in Midlothian, this requires relationships with other local authorities e.g. Edinburgh, Borders etc. Create links so that this can be exploited
- Public “anchor” employers will still need to recruit for childcare, adult care, and other public services
- Local (travel to work area) employers and schools need to be better linked, digital developments from Covid is helping this
- Home working and flexible working may change local economies as these people may need to use local services
- There needs to be stronger links with local businesses to ensure work placements / experiences
- School and post school learners would benefit from hearing from local businesses talking about their recruitment processes and career paths. Perhaps more relatable to local people than targeting national employers

Significant long-term reductions in public sector funding continues to be particularly challenging for Midlothian. The current funding settlement from the Scottish Government does not reflect the unprecedented growth in the population of Midlothian, the fastest growing local authority in Scotland. All GIRFEMC partners are committed to taking up the challenge of shifting resources to early intervention and prevention and to work closely together to align our resources to meet the outcomes that have been agreed.

The Education (Scotland) Act 2016 remains a main driver for reducing inequalities in our children's learning. The National Improvement Framework published in 2016, set out the vision and priorities for improving education with a clear focus on raising standards and closing the poverty-related attainment gap, reducing exclusions and increasing attendance. This Scottish Government document sets out Scottish Government's expectations for schools:

*“The central purpose of this Government, as set out in our overarching National Performance Framework is to: create a more successful country with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth. Prominent among the set of 16 National Outcomes that support this central purpose is one which directly reflects the core objectives of Scottish education, as established through the development of Curriculum for Excellence. That is:*

***Ensuring that all our children and young people are equipped through their education to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.***

*As this outcome indicates, we are committed to a Scotland in which all children and young people can realise their potential, regardless of their social background or learning needs, thereby developing the knowledge, skills and attributes they will need to flourish in life, learning and work.”*

Local Authorities are required to work collaboratively in *Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RICs)*. The South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC) has agreed to ensure a collaborative approach to:

- Raise attainment and achievement
- Help to deliver excellence and equity
- Develop work related to GIRFEC and tackling attainment inequity
- Share expertise across the Collaborative to effect change
- Maintain local democratic accountability
- Contribute to the growth of the regional economy
- Contribute to relevant Edinburgh City Deal outcomes

The *South East Improvement Collaborative Plan* is based on analysis of available data leading to the prioritisation of two initial areas of focus, namely improving attainment and achievement, including closing the attainment gap; and quality improvement in schools and early years' settings. The current plan can be found here:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/public/seicollab/uploads/sites/7618/2019/09/12130644/Revised-SEIC-Plan-September-2019.pdf>

In Midlothian, 25% of our children are living in poverty [www.endchildpoverty.org.uk](http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk). Commitments to reducing the educational attainment gap affecting these children and young people have to be balanced with the requirements for improving universal outcomes and meeting the needs of children and young people facing challenges because of disability or other additional support needs. In July 2018, Scottish Government announced year on year funding through the Scottish Attainment Challenge to provide additional support for care experienced children and young people, to help improve their educational outcomes. Amongst other things, this funding has supported the recruitment of a part time dedicated



educational psychologist and three children and families practitioners to support looked after children with low attendance to re-engage in education. It has also ensured ring fenced therapeutic intervention for a number of these children and young people.

In February 2021, The Poverty Alliance published an evidence report into the poverty related attainment gap. It identifies that the “most robust evidence on effective interventions to reduce the... gap is in the early years” (Robertson and McCardy, 2021). It also cites the Education Endowment Foundation, and recent evidence reviews, which show that the most effective evidence-based interventions include parental engagement/involvement focused on helping parents to use appropriate strategies to support children’s learning at home; high-quality early learning and childcare provision; and targeted interventions in disadvantaged communities that address children’s early cognitive, language and numeracy development. The Early Years Subgroup has continued to develop the family learning approach to early year’s services and a Midlothian Family Learning Strategy is in development which builds on the successes of the approach in the early years to include children from birth to 18. An innovative tier 1 intervention towards healthy eating and good nutrition is being piloted in the Mayfield area which ensures a consistent message across multiagency services to support families with children under 5. Practitioners from education, health, CLL and the third sector have been trained and are eager to start sharing the messages from the HENRY programme.

Although the extension to the early learning and childcare (ELC) entitlement to 1140 hours per year was postponed as a result of the pandemic, all eligible families in Midlothian have benefitted from the increased hours this year. Midlothian had the infrastructure and workforce in place to introduce the increased hours from August 2020. The availability of funded places after December 2020 reduced as more children become eligible for the funding which has meant that some parents did not receive their first choice of ELC setting but have been offered an alternative setting within their learning community. A multi-agency targeted intervention to support children’s early language skills is also developing which will utilise the Up, Up and Away strategy.

All partners supporting families with children in the early years continued their support throughout the lockdown periods. A mixture of online communication, doorstep visits and engagement with Hub provision ensured that families continued to receive timely interventions and appropriate services. All partner organisations have adapted their early year’s services to ensure they are aligned to local and national guidelines and innovative practice has been developed to support parents with children’s learning at home.

The Midlothian Early Action Partnership (MEAP) were preparing to embark on the systems mapping, involving engagement with children, young people and young adults through



various focus groups and individual face-to-face sessions, at the time the pandemic hit. Activities were paused for two months, to respond to immediate COVID-19 priorities. When the project activities resumed in June 2020, we took every opportunity to adapt to the changes and to refine our approach to the project delivery. A revised scope for the systems mapping was agreed and work commenced in August 2020; it is anticipated the work will conclude in April 2021.

The Midlothian Sure Start (MSS) Test of Change (ToC) focusing on embedding trauma-informed practice within primary schools was also severely impacted by the pandemic. At the start of 2020, MSS had been delivering storytelling, yoga, mindfulness and art therapy to children and families. Much of this work had to be adapted or paused in response to COVID-19. New ways to support and engage schools and children had to be found. In September 2020, a new Test of Change commenced within the Penicuik area in Midlothian, involving education, third sector, health and council developing a shared vision of good mental health services and testing a systemic new way of working for the area. Reducing stigma and enhancing personal agency, self-efficacy and resilience are key aspects of the Test of Change.

Care experienced children and young people, young carers, homeless young people, travellers, young offenders, and those living in our more deprived communities face significant disadvantages in health and life opportunities. They have the highest rates of severe chronic illness; the poorest diet; are the heaviest consumers of tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drugs; the highest rates of unintended teenage pregnancies and the lowest educational achievement.

The number of children looked after in Midlothian has continuously declined since 2013. This coincides with plans implemented by Midlothian Council's Children's Services team specifically to reduce this number. In 2018 the Midlothian rate of Looked after Children out with parental care is 12 per 1,000 children which is below the Scottish national rate, for the fifth year. The attainment level of Care Experienced Young People as measured by the % achieving Level 4 Literacy and Numeracy is below the performance target set for 2019-20 at the end of half one of the year. Although the % for looked after children is lower than the % achieved by all Midlothian pupils (82.76%), there has been a significant increase to 47.83% from 15.79% in 2018. The rate of child protection registrations in Midlothian has continued to decrease, reducing to 2.6 in 2018, which is below the national average of 2.9.

In 2018/19 there were 1,570 children aged between 3 and 18 years attending Midlothian schools who have been assessed as being affected by a disability. Of these, 706 had a learning disability, 154 were on the autism spectrum, 151 had a language or speech difficulty, 81 had both a learning and physical disability, 75 had a physical or motor impairment, 64 had both a learning disability and were on the Autism spectrum, 29 a visual

impairment, 24 a hearing impairment, 15 other communication support needs and 271 Dyslexia.

National Records of Scotland estimates a 22% increase in the under 16 population in Midlothian by 2037, which will have a significant impact on demand for services, nurseries and schools, and caseload levels for staff, particularly if it takes time for the funding from Scottish Government to adjust to reflect the increases. To meet the rapid expansion of population in Midlothian, new schools have been built including Newbattle Community High School, Bilston Primary, Gore Glen Primary, Roslin Primary, and the multi-use Paradykes hub including Primary school, doctors' surgery, sports centre and swimming pool. New schools have been built in Bonnyrigg (Burnbrae and St Mary's) and will be required for Shawfair new town as it develops, and for Mayfield/ Easthouses. At high school level Lasswade High School is under pressure and the Council has achieved funding for a 'new build' school at Roslin on the A701 corridor to take account of the growth in Loanhead (where pupils' catchment school is Lasswade) , along with current pupil growth in Bilston, Roslin and Penicuik. This new school will replace Beeslack High School in Penicuik. Penicuik residents will then make use of a single High School when Penicuik High is upgraded. This will involve decanting pupils into the former Beeslack High school building to allow work at Penicuik High to be undertaken. A new High school is also required for Gorebridge, and for Shawfair new town. Replacements are also required for older buildings. A Learning Estate strategy has been developed to set out how these challenges will be addressed.

The development of new methods of communication means that the use of websites and the full range of social media are essential to engage with, and keep children and young people safe, particularly as they are 'experts' in the latest technology and social media. With the increasing use of technology and the internet in the delivery of education and learning, and its role as a social enabler, it is important to address disadvantage so that all children and young people (particularly those who are vulnerable, such as those in care) have the equality of access that is crucial to gaining qualifications and employment and being socially involved.

## GIRFEMC ACTION PLAN

GIRFEMC - Increased numbers of children will be safe, healthy and resilient (3 year outcome)
Increase the support for those affected by domestic abuse, parental alcohol or drug misuse (1 year priority)

Ref Code	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target	Base line	Previous trend data	Managed by Comments
	Children and young people supported by MELDAP commissioned services to address their own alcohol and drug use and/or to minimise the impact of other's alcohol and drug use on their lives	31 March 2022	Number of children and young people provided with support	<i>Establish baseline using 2019-20 data</i>	Targets agreed with MELDAP services (MYPAS, Children 1st)	2019/20 data	MELDAP
		31 Mar 2022	Number of children and young people reporting improved family relationships	<i>Establish baseline using 2019-20 data</i>	Targets agreed with MELDAP services (MYPAS, Children 1st)	2019/20 data	MELDAP
		31 Mar 2022	Number of parents reporting improved parenting skills	<i>Establish baseline using 2019-20 data</i>	Targets agreed with MELDAP services (MYPAS, Children 1st)	2019/20 data	MELDAP

GIRFEMC - Increased numbers of children and young people will receive timely and effective support when they need it (3 year Outcome)
Increase the level of services supporting mental health (1 year priority) Increase the level of supports available to children and young people who require help to overcome trauma (1 year priority)

Ref Code	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target	Base line	Previous trend data	Managed by Comments
	Introduce additional earlier, community-level mental health supports	31 Mar 2022	The number of children and young people who receive support from additional early MH support provision as a result of Community Framework and MEAP early action funding	New measure	Zero	New measure	Children and young people's Mental Health Strategic Planning Group (CYP MH SPG)
	Pilot and evaluate a single referral pathway in an area of Midlothian (Penicuik)	31 Mar 2022	Pilot in place and involving all key stakeholders	Pilot in place	No pilot in place	New measure	CYP MH SPG
		31 Mar 2022	Interim evaluation of pilot completed with recommendations to GIRFEMC Board	Evaluation undertaken	No pilot in place	New measure	CYP MH SPG
	Identify and undertake earlier interventions that respond to the needs of individuals and reduce the numbers of 'inappropriate' referrals to CAMHS	31 Mar 2022	Children and young people's feedback via Systems Mapping exercise (evidence-based, identification of supports needed and deemed a priority by children and young people)	Children and young people's feedback on priority supports needed	N/a	New measure	CYP MH SPG
		31 Mar 2022	Percentage of referrals to CAMHS deemed as 'appropriate' referrals'	10% reduction (focused on 2 areas including area involved in pathway pilot)	TBD – based on 2019 referral data	New measure	CYP MH SPG

Ref Code	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target	Base line	Previous trend data	Managed by Comments
	Pilot tier 1 intervention approach towards healthy eating and good nutrition in the Mayfield area, ensuring a consistent message across services that support families with children under 5	31 Mar 2022	Number of practitioners trained in Henry approach	16	8	No previous trend data	Early Years
		31 Mar 2022	Number of families with children in the early years engaged in healthy lifestyle family learning activities	To be agreed following establishment of Henry Steering Group	Baseline to be established	New measure	Early Years
	Develop and embed best practice to support pregnant women who smoke to quit	31 Mar 2022 (official figures avail. in Nov 22)	Increase the percentage of women identified as smoking at maternity booking who subsequently set a quit date with Midlothian's Quit your Way Service	Once service is established work towards a monthly engagement (quit date set) rate of 30%	11% (19/20)	16.6% (18/19)	Early Years
	Increase the availability of trauma-informed supports available to children and young people	31 Mar 2022	Trauma informed workforce - number of staff trained across all services and organisations that support children and young people in Midlothian	Increase % trained	Baseline to be collected from all services and orgs	New measure	CYP MH SPG/ Vulnerable Sub-Group

## GIRFEMC - There will be reduced inequalities in learning (3 year Outcome)

Raise the attainment of children and young people with additional support needs (1 year priority)

Raise education attainment of care experienced children and young people (1 year priority)

Reduce the number of exclusions and part time timetables for care-experienced children and young people (1 year priority)

Ref Code	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target	Base line	Previous trend data	Managed by Comments
	Create accurate data-set, to monitor and track CYP with additional support needs' progress in learning and attainment	31 Aug 2021	Appropriate support is being provided, based on data in place that identify needs, leading to improved attainment over time	Accurate data-set in place	Inaccurate data-set	Inaccurate trend data	Equity and Inclusion Group (E&I)
	Data-set being consistently used to monitor and track CYP with additional support needs' progress in learning and attainment	31 Mar 2022	Accurate data-set is consistently used in all schools to monitor, track and evidence of CYP progress in learning and attainment	To be established once baseline confirmed	Baseline will be confirmed in August 2021, which inform targets moving forward	New measure	E&I
	Launch five-year Equity and Inclusion Strategy	31 Mar 2022	Strategic plan approved by GIRFEMC Board	Plan approved	New measure	New measure	E&I
		31 Mar 2022	Level of school attendance of care-experienced children and young people	No 0% attendance Reduction in number of PT timetables Reduction in exclusions	Baseline will be established in August 2021, which inform targets moving forward	New measure	E&I
	Improve information sharing to support children that are identified as not meeting all their developmental milestones	31 Mar 2022	Data sharing agreement in place	Agreement in place	New measure	New Measure	Early Years

Ref Code	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target	Base line	Previous trend data	Managed by Comments
	at the time of their health checks						
	Create a Midlothian Family Learning strategy that encourages family members to learn together, with a focus on intergenerational learning, and enables parents to learn how to support their children's learning and development	31 Aug 2021	Strategy in place with identified actions	Approved by GIRFEMC Board	New Measure	New Measure	Early Years/E&I
		31 Mar 2022	Evaluation of the implementation of Parents Involved in their Children's Learning Approach by Stirling University	Evaluation Report	New Measure	New Measure	Early Years
	Collaboratively implement the <i>Circle Up, Up and Away</i> approach as an early intervention for children in their early years who are at risk of language and communication delay	31 Mar 2022	Number of Practitioners (education, health, private/voluntary sector) trained in approach	To be determined	Baseline to be established	New Measure	Early Years
		31 Mar 2022	Children that have been identified as at risk are assessed to have improved in their language and play development	To be determined	Baseline to be established	New Measure	Early Years

## **IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PEOPLE OF MIDLOTHIAN PARTNERSHIP (IOM PARTNERSHIP)**

### **Improving Opportunities for People Midlothian Plan 2021/22**

The long term aim of the IOM Partnership is “**to build resilient and empowered communities, and reduce poverty and inequalities**”.

### **IOM Partnership Strategic Needs Assessment 2019**

As a result of the COVID pandemic which began in February 2020, the targets set out in this plan have been developed to take account of the changes resulting from lockdown of the population between March and July 2020 and again in December 2020 to reduce the spread of the virus. The loosening of lockdown between July and September 2020 and continuing concerns about a further winter spike in viral spread mean that the action plan for 2020/21 has to be radically altered to reflect changed circumstances. IOM members have been at the forefront of a wider ranging volunteering led community resilience response to support vulnerable residents throughout lockdown, and are now also engaged in the employment recovery strategy to address the anticipated large rise in unemployment resulting from business closures, the end of the furlough scheme, and the large scale economic downturn driven by Covid for sectors such as retail, arts and culture, tourism and hospitality. The 2021-22 plan will largely reflect a recovery plan for the IOM, taking into account new and emerging priorities as a result of the Pandemic.

The Strategic Assessment 2019 identified 3200 workless households in Midlothian (11.6%), exactly the same as the Scottish average. Data for how many children live in such households is not available as the Office for National Statistics considers this data too small to be reliable.

Latest figures at December 2020 from NOMIS (Labour Market Profile) shows that the gross weekly pay for full time workers in Midlothian, based on residence rather than workplace, was an average of £556.80 a week which is below the Scottish average earnings of £595.00, a difference of £38.20. Women in employment in Midlothian earn on average £55.60 less than the Scottish average. Lower wages have been a consistent feature for Midlothian residents since 2002 when the gap was £49.00. The peak gap was in 2008, the year of the global economic crisis, when the wage gap rose to £61.90.

Unemployment in Midlothian has decreased overall between 2008 and 2019, from 2,200 to 1,500 (3.2%), which is lower than the Scottish average figure of 3.9%. The unemployment rate for 18-24 year olds has fallen from 2015-16 (14%) to 4.4 %, just above the Scottish average of 4.3%. 93.9% of all 16-19 year olds are actively engaged, with 64 % participating in education, 27% in employment and 2.9% in other training and development. Unemployment figures are anticipated to increase substantially as a result of the Covid pandemic, the loss of businesses, the decline in a number of major employment sectors and the predicted end of furlough.

Around 11,600 (21%) of people in Midlothian have work-limiting disabilities, which is in line with the Scottish average.

In September 2020, there were 10,500 people in Midlothian who were economically inactive (18.8%) which is 4.7 % lower than the Scottish average. 1,800 out of these 10,500 local people indicated that they wanted a job. The jobs density figure, which represents the ratio of total jobs to population aged 16-64, is 0.63% in Midlothian which is lower than the Scottish average figure of 0.82%. If the density figure was 1 then that would mean that there was one job for every working age person in Midlothian, so a density figure of 0.63 being lower than the Scottish figure means that there are fewer jobs available in Midlothian for residents than the Scottish average.



The proportion of school pupils entitled to free school meals is 37%, just below the Scottish average of 38%. It is predicted that this number will continue to rise along with the number of households in poverty as a direct result of Covid.

### **IOM Priorities 2021/22**

In light of the above strategic needs assessment, and as a result of the IOM Partnership undertaking a significant review of its strategic priorities, actions and associated performance measures during 2019/20, the following seven strategic priorities were agreed for 2020/21 and beyond:

- **The number of households in poverty across Midlothian is reduced**
- **The number of children living in households in poverty is reduced**
- **Employers in Midlothian deliver fair work practices and offer the living wage – this target has been deferred due to Covid19**
- **Participation measures for young people over 16 increase**
- **The qualification levels of people in Midlothian increases**
- **Health inequalities for people in Midlothian are reduced**
- **Third Sector organisations and volunteers have improved skills, resources, and knowledge to achieve positive outcomes**

### **IOM Planning Framework 2021/22**

The IOM Partnership Strategic Action Plan (see below) describes a range of strategic actions, which will help deliver these strategic priorities, and a range of measures against which progress can be judged. In addition to the Strategic Action Plan, the IOM Partnership also has responsibility for developing, implementing and evaluating a number of other plans, many of which are statutory in nature. These include:

- The Learning and Development in our Communities Plan 2018-21 (a statutory plan under the Education Act) the full plan can be found here: [https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/3084/learning\\_and\\_development\\_in\\_midlothian\\_communities\\_-\\_3\\_year\\_plan\\_2018-21](https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/3084/learning_and_development_in_midlothian_communities_-_3_year_plan_2018-21). This plan will be reviewed and consulted on from March 2021 and a new three year plan for 2021-2024 will be in place by September 2021
- The action plan of Midlothian Financial Inclusion Network (MFIN)
- The Child Poverty Plan, required as a result of the new Child Poverty Act
- The Third Sector Strategy, including the action plan of Social Enterprise Action Midlothian (SEAM)
- The Midlothian Food Growing and Allotment Strategy
- The Employment and Learning Midlothian (ELM) Covid Action Plan

The IOM Strategic Action Plan is also based on the medium term priorities for 2019-22 in the Single Midlothian Plan, and the priorities identified by the residents of Midlothian in the 2020 Citizens Panel Survey.

### **Community and Third Sector**

Key to the delivery of IOM Partnership priorities within Midlothian is the community and voluntary sector. This diverse and creative range of groups and organisations is coordinated by Third Sector Interface Partnership. The Interface is made up of three organisations: Midlothian Voluntary Action (MVA), the Social Enterprise Alliance Midlothian (SEAM), and Volunteer Midlothian. The Interface is represented at the IOM Partnership. Individual community and third sector organisations are also represented at all levels of the community planning partnership in Midlothian. The Midlothian Third Sector Interface Partnership works across the strategic areas of:

- Volunteering

- Social Enterprise
- Third and community Sector support
- Empowering and engaging local voluntary action

The Midlothian Compact, recognises the strength of the working relationships between the council and the third sector. Through collaboration, co-production and innovation, we work together to deliver the positive outcomes needed to meet the IOM priorities of reducing the gap in learning and health outcomes and reducing the gap in economic circumstances.

The Compact established a set of core values that shape and define the work of the IOM and develop ways to ensure the best outcomes for local communities. These TRACK values are:

- **Togetherness**                      working together to design and deliver services for the people of Midlothian
- **Respect**                              offering each other mutual respect and parity of esteem and valuing the knowledge, skills and constraints of both sectors
- **Accountability**                    working together openly and with mutual accountability
- **Creativity**                            seeking creative approaches to opportunities and challenges
- **Kindness**                            commitment to putting kind, socially inclusive interactions at the heart of all our work

## Digital Inclusion

Midlothian Council are working on a draft Digital Strategy with a vision of creating better services that provide improved outcomes for our citizens through establishing a Digital Council that delivers digital services to digitally connected Places and communities. This will enable the Council to make the best use of opportunities to work effectively and create better relationships between the Council and its communities. Although digital inclusion is a key theme across all CPP thematic sub groups, the partnership working between Midlothian Council and TSi provides a unique opportunity to co-produce a digital strategy which will benefit all Midlothian citizens. The impact of Covid and the increased reliance on digital solutions has more clearly highlighted the difficulties for those who are not digitally included due to connectivity, access to devices and skills/knowledge.

Reference Code	IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES PARTNERSHIP – STRATEGIC ACTIONS PLAN 2021/22						Ownership Team
	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline	Previous trend data	
IOM – The number of households in poverty across Midlothian is reduced							
IOM – The number of children living in poverty is reduced							
	Provide comprehensive support to families to maximise their income, increase their skills and access sustainable employment	31 March 2022	Number of instances of front line advice given	4500	4410	2019-20 4410	Citizens advice bureaux
			Number of instances of specialist tribunal / appeal/ support given	700	750	2019-20 750	Council Welfare Rights Team
			Amount of household income gained	£3million	£4.4 million	£4.4million 2018-19 (WRT capacity reduced by 1.2 FTE)	Council Welfare Rights Team
				£2.5million	£2.5 million	£2.5 million 2019/20	CABx
			Number of Intensive family support (IFS) families entering into an action agreement	10	0	New measure	Barnardos and CLL
			IFS Participants no longer affected by debt as a barrier to social inclusion	7	0	New measure	
			IFS Participants achieving positive outcomes (Employment and Education)	3	0	New measure	
		31 March 2022	Number of parents engaging in Parental Employability Support Programme	45	0	New measure	CLL
		31 March 2022	Number of parents achieving increase in income through PESF	29	0	New measure	

		31 March 2022	Number of parents achieving qualifications through PESF	32	0	New measure	
	Reduce food insecurity and fuel poverty	31/3/22	<p>Numbers assisted with crisis application to Fuelbank Foundation (2 payments: £30 (1st April -31st Oct), £49 per year 1st Nov – 31st March)</p> <p>Implement new projects from Food and Health Alliance food insecurity recommendations including project on food vouchers and older people</p>	30  3	New measure	New measure	<p>Dalkeith CAB</p> <p>CLL/Child Poverty Group</p>
	Reduce number of children living in poverty in Midlothian		<p>The Child Poverty Act sets out four statutory, income-based targets (all after housing costs) to be achieved by 2030</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less than 10% of children in relative poverty;</li> <li>• Less than 5% of children in absolute poverty;</li> <li>• Less than 5% of children are in combined low-income and material deprivation;</li> <li>• Less than 5% of children are in persistent poverty</li> </ul>	24%	New measure - will be impacted by Covid	<p><b>16/17 – 24%</b></p> <p><b>17/18 – 25%</b></p> <p><b>18/19 – 23%</b></p>	CPP/IOM/Child Poverty Working Group/Partners
<b>IOM - Participation measures for young people over 16 increase</b>							
	Foundation apprenticeships offered by Midlothian Council	June 2022	Number of places taken up for next academic year/ number of successful completions	75 / 35	44	12	CLL/ schools / DYW

	Increased number of Edinburgh College places made available to Midlothian residents. Edinburgh College and partners (Council / DYW/ SDS) will engage in high profile marketing and communications recruitment activities for 2021/22 to target school leavers, and those who are unemployed. Social media channels to be utilised more widely.	August 2021	Number of places taken across 500 course options by Midlothian residents	3000	2789 applicants 2811 students enrolled 2019/20 academic year	2789 applicants 2811 students enrolled 2019/20 academic year	Edinburgh College
	Ensure that transitional support is offered to young people in S4, 5, 6 who are at risk of leaving school without a destination	31 March 2022	Youth work offer in each cluster at no cost to participants for P6-S1	4 youth clubs	4	4	CLL/Third sector/ schools
			Take up of 150 places on alternative curriculum offer to leavers intending work as first destination to remain in learning and on school roll	100	New measure	New measure	CLL
			School college partnership offer expanded to include more digital qualifications	250 places offered 100% taken up / 75% successful outcome	New measure	New measure	Edinburgh College / Secondary Schools
			NOLB offers made	40	New measure (NOLB replaced AA and SERI funding and widened target group to adults as	<b>2018/19:</b> 114 Youth Activity Agreement referrals led to 41 offers, of which 33 were taken up. 62	CLL

					well as young people)	young people moved on to positive destinations: 26 in employment, 17 in vocational training, 15 in further education, 2 Modern Apprenticeships, 2 other	
			'Unknown's' list average below 100	Under 100 average	108 average	122	CLL/ Skills Development Scotland
			Sustain Participation Measure at 1% above national average	1% below national average	93.4% 2020		SDS/CLL
			Care experienced / young carers % positive destinations is monitored and maintained within national average	Maintain within national average	Nat average CE leavers: 71% 2018/19 2019 Midlothian data: Looked after <b>78.7%</b> Young carers 91.5%	New measure	CLL / Who Cares Scotland
			Number of young people engaging in Croft Street Hub (formerly	56	50	50	CLL/schools

			PAVE/PAVE2)				
			Number of young people gaining positive destinations of which 60% gaining positive outcome	60%			
			Number of young people gaining 5 National 3 awards or above	90%			
		31 March 2022	Ensure Data Hub is up to date for S4-6 pupils Anticipated leave date (100%) Preferred route (90%) Preferred occupations (70%)	100% 90% 70%			SDS/Schools
		31 March 2022	Number of young people who volunteer with Transform Project  No of sessions delivered to young people in Transform Project	40  90	Reduced targets due to Covid restrictions	60  107	Volunteer Midlothian
<b>IOM – Increase the number of adults in employment and qualification levels of adults in Midlothian</b>							
	Improve qualification levels for adults at levels SVQ1 and 4 and sustain qualifications levels at SVQ2 and 3	31/3/22	Tracking only	84.2%	SVQ 1 – 83.2%	88.2% 2016 87.7% 2017 83.2% 2018 84.1% 2019	CLL/FE
		31/3/22	Tracking only	40.6%	SVQ 4 – 39.6%	38.6% 2016 42.0% 2017 39.6% 2018 42.9% 2019	CLL/FE/PTLM
		31/3/22	Tracking only	8.6%	No qualifications – 9.6%	6.4% 2016 7.2% 2017 9.6% 2018 9.4% 2019	CLL/FE/
	City Region Deal IRES programme offered in Midlothian	Up to March 2022	Numbers of individual supported / % successful outcomes from joint Construction training programme at Loanhead and in Edinburgh College	14 NPA Brickwork level 5	0	New measure	Edinburgh College / Midlothian Council

			Number of Midlothian residents engaging in City Region Deal digital programmes	Establish baseline	Establish baseline	New measure	ESESCRD
			Number of Midlothian residents gaining positive outcome through accessing Regional Skills Centres (sustained employment, additional hours, registering for support, assistance with accessing benefits)	20		New measure	City Region partnership/ Midlothian Council
	Reduce the number of adults aged 16 to 64 economically inactive in Midlothian	31/3/22	Below national average – tracking only	Keep below national average	New measure	2019/20: 18.8% Midlothian, 23.5% Scotland 17.4% want a job Midlothian, 21.1% Scotland	CLL Labour Force Survey (NOMIS)
	Reduce the number of women claiming out of work benefits in Midlothian – tracking only	31/3/22	Tracking only	Keep below national average	New measure	Dec 2020 – 1185 (4%) for Midlothian  Dec 2020 Nat average 4.4%	CLL Labour Force Survey (NOMIS)
	Support adults into employment through partnership working	31/7/21	Review and update Employability Pipeline	1	1	1 last updated 2019	CLL
		31/3/22	Numbers securing employment in health and social care sector through participation in Skills Boost	Establish baseline	New measure	New measure – new	Edinburgh College



			programmes			programme	
	Support adults into further and higher education through partnership working	31/3/22	Numbers attending Skills Boost programmes and achieving positive outcomes	Establish baseline	New measure	New measure - new programme	Edinburgh College
IOM – CLD Regulations are reviewed and new CLD plan agreed to meet statutory requirements							
	Review existing CLD Plan and produce new CLD Plan for 2021-24	30/9/21	Plan produced and action plan reviewed quarterly	1	New measure	New measure	CLL
	Ensure equalities groups and representative bodies have their voice heard in the development of the plan subject to Covid restrictions	30/6/21	Number of equalities groups consulted  Number of voluntary sector groups consulted	9  20	New measure  New measure	New measure  New measure	CLL
IOM – Increase opportunities for Midlothian residents to be digitally included							
	Increase access to digital learning opportunities across partners	31/3/22	Map provision and produce Midlothian Digital Pathway with routes into support networks  Number of digital opportunities offered	1  Establish baseline	Establish baseline  New measure	Establish baseline  New measure	Digital Partnership Group  CLL/TSi
IOM - Third Sector organisations and volunteers have improved skills, resources, and knowledge to achieve positive change							
	Deliver one to one business support, information and training to around 300 third sector organisations and individuals per year	31/3/21	Number of instances of assistance	300	300	New measure	TSi

	Deliver an annual TSI training programme, of 10 training events		Number of training events delivered	10	9	11- 18/19 9 19/20	TSI/CLL
	Collaborate with Midlothian Council to deliver the 1 year actions in the revised Midlothian Third Sector Compact	31/3/20	Co-produce new Council grants scheme	1	New measure	New measure	TSI / Council
<b>IOM - Health inequalities for people in Midlothian are reduced</b>							
	Deliver actions to contribute to the whole system approach to type 2 diabetes prevention in Midlothian	31/3/22	Review and reprioritise IOM members contribution to Diabetes prevention approach, minimum of 3 priorities	3	0	New measure	HSCP
			Provide 6 monthly update on progress in relation to action plan	2 updates	0	New measure	HSCP
	Provide capacity building support to the Midlothian workforce to develop a prevention confident staff	31/3/22	Provide learning sessions to statutory and third sector partners increasing their knowledge and understanding of health inequalities	10	0	New measure	HSCP
	Number of direct opportunities for volunteering in the Health and Social Care Partnership	31/3/22	Number of volunteers co-ordinated by the Health and Social Care Partnership	3	0	New measure	HSCP

## **SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

The CPP merged into one theme three complementary dimensions of ‘promoting economic growth’; ‘ensuring a sustainable environment’; and ‘developing housing to meet communities’ needs’. It has been, and remains, challenging bringing all three components together. These three components are the underpinning principles of planning legislation in Scotland. It was the view of the CPP that by aligning the structure of the CPP in this way there would be opportunities for improved links between the Community Planning and local development planning processes. Progress has been made in linking the outputs of neighbourhood planning to the development planning process. Early work has started on replacing of the Midlothian Local Development Plan (adopted 2017). However, the decision by Scottish Government in 2019 that SESplan 2 not be approved has left uncertainty over the future level of strategic housing and growth requirements in Midlothian. The draft National Planning Framework no. 4, expected to be published by the Scottish Government in Autumn 2021. This document will give an indication of the development requirements for Midlothian and inform production of Midlothian Local Development Plan no. 2. The National Planning Framework, when finalised, will confirm the development requirements for the area.

New national Planning guidance and regulations are being prepared to help implement the new Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. The new Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 introduces the opportunity for Local Place Plans to be prepared by local communities for their area. They can set out a vision for an area, uses of land and aspirations for development. These plans need to conform with the Local Development Plan but will not be part of the Local Development Plan. The Local Development Plan needs to take account of local place plans. The expectation and aspiration is that this will further bring together community planning and development planning, strengthening public engagement in the latter, and building on Community Empowerment Act principles.

Strategic development requirements in SESplan 1, and previous Structure Plans, have created significant development allocations, notably for new housing, in Midlothian. This has created rapid expansion in Midlothian across two development corridors (A701 and A7/A68) and the Shawfair area. The 2008/2009 financial crisis and previous infrastructure issues (particularly water and drainage) reduced the speed of new homes coming forward from previous development allocations coming forward. In recent years the speed of delivery from these development sites has quickened. Therefore this, combined with delivery of housing sites from the more recent allocations in the Midlothian Local Development Plan (2017), has created very significant new housing development across Midlothian. It has meant Midlothian is, and has been for a while, the fastest growing Council area in Scotland.

The concerns of communities affected by this pace of change include:

- The need for rapid parallel investment in retail, health, education and community facilities to match the needs of the new population; and if, and how, developers can be used toward this;
- Conservation of green space and the natural environment,
- Improvements in the town centres of Midlothian towns,

- Local sustainable transport links to employment, learning and health facilities
- Steps to integrate new and old communities into a common sense of place that strengthens the identities of each community.

### **Developing the Midlothian Economy**

As Scotland's fastest growing local authority, Midlothian has both challenges and opportunities to meet to ensure the agenda for sustainable and inclusive growth. The Strategy for Growth 2020-25 seeks to harness opportunities in partnership with the CPP and the local business base, ensuring growth is inclusive and sustainable.

The Council and its partners seek to build on strengths and harness investments available through the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal (ESESCR Deal) to deliver an enhanced infrastructure and pan city region to drive change. All of which will support our businesses to flourish, result in increased start-up activity and increased capacity for growth and which will continue to invite and capitalise on vital investment in our business community.

Putting Midlothian on the map is a key priority of developing the local economy. Midlothian is home to world-leading centres of excellence offering significant further opportunities for internationalisation and foreign direct investment – uplifting the local economy and creating new jobs. With the support of Scottish Development International, we seek to diversify our business base to thrive, grow and internationalise with the objective of increasing the number of Inward Investment projects locating in Midlothian.

As the Covid Pandemic disrupted trade across the globe numerous grant schemes were launched by Scottish Government to financially support Scottish businesses during trading restrictions; indications are that these schemes are likely to continue during 2021/22. Midlothian Council are administering many of these funds to the local business community. This has proven challenging and resource intensive but has become a critical function, this service is being delivered remotely with staff from several teams contributing.

Unemployment figures are anticipated to increase substantially as a result of the Covid pandemic, resulting from business closures and post furlough redundancies as businesses cut costs in the short term to aid recovery. The recent extension of the scheme to September 2021, will hold back the expected volume of redundancies predicted on the scheme's closure. The SG funded National PACE initiative will provide 2FTE employability/self-employment support workers for those at risk of redundancy, or that have been made redundant due to Covid. These roles will be based in Economic Development and work closely with Business Gateway, CLL employability team and CPP partners.

There were 2,110 enterprises employing less than 10 people in Midlothian in 2019, representing 87% of the total number of Midlothian enterprises. 275 Midlothian enterprises employed between 10 and 49 staff, 35 between 50 and 249 staff and 5 over 250 staff. An enterprise can be thought of as the overall business, made up of all the individual sites or workplaces. It is defined as the smallest combination of legal units (generally based on VAT and/or PAYE records) that has a certain degree of autonomy within an enterprise group.

The largest employment sector in Midlothian in 2019 was wholesale/retail employing 19.4% of Midlothian's total workforce or 6000 employees. Covid will have a consequential impact on Town Centres, already challenged by the move to out of town retail spaces. Covid measures will continue to impact on how we use space to balance socio-economic factors with health and wellbeing outcomes, presenting an opportunity to configure outdoor spaces to combine recreational and commercial uses.

The rise in e-commerce will continue as consumer habits have changed, the convenience of online shopping will stimulate new e-business start-ups and a need to intensify digital marketing activities in order to be seen, adopting new technology and learning new skills will be essential as businesses continue to emerge from restrictions. We are currently piloting a dedicated digital resource to upskill advisers with the aim to access a funded post for 2021/22 that will support all businesses with their digital presence and performance. Aligning the Scottish Government's strategic drive towards '20 minute communities' the new local development plan; locality outcome improvement and place plans will be important as COVID recovery develops. There is an opportunity to relocate work patterns from commuting to local and to reinvigorate local communities as a result.

### **Strategic Priorities 2021/22**

- Driving forward inclusive economic growth by working in partnership with stakeholders, and ensuring business community benefits in the supply chain to maximise opportunities for local people, working with Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal's (ESESCRD) Regional supply chain sustainability theme in the emerging Regional Growth Framework from September 2021
- Maximise opportunities for inward investment and funding to the area
- Support the regeneration of Town Centres & Communities
- Work with Midlothian employers to understand skills needs and provide local employment opportunities

### **Driving forward inclusive economic growth by working in partnership with stakeholders, and ensuring business community benefits in the supply chain to maximise opportunities for local people**

- Increase local procurement spend
- Increase the number of businesses accessing tender opportunities
- New Midlothian Tourism Strategy

### **Maximise opportunities for inward investment and funding to the area**

- New Inward Investment Brochure
- Marketing Campaign
- Increase number of new businesses locating in Midlothian
- Work with partners to identify funding opportunities

### **Support the regeneration of Town Centres & Communities**

- Future Dalkeith phase 2
- Stimulate interest in Social Enterprise as a business model, provide 121 support pre start
- Develop plans for collaborative community pilot

### **Work with Midlothian employers to understand skills needs and provide local employment opportunities**

- Provision of local PACE redundancy service
- Promote employment opportunities
- Simulate entrepreneurship

### **City Region Deal**

The Midlothian area is part of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region “City Deal” bid. City Deal offers access to retrospective UK Treasury and Scottish Government investment if projects achieve specified economic impact levels. The Edinburgh City Region City Deal includes all Lothian’s Councils, Fife, Scottish Borders and City of Edinburgh Councils. Proposals affecting Midlothian directly include capital infrastructure investment to improve connectivity, with a focus on the Midlothian Science Zone; skills and learning investment in widening access to and achievement from further and higher education; support for public transport improvements - especially connections around the city bypass to improve links to employment in the wider travel to work area. A series of integrated employability and skills (IRES) programmes coordinated through IOM theme of the CPP have been initiated focussing on Housing and Construction Industries, Digital Development and Innovation, Recruitment and Skills pipeline development, transport access and labour market intelligence. These link to and support capital investments across the City Region including housing, science and digital research, transport infrastructure and cultural developments using Community Benefit procurement and other methods to seek to ensure inclusive benefits accrue to the most disadvantaged residents for the CRD investments. The emergent Regional Growth Framework has the potential to identify the significant strategic ambitions and opportunities for the Region over the next 20 years and this is due for consultation during summer 2021. It will be important to ensure the voices of Midlothian communities of place and interest are heard in the development of this wider strategy. Similarly, the Midlothian Tourism Strategy and Regional Tourism strategy need to align and the Regional strategy reflect the needs and aspirations of Midlothian’s tourism sector and local resident.

### **National strategic Links**

The Sustainable Growth partnership will seek to make and sustain effective links with Scottish Government’s Inward Investment and Global Infrastructure Investment Plans. The impact of Brexit on Midlothian based businesses and those of the travel to work area also needs to be assessed and links made to Scottish Government and Scottish Government agency responses.

### **Cross community planning partnership links**

Employers have a key role in supporting Single Midlothian Plan (SMP) key priorities of reducing inequalities and achieving a carbon neutral Midlothian by 2030. This requires strong links between the Sustainable Growth Business and climate groups and the IOM thematic partnership with its remit for lifelong learning, employability, poverty reduction and community capacity building. There is an opportunity to develop employment in green technologies. There will be opportunities through community benefits from public procurement to drive living wage expectations and local community wealth building approaches.

### **NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

Production of a new Midlothian Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) was a delivered action for 2018/19. Delivery of LBAP actions is very much linked to the programme for the Single Midlothian Plan in 2021/22. It is very important that LBAP actions continue to be delivered by partners. One of the objectives of the

Midlothian Local Biodiversity Action Plan is to engage the public in more biodiversity events to increase engagement with and understanding of biodiversity matters. This continues into 2021/2022. The Council's planning department has worked with partners on preparing Nature Conservation planning guidance. This document is expected to be adopted by the Council in 2021. It will be a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications.

The Midlothian Green Network Supplementary Guidance, prepared with partners and adopted by Midlothian Council in 2018, continues to support green and blue infrastructure and facilitate active travel in Midlothian. It was prepared as a requirement of the Midlothian Local Development Plan (2017) and compliments the Council's Active Travel Strategy.

### **ACTIVE TRAVEL**

Active Travel, viewed as walking, cycling and now bus travel, is important for a range of environmental, health and recreational reasons. Its importance continues to increase and is therefore a priority for a range of partners. This plan captures a very small amount of work occurring in this area and identifies where partners are working together in partnership. Active travel is increasingly important for the layout, location and connectivity of new development.

### **HOUSING IN MIDLOTHIAN**

The strategic vision for housing in Midlothian is that all households will be able to access housing that is affordable and of good quality in sustainable communities. In order that this vision is realised, the Local Housing Strategy 2021-26 identifies the following key outcomes:

- Access to housing and the supply of new housing has increased across all tenures in Midlothian
- Improve Place Making in Midlothian
- Homeless households and those threatened with homelessness are able to access support and advice services and all unintentionally homeless households will be able to access settled accommodation
- The needs of households with particular needs will be addressed and all households will have equal access to housing and housing services
- Housing in all tenures will be more energy efficient and fewer households will live in, or be at risk of, fuel poverty
- The condition of housing across all tenures is improved
- Integration of Housing, Health and Social Care in Midlothian is improved

There continues to be high demand for affordable housing as despite the success achieved at significantly increasing the new supply of affordable housing in Midlothian, it is evident that the level of housing need has increased with 4,088 households currently on the Housing List (as at 1 February 2021) including 821 homeless households. In order to address this rapid increase in housing need the supply of new affordable housing across all tenures needs to increase.

Midlothian's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2021- 26 identifies the main strategic investment priorities for affordable housing. The SHIP sets out Midlothian Council's approach to promoting affordable housing investment and meeting housing supply targets identified in the Strategic Development Plan for Edinburgh and South East Scotland. To address this need for more affordable housing, the SHIP details potential sites for 2,602 new affordable homes to be built during 2021-26.

Midlothian Council's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2020 set out a vision by 2024:

"An increased number of homeless households will obtain permanent accommodation, no homeless household will be accommodated in bed and breakfast accommodation, and the average time taken for the Council to complete its homeless duty will have halved from 105 to 52 weeks."

The following key actions support this vision:

- Increase the supply of affordable housing in Midlothian
- Revise Midlothian Council's Housing Allocation Policy to address the backlog of homeless households already in temporary accommodation, and reduce the time taken to house homeless households in the future
- Seek alternative models of temporary accommodation to end the need for bed and breakfast accommodation
- Ensure homeless households are supported to access a wide range of housing options, including the private rented sector
- Develop a 'housing first' approach in Midlothian to house homeless households with complex needs
- Develop and implement a Homeless Prevention Strategy

Reference Code	SUSTAINABLE GROWTH 2019/20						Ownership
	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline	Previous trend data	Team
<b>Maximise opportunities for inward investment and funding to the area</b>							
	Develop the Inward Investment Prospectus	Jul 2021	Prospectus published	1	0	N/A	Economic Development
	Inward Investment campaign, launch prospectus with video promo	Jul 2021	Digital Marketing Campaign	1	0	N/A	Economic Development/Locate in Midlothian
			Locate in Midlothian Traffic	New Measure	0	N/A	Economic Development/Locate in Midlothian



	Work with network of partners to promote opportunities and provide support	Mar 2022	Number of Inward Investment enquiries for Midlothian sites <sup>1</sup>	160	0	139 (2018-19)	Economic Development/B usiness Gateway/SDI/SE /Planning,
			Number of new businesses locating in Midlothian	60	0	100 (2018-19)	Economic Development
Work with Midlothian employers to understand skills needs and provide local employment opportunities							
	Promote local employment opportunities	Mar 2022	Growth in Digital Reach	4000	0	300 views per month (2019-20)	Economic Development
	Provision of PACE redundancy support	Mar 2022	Positive destinations, employment, training, self-employment	Demand responsive	0	N/A	Economic Development/S DS/DWP
	Deliver Self Employment Awareness sessions	Mar 2022	Sessions with 1-2-1/group follow up support if requested in partnership with Midlothian DWP	6	0	N/A	Business Gateway/DWP
Place based economic development approach to support the regeneration of Town Centres & Communities							
	Develop strategy for pilot community enterprise project and deliver (funding dependant)	Sept 2021	Pilot project commenced	1	0	N/A	Economic Development/T SI/CLL
	Future Dalkeith recommendations – phase 2 project	Mar 2022	Attract funding for take forward recommended projects from Future Dalkeith project	1	0	N/A	Economic Development

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/3402/communities\\_and\\_economy\\_service\\_plan\\_2019-20](https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/3402/communities_and_economy_service_plan_2019-20)

	Stimulate interest in Social Enterprises as a business model	Mar 2022	Provide 1-2-1 support pre start	8	0	0	Economic Development/T SI
	Support the delivery of TCCF funds phase 1 & 2	Sept 2021	All projects completed within timescales	1	0	N/A	Economic Development
<b>Drive forward inclusive economic growth by working in partnership with stakeholders, and ensure business community benefits in the supply chain to maximise opportunities for local people.</b>							
	Local procurement strategy implementation	Mar 2022	Increase the number of local businesses accessing tender opportunity support	40	0	N/A	Economic Development/ Procurement/ SDP/ Business Gateway
		Mar 2022	Increase the number of SDP Workshops	4	0	N/A	
		June 2021	Develop a Lead Officer Forum to ensure sustainable supplier options to include Com Ben & net zero carbon	1	0	N/A	
	Provide business support	Mar 2022	Number of pre start businesses supported	190	174	174 (2019/20)	Business

			Business start-ups claimed	160	143	143 (2019-20)	Gateway service
			Established business support	150	102	102 (2019/20)	
	Maximise opportunities to support recovery in the tourism sector	Nov 2021	Develop a recovery strategy for Midlothian	1	0	N/A	Economic Development/  Business Gateway/  Midlothian Tourism Forum
		Mar 2022	Business Gateway membership referrals to MTF	120	0	38 (2018-19) Note: drop during MBTAG tenure	Economic Development/ Business Gateway/ Midlothian Tourism Forum
More social housing has been provided taking account of local demand, including specialist housing.							
Homelessness has reduced and people threatened with homelessness can access appropriate advice and support services.							
Review housing options booklet and replace with a series of shorter fact sheets.							
The council's affordable housing programme will achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030.							
Deliver leaving home education programme in all secondary schools.							
Raise awareness of energy saving or fuel poverty advice and assistance schemes across all housing tenures.							
	In partnership between the Council, Registered Social Landlords and private developers, deliver 200 new affordable	31/3/22	Number of new homes completed, including specialist housing	200	0	Average 100 per annum	MC Housing/ RSL's/ Developers

	homes						
	Review current Housing Options provision and replace with a series of shorter fact sheets	31/12/21	Provide focussed information on specific housing options across all tenures.	Information available	New measure	0	MC Housing
	Deliver "Leaving Home" education programme in Schools	31/3/22	Deliver to S2 and senior year groups across all high schools	S2 and senior year groups	0	All schools included in pre-Covid	MC Housing
	Raise awareness of energy saving or fuel poverty advice and assistance schemes.	31/3/22	Increase the number of households accessing energy saving or fuel poverty advice and assistance schemes.	2,000	0	Average 2,000 per annum	MC Housing/ Third sector partners
	Undertake review of affordable housing specification design guide taking account of Midlothian's ambition to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030.	31/12/21	Revised specification completed by external consultant.	Work completed	New measure	0	MC Construction and Housing
<b>SG Climate Emergency: Priority 1 - Agree and implement a standard methodology and tool(s) for measuring and accounting for carbon emissions in Midlothian (3 year priority )</b>							
<b>Identify a standardized method to be used by all CPP partners to measure carbon emissions from all sectors of Midlothian in order to maintain a consistent approach to quantifying Midlothian's emissions, estimating the emissions from particular activities, and calculating the emissions reductions deliverable by specific mitigation projects.( 1 year action )</b>							
	Review the range of extant carbon calculation methodologies and tools in use in government, academia and the private sector	31/3/22	Review undertaken	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, Scottish Government, NatureScot, SEPA, University of

						Edinburgh, Edinburgh College
Agree on the most appropriate methodology/tool to use, consistent with national/local government/public body best practice	31/3/22	Methodologies considered	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, Scottish Government, NatureScot, SEPA, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh College
Publicise the availability and use of the methodology/tool and provide online guidance on how to use it	31/3/22	Methodologies publicised	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, Midlothian Federation of Community Councils (MFCC) , others as appropriate

**SG Climate Emergency: Priority 2 - Promotion of 20 minute neighbourhoods in Midlothian (3 year priority)**

**Work with partners to promote '20 minute neighbourhoods' that are less reliant on commuting for work, education, shopping and services and where services are accessible by foot, wheel or public transport. ( 1 year action )**

Promote the principles of the '20 minute neighbourhood' concept, as set out in the Scottish Government Position Statement on NPF4, November 2020, within all partner organisations	31/3/22	Promotional work and awareness raising undertaken with relevant partners	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	All Climate Emergency Group members
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Work with housing developers to maximise opportunities for land and buildings are set aside in new developments for use by retail and other local service providers	31/3/22	Engagement has taken place with housing developers	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, Melville Housing Association, Homes for Scotland, Federation of Small Business, Chamber of Commerce
Work with local shop owners and service providers to identify opportunities for new local premises and outlets to serve currently unmet need- work to producing a directory highlighting Midlothian produce and how/where it can be obtained	31/3/22	Engagement has taken place with local shop owners and service providers	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, Federation of Small Business, Chamber of Commerce, MFCC
Work with Midlothian employers to identify measures to facilitate local employment, reduce the amount and distance of commuting and maximise use of walking, cycling and public transport to travel to work	31/3/22	Engagement has taken place with local employers	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, Federation of Small Business, Chamber of Commerce

**SG Climate Emergency: Priority 3 - Climate Emergency Awareness Raising and Community Engagement (3 year priority)**

**Work with community groups and organisations to establish an ongoing Midlothian wide programme of awareness of climate change and the practical measures that can be taken by individuals and communities to help deliver the Midlothian Carbon Net Zero by 2030 target and mitigate the effects of the climate emergency. ( 1 year action )**

Promotion of Climate Emergency issues through a programme of engagement activities, including a sustained social media presence and investigation of setting Climate Emergency Hubs	31/3/22	Promotion group established and is operational	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	All Climate Emergency Group members
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Compile exemplars of Climate Emergency related projects, for wider circulation, that can prompt action and involvement	31/3/22	List of exemplar projects is compiled	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	All Climate Emergency Group members
Development of locally-owned Climate Emergency projects	31/3/22	Work progressed to take forward development of locally-owned Climate Emergency projects	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council and MFCC, Midlothian Voluntary Action (MVA), Changeworks
Learn from other projects and Community Planning Partnerships on Best Practice on Net Zero and Housing	31/3/22	Relevant projects identified and understood	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	All Climate Emergency Group members
Work with Midlothian Council education services to establish what role Climate Emergency has in the school curriculum and activities. Identify if there are events that schools/children could become involved in. Cover all Climate Emergency, travel, emissions, biodiversity, use of resources	31/3/22	Climate Emergency group partners liaise with Midlothian Council Education service	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council and relevant other Climate Emergency Group members
Ensure that young people (esp. early years / primary / secondary) are supported to contribute to conversations and planning to support initiatives with the improvement of carbon reduction	31/3/22	Climate Emergency group partners liaise with Midlothian Council Education service and other relevant bodies	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, MFCC

**SG Climate Emergency: Priority 4 - Development of Renewable Energy (3 year priority)**

**4a. Work with the Council's Energy Services Company and other partners to expand the use of district heating systems and renewable energy sources to replace domestic gas boilers, including community-owned schemes ( 1 year action )**

**4b. Work with SP Energy Networks and other partners to identify and remove grid capacity bottlenecks in Midlothian that hinder roll-out of renewable technologies.( 1 year action )**

**4c. Work with the Council's Energy Services Company and other partners to identify potential sites for renewable energy generation, including community-owned schemes.( 1 year action )**

	Work with owners/operators of current renewable energy projects in Midlothian to explore potential for expansion into surrounding new housing projects	31/3/22	Work undertaken with Midlothian Energy to take forward the action	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	All Climate Emergency Group members
	Explore the possibilities for a Council/private housing developer joint venture showcasing zero-carbon housing	31/3/22	Work undertaken with Midlothian Energy to take forward the action	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, Homes for Scotland
	Explore developing a plan for decarbonising the electricity and hot water output from the Millerhill Energy from waste plant	31/3/22	Work undertaken with Midlothian Energy to take forward the action	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, Midlothian Energy, SEPA, City of Edinburgh Council, East Lothian Council, Zero Waste Scotland, FCC Environment
	Explore developing a plan for extending district heating beyond Shawfair. Map opportunities	31/3/22	Work undertaken with Midlothian Energy to take forward the action	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, Midlothian Energy, SEPA



Build on experience elsewhere in Scotland to develop Midlothian-based projects for retrofitting of renewable heat systems in existing gas-heated domestic properties	31/3/22	All partners learn from experience elsewhere	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Changeworks, Midlothian Council, MFCC ,Melville Housing Association, Scottish Government
Review electricity grid capacity across Midlothian and assess its ability to handle predicted growth in electric vehicles, electric heating etc. Identify bottlenecks and engage with relevant bodies to invest in upgrades	31/3/22	Assess capacity electricity grid capacity in Midlothian	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, Midlothian Energy, SP Energy Networks
Identify potential sites on Council and other partners' land for renewable energy generation including solar, wind and ground-source heat pumps. Explore potential for community-owned schemes joint ventures and joint ventures between public, private and community sectors	31/3/22	Consideration given by partners to potential sites for renewable energy	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	All Climate Emergency Group members

**SG Climate Emergency: Priority 5 - Support and Promotion of Biodiversity (3 year priority)**

**Build on the actions in the Midlothian Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2019-2024 to ensure that Midlothian adopts a holistic approach to the environment, aimed at increasing biodiversity and reducing carbon emissions. (1 year action )**

Work with schools on biodiversity projects in their local areas, including on establishment of B-line projects	31/3/22	Climate Emergency group partners liaise with Midlothian Council Education service and other relevant bodies	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, MFCC ,MVA and Climate Emergency Group Interested Parties
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Take forward community driven citizen science projects and keep people connected to nature	31/3/22	Climate Emergency group partners work with relevant community, and other, bodies	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, MFCC, MVA and Climate Emergency Group Interested Parties
Investigate potential locations and interested parties in taking forward a community woodland including "Tiny Forest" proposals, or managed open space	31/3/22	Climate Emergency group partners work with relevant community, and other, bodies(including investigation of mapping of food growing areas)	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, MFCC, MVA and Climate Emergency Group Interested Parties
Promote wildlife corridors that connect urban and rural areas and across local authority areas	31/3/22	Climate Emergency group partners work with Midlothian Council, adjacent local authorities and relevant bodies	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council and Climate Emergency Group Interested Parties
Promote local food growing	31/3/22	Climate Emergency group partners help take forward the Midlothian allotment and food growing strategy	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, MFCC , MVA and Climate Emergency Group Interested Parties

<b>SG Climate Emergency: Priority 6 - Place the Climate Emergency as the Central Theme of the Midlothian Local Development Plan no. 2 (3 year priority</b>							
<b>Place the Climate Emergency and Midlothian Council's Climate Emergency Declaration at the centre of the replacement Midlothian Local Development Plan, and its development strategy and policies, so that the new plan facilitates promotion of carbon neutral development, mitigation of, and adaptation to, the effects of the Climate Emergency. ( 1 year action )</b>							
	Review best practice in Scotland/elsewhere for embedding climate change mitigation/emissions reduction in planning policy	31/3/22	Climate Emergency Group members to work with Midlothian Council (Planning) to take forward	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, MFCC, MVA and Climate Emergency Group Interested Parties
	Develop a measurable and verifiable plan for LDP2 to support delivery of Net Zero by 2030	31/3/22	Climate Emergency Group members to work with Midlothian Council (Planning) to take forward	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, MFCC, MVA and Climate Emergency Group Interested Parties
	Investigate possibilities for peer review of the climate emergency credentials of the next Midlothian Local Development Plan	31/3/22	Climate Emergency Group members to work with Midlothian Council (Planning) to take forward	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, MFCC, MVA and Climate Emergency Group Interested Parties

	Review best practice in Scotland/elsewhere for embedding climate change mitigation/emissions reduction in planning policy	31/3/22	Climate Emergency Group members to work with Midlothian Council (Planning) to take forward	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, MFCC, MVA and Climate Emergency Group Interested Parties
	Develop a measurable and verifiable plan for LDP2 to support delivery of Net Zero by 2030	31/3/22	Climate Emergency Group members to work with Midlothian Council (Planning) to take forward	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, MFCC, MVA and Climate Emergency Group Interested Parties
	Investigate possibilities for peer review of the climate emergency credentials of the next Midlothian Local Development Plan	31/3/22	Climate Emergency Group members to work with Midlothian Council (Planning) to take forward	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, MFCC, MVA and Climate Emergency Group Interested Parties

	Investigate a policy mechanisms for carbon off setting requirements for new development in Midlothian	31/3/22	Climate Emergency Group members to work with Midlothian Council (Planning) to take forward	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council
<b>SG Climate Emergency: Priority 7 - Transport (3 year priority)</b>							
<b>Produce a quantified plan for reducing transport emissions in Midlothian to Net Zero through reductions in the demand for travel; localisation of travel patterns through the '20 minute neighbourhood' concept; modal shift from private cars to public transport and active travel; and decarbonisation of remaining road traffic. ( 1 year action )</b>							
	Investigate potential for Bus Partnership Projects in Midlothian to get bus routes in place at the start of a new development before car based travel patterns form or are exacerbated	31/3/22	Potential for Bus Partnership Projects in Midlothian have been investigated for new development	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, SESTran, SUSTrans, Homes for Scotland, Melville H A
	Reduce the need to travel into Edinburgh or other areas – improve employment, training and educational opportunities in Midlothian by increasing or promoting local provisions	31/3/22	Support, where appropriate, local employment and training opportunities	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, Federation of Small Business, Chambers of Commerce
	Promotion of A720 Orbital Bus route projects and consideration of tram extensions to Midlothian	31/3/22	Opportunities are taken for promotion of the A720 Orbital Bus route projects and consideration of tram extensions to Midlothian	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, SESTran, SUSTrans
	Review HGV/LGV movements within Midlothian with the aim of limiting their number. This should look at potential models for freight consolidation services within the county in order to provide a service to businesses and reduce the numbers of vans and HGVs throughout	31/3/22	Relevant partners work together to consider the action	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, SESTran, SUSTrans

Midlothian						
Work with car dealers, approved EV charger installers, Energy Saving Trust etc to establish a 'one stop shop' for EV buyers in Midlothian to improve uptake and make the process of buying an EV and establishing the charging infrastructure seamless and smooth	31/3/22	Work undertaken with car dealers to investigate how purchase of electric vehicles can be simplified	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, Federation of Small Business, Chambers of Commerce
Work with communities and regional transport partners to investigate support for production of an updated Local Transport Strategy with reducing the demand for travel and reducing transport emissions at its heart	31/3/22	Relevant partners work together	Yes - Annual Measure	New measure	0	Midlothian Council, SESTran, SUSTrans and Climate Emergency Group Interested Parties

## **EQUALITIES**

Equality, Diversity and Human Rights are cross-cutting and underpin all that the Community Planning Partnership does, plans and provides. The Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty requires public organisations, both as an employer and in the planning and delivery of services, to have due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
2. Advance equality of opportunity
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Success/failure to meet this overarching outcome will be reported to the Community Planning Working Group and Board and then to the Equality & Human Rights Commission.

The equalities impacting actions of the partnership are embedded in and across the 5 themes rather than being set out as a separate action plan template. Key actions that are intended to reduce inequalities affecting protected characteristics groups are:

### **Getting it Right for Every Midlothian Child**

- Engage children, young people, parents/carers and families in genuine participation, together co-designing a better mental health support system
- Continue to build confidence and knowledge in trusted adults through delivering training in Mental Health First Aid and raising awareness of tools that support good mental health
- Contribute to working with young people affected by domestic abuse, parental alcohol or drug misuse
- Contribute to the proportion of children and young people who feel safe in their homes, communities, schools and online
- Contribute to reducing the proportion of children and young people living in households affected by poverty through increasing the number of young carers we currently support
- Provide comprehensive support to families to maximise their income, increase their skills and access sustainable employment \* shared with IOM
- Reduce or maintain the length of time it takes to find permanent placements for children and young people looked after away from home
- Monitor and evaluate the Permanence and Care Excellence (PACE) programme
- Monitor and review the Corporate Parenting action plan

### **Improving Opportunities for People of Midlothian**

- Provide comprehensive support to families to maximise their income, increase their skills and access sustainable employment\*(shared with GIRFEMC )
- Reduce food insecurity and fuel poverty
- Reduce the number of children living in poverty in Midlothian
- Ensure that transitional support is offered to young people in S4, 5, 6 who are at risk of leaving school without a positive destination
- Improve qualification levels for adults at levels SVQ1 and 4 and sustain qualification levels at SVQ 2, 3
- Reduce the number of women claiming out of work benefits in Midlothian
- Ensure equalities groups and representative bodies have their voice heard in the development of the CLD plan subject to Covid restrictions
- Increase access to digital learning opportunities across partners

### **Adult Health & Care**

### **Older People (65+)**

- Work in partnership with Red Cross and GPs to support frail people
- Train more Ageing Well volunteers and provide a wider range of activities
- Strengthen systems to reduce numbers of people being delayed in hospital e.g. Flow hub

### **Mental Health**

- Reshape community based mental health support and services
- Review programme to improve access to psychological therapy

### **Physical Disability**

- Contribute to the re-provision of Astley Ainslie Hospital including strengthening community based services
- Continue to strengthen the provision and accessibility of information about services and supports

### **Learning Disability and Autism**

- Build on the creative new approaches to day service design and the more individualised and community based models of support that have developed in response to COVID
- Build 8 flats in Bonnyrigg and renovate Primrose Lodge in Loanhead for three people with Profound and Multiple Learning Disability and additional respite for two people
- Trial Principles into Practice, a draft framework that offers practical guidance and evaluation measures to improve the planning and delivery of support for young people (14-25) who require additional support as they make the transition to young adult life
- Update 'Autism Supports' the interactive guide to autism support and services

### **Justice Service**

- Providing people on Community Payback Orders with recognised qualifications through Unpaid Work staff becoming registered trainers
- Run a Caledonian group work programme in Midlothian for men from Midlothian, East Lothian and the Scottish Borders

### **Substance Misuse**

- Work with partners to promote evidence based educational interventions for young people including "Problematic Risk Taking Document" and Core Messages resources
- Recruit an additional peer worker to increase the role in treatment and support services of people with lived experience

### **Sustainable Growth Action Plan**

- Reduce the need to travel into Edinburgh or other areas – improve employment, training and educational opportunities in Midlothian by increasing or promoting local provisions
- Promotion of A720 Orbital Bus route projects and consideration of tram extensions to Midlothian
- Promote local food growing
- Ensure that young people (esp. early years / primary / secondary) are supported to contribute to conversations and planning to support initiatives with the improvement of carbon reduction
- Work with Midlothian employers to identify measures to facilitate local employment, reduce the amount and distance of commuting and maximise use of walking, cycling and public transport to travel to work
- Promote the principles of the '20 minute neighbourhood' concept, as set out in the Scottish Government Position Statement on NPF4, November 2020, within all partner organisations

### **Safer Communities**

- Use Midsafe money to fund a youth project with specifics around educating parents and family relationships
- Work with partner agencies to prevent violent behaviour, manage violent offenders and develop a programme of interventions to reduce levels of violent crime
- Raise awareness of Violence against Women and Girls with services and communities

- Implement Equally Safe Priority 4 'Men desist from all forms of VAWG and perpetrators of such violent receive a robust and effective response'
- Develop new ways to engage with and support younger people in substance misuse treatment services
- Develop the SPRING service (for women). Specifically develop 'Stepping Stones' and the 'Next Steps' phase of SPRING
- Review and develop the structured programme Stepping Stones to incorporate elements of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Decider skills, in partnership with psychological therapies

A number of other specific actions are also being taken forward by the CPP and Council (CLL) Equalities Engagement officer working with community partners in Midlothian. These are set out below:



Reference Code	EQUALITIES 2021/22						Ownership
	Actions	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline	Previous trend data	Managed by
	Contribute in terms of equality issues & initiatives to the Midlothian Equality Plan 2017-21	31/3/22	Evidence of equalities work/issues from 5 thematic partnership groups and sub groups is reflected in the minutes of these groups	5	5	None	Community Planning Working Group
	Address significant health inequalities relating to increased risk of type 2 diabetes in South Asian population	31/03/22	Number of projects  Number of people engaged in project(s)	2  25	1  15	19-20 – 1/ 15  20-21 – project halted due to Covid-19	CLL Equalities Engagement Officer/ Midlothian Muslim Community Centre (MMCC)/ Community Planning Partners

Establish a project which raises awareness of the environmental impact of period products and promotes “plastic-free periods” whilst recognising socio-economic barriers and addressing period poverty	31/03/22	Number of people accessing a more environmentally-friendly/ sustainable choice of period product	20	0	New measure	Council Equalities Engagement Officer, Community Planning Partnership
Find opportunities for equalities characteristics groups to maximise influence by working together	31/03/22	Number of joint working actions undertaken (projects)	3	3	20/21 - 3	CLL Equalities Engagement Officer/ Midlothian Peoples Equalities Group/

	Work in partnership to plan and prepare Midlothian LGBT+ PRIDE parade 2022	31/3/22	Working group established, funding secured, and planning of event underway	1	0	New measure	CLL Equalities Engagement Officer; CAB; MYPAS; Health in Mind; Community Planning Partners
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# **Adult and Social Care Service Plan**

## **2021-22**

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Head of Adult and Social Care  
Head of Primary Care and Older People's Services

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**Appendix C    Integrated Impact Assessment**

## 1. Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership Overview

The Service Plan is focused on the adult health and social care priorities in the Single Midlothian Plan 2021-22 and the Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan for 2019-22. The Strategic Plan is the foundation to the delivery of our services promoting prevention and early intervention and centered on helping to maintain and improve health and wellbeing.



The Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership serves a population of 91,340, and is responsible for services that help adults live well and get support when they need it. This includes all community health and social care services for adults in Midlothian and some acute hospital-based services. Many voluntary sector and independent providers work with us to deliver the objectives of the Partnership, and while the Partnership is governed by the Integration Joint Board (IJB) it is also a thematic group of the Midlothian Community Planning Partnership.

## 2. Our Vision

Agreed by the IJB in December 2020, **our vision** is that people in Midlothian are enabled to lead longer and healthier lives.

-  People are able to look after and improve their own health and wellbeing and live in good health for longer.
-  People are able to live, as far as reasonably practicable, independently and at home or in a homely setting in their community.
-  People who use health and social care services have positive experiences of those services, and have their dignity respected.
-  Health and social care services contribute to reducing health inequalities.
-  People who work in health and social care services are engaged with their work and improve information, support, care and treatment they provide.
-  Health and social care services are centred on helping to maintain or improve the quality of life of people who use those services.
-  Resources are used effectively and efficiently.
-  People who provide unpaid care are supported to look after their health and wellbeing.
-  People using health and social care services are safe from harm.

Over the last twelve months Sport and Leisure and Welfare Rights have become an integral part of the service. As we develop our Strategic Plan for 2022-25, their vision and priorities will be intrinsically linked to our health and social care priorities.

### **Sport and Leisure**

**Our vision** is an active Midlothian where everyone benefits from sport. We will encourage and support individuals:

- To be physically active every day.
- Keep moving at home and at work.
- Take an active approach to getting around.
- Take part in sport because we see it being relevant to our lives.
- Be involved in ways that suit us.
- By improving the customer experience through self-evaluation.

By reducing barriers and encouraging inclusion we aim to increase the benefits of sport. For some of us, by taking part, for others, through our communities. An active Midlothian is one where people are encouraged to participate, progress and achieve in sport. At the same time people become more active and stay active.

### **Welfare Rights**

**Our vision** is to support individuals in need of assistance by offering free, confidential, personalised and impartial advice on a wide range of financial matters, and take a preventative approach for identifying vulnerable individuals. We will work with and support individuals:

- To budget and maximise income.
- To check entitlements and get support making claims for benefits.
- To access advice about debts and help gain control of their finances.
- To assist with challenging and pursuing appeals.
- To address the financial consequences of adults with a diagnosis of cancer.

## **3. Our Values**

Our core value is that our services will provide the right support, at the right time and in the right place. We will achieve this by placing more importance and a greater proportion of our resources on our key values. This will not be achieved overnight; changes in the way in which health and care services are delivered take time.

Our values are underpinned by the following principles

- **Prevention:** You should be supported to take more responsibility for your health and wellbeing. We want to deal with the causes rather than the consequences of ill health wherever possible.
- **Independence, Choice and Control:** You should be able to manage your condition and control your support. We will support you to live independently at home and promote the

principles of independent living and equality.

- **Support the person not just the condition:** Your support/treatment should consider key issues affecting your life as well as supporting you to manage your condition.
- **Recovery:** You should be supported to recover good health and independence as far as possible.
- **Coordinated Care:** Everyone who provides your care should be working together.
- **Local:** Your support should be provided as close to your home as possible and you should only go to hospital if you really have to. Much of this support is provided by families, neighbours and your local community. We will work in partnership with unpaid carers, volunteers and communities.
- **Public Protection:** You should feel safe at home and in your community.
- **Equality:** You should not be disadvantaged due to your ability, ethnicity or caring responsibilities. We will do everything we can to reduce health inequalities and respect your dignity and human rights in the planning of health and social care.
- **Evidence based decisions:** Services will be commissioned based on identified need. We will listen to people who use our services, and the people who care for them, working together to develop the services that are right for them.
- **Quality:** We will provide the highest quality health and care services, with a very strong emphasis upon improving the quality of services, responding to user feedback and internal and external audits.

#### 4. Public Engagement

Engagement is fundamental in helping us to plan and deliver our services. We follow the national engagement standards and ensure ongoing engagement with people and partner organisations through representatives from the third sector, carers and people with lived experience on all formal planning groups including the IJB, the Strategic Planning group and Service Area planning groups.

The Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership's Public Engagement Statement sets out:

- a) who we will consult and engage with;
- b) our methods of consultation and engagement;
- c) when we consult and engage;
- d) our standards for community engagement; and
- e) guidelines for effective communication.







We also use feedback from national consultation programmes such as the Scottish Governments Health and Care Experience Survey. The results of the 2019-20 Health and Care Experience Survey were published in October 2020. We are using this feedback to help identify areas for improvement by better understanding people's experiences of their local health and social care services and caring responsibilities in Midlothian.

## 5. Our Key Successes 2020-21



Our Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership Annual Performance Report provides a sense of the depth and breadth of the work which contributes to our vision that people in Midlothian are enabled to lead longer and healthier lives. With the help of facts and figures, case studies and feedback from our communities the report highlights our key successes over the previous 12 months.

The 2020/21 Annual Report will be available in July 2021 and will be published online at <https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/mhscp>

As we have moved through the Covid pandemic, the top priority for the partnership has been the safety of patients, clients, communities and staff. In response to the situation it was important to be innovative and support clients effectively and safely during this time. Staff continued to see people face-to-face where this was essential, but in order to reduce face-to-face contact, where feasible, teams made a number of changes to how they delivered services throughout the pandemic.

As well as managing changes to existing services, the Partnership provided care and treatment to those who had contracted Covid-19 and their families. The Partnership provided support to partner agencies around changed provision, infection control and other requirements, including the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) and staff testing.

Covid related services had to be established, often at short notice, as the pandemic escalated, such as the Covid Testing and Assessment Hub at Midlothian Community Hospital. Many staff across the Partnership were redeployed to other roles, assisting in care homes and PPE centres.

Partnership staff were very involved in the work of the Midlothian Care for People Group where members of the Community Planning Partnership and other partners coordinated a humanitarian response to the pandemic. Statutory and voluntary sector partners sought, as far as possible, to provide essential services to the whole population and particularly to those most directly affected by the imposition of lockdown. The Midlothian Care for People Group operated in a complex environment keeping abreast of new guidance and rapidly changing projections of need, whilst also keeping in close touch with policies and activities at national, regional and council level.

## **6. Our Priority Areas**

### **1. LONG TERM CONDITIONS**

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#### **Cancer**

- Explore ways to deliver treatments locally, in particular chemotherapy.
- Implement the new 'Improving Cancer Journey' to provide support to people after a diagnosis of cancer.

#### **Respiratory Disease**

- Reduce rates of smoking and support people to maintain a healthy weight.
- Strengthen partnership working with MERRIT, Marie Curie and Edinburgh Community Respiratory team.

#### **Neurological Conditions**

- Support people to live in their own homes by helping to explore housing options.
- Work with the Astley Ainslie hospital to explore ways to deliver in-patient and out-patient services locally.
- Review demand for services in light of free personal care for under 65s.

#### **Stroke**

- Reduce rates of smoking and support people to maintain a healthy weight.
- Look to develop ways of integrating rehabilitation into community services.
- Review our community based support by working with the Edinburgh Stroke Unit.

#### **Diabetes & Obesity**

- Support adults to maintain a healthy weight, especially those with pre-diabetes, e.g. through increased weight management services.
- Work collaboratively with other Partnerships in south east region of Scotland to increase services to tackle type 2 diabetes.

#### **Sensory Impairment**

- Improve awareness and understanding of sensory impairment among staff.
- Work with acute colleagues to detect vision and hearing loss early through clinics and checks.
- Work with acute colleagues to provide services locally such as audiology maintenance clinics.

#### **Palliative Care**

- Strengthen choice and control through Anticipatory Care Plans, Power of Attorney arrangements and Adult Carer Support Plans.
- Improving services by training staff in care homes and consulting with families.

### **2. SERVICE USERS GROUPS**

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#### **Older People (65+)**

- Identify frail people and provide early intervention using GP, and health and social care data.
- Strengthen the Ageing Well project to help reduce isolation and promote activity.
- Strengthen systems to reduce people being delayed in hospital e.g. Flow hub.
- Through the development of intermediate care services, improve the care planning

system both to simplify and fully involve service users.

### **Mental Health**

- Reshape the rehabilitation pathway.
- Enhance mental health services in Primary Care including the expansion of the Access Point.
- Review the use of mental health older people's beds in the Community Hospital and look to enhance community based supports.
- Refresh the local suicide prevention plan.

### **Physical Disability**

- Plan for the implementation of changes to the Welfare Benefits system in Scotland.
- Plan for and deliver the provision of free personal care for under 65s.
- Contribute to the re-provision of Astley Ainslie Hospital including strengthening community based services.
- Continue to strengthen the provision and accessibility of information about services and supports.

### **Learning Disability**

- Commission new build housing for people with learning disability using clustered models supported by technology enabled care.
- Implement a range of changes to the provision of day services including more local services and more age appropriate services.
- Develop community based services using Positive Behavioral Support for people with complex care needs.

### **Autism**

- Introduce a local "Guide to Autism".
- Devise a mobile app to discover Midlothian through the eyes of people with complex needs.

### **Justice Service**

- Providing people on Community Payback Orders with recognised qualifications through Unpaid Work staff becoming registered trainers.
- Supporting families through the Safe and Together service by working with perpetrators of domestic abuse.

### **Substance Misuse**

- Improve services, especially for people with dual diagnosis of mental health and substance misuse, through the Recovery Hub.
- Increase the role in treatment and support services of people with lived experience.
- Increase employment opportunities for people in recovery by improving engagement in education, training and volunteering.

### **3. RESOURCES**

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#### **Primary Care**

- Increase capacity in GP practices.

#### **Social Care Support**

- Develop more joined up services e.g. the recovery hub; locality work and the learning disability team.
- Strengthen the approach to self-directed support.
- Fully implement new policies such as Fair Access to Care and new legislation including the Carers Act.

#### **Hospitals**

- Strengthen the pathway for people who present at acute hospital whose needs are more social in nature.
- Increase the role of Hospital at Home.
- Reduce the number of people whose discharge is delayed.
- Develop models of care that support reduced attendance at Accident/Emergency.

#### **Carers**

- Full implementation of provision of Adult Carer Support Plans.
- Provision of respite care and short breaks.
- Improve identification of 'hidden carers'.

#### **Workforce**

- Enable all staff to work in a more person-centred way with a stronger focus on prevention and recovery.
- Develop and implement forward looking action plans for each service area.

#### **Communities**

- Develop a stronger locality based approach building on the work through the Penicuik Collaborative.
- Continue to have a focus upon the three areas of deprivation in Woodburn, Mayfield and Gorebridge.

#### **Third Sector**

- Explore viability of establishing a Voluntary Sector Hub within health and social care.
- Continue to develop stronger working relationships both operationally and in relation to service redesign.

#### **Housing and Property**

- Plan the development of a range of extra care housing schemes to support Midlothian residents to be cared for within Midlothian.

#### **Technology Enabled Care (TEC)**

- Improve our use of health and social care data to understand and respond to the needs of the population.
- Introduce TEC systems to lessen the need to travel into hospital for clinics and appointments.
- Use technology to help people remain at home for as long as possible.

## **7. Our Challenges**

### **Covid-19 Pandemic**

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic brought many challenges and much disruption to the Health and Social Care Partnership, its partners and the communities it serves. There was increased anxiety and pressure on many service users, unpaid carers and staff. While challenges may have changed over 2020, they will continue into 2021 and beyond. Covid will continue to influence how we deliver core services, work with partners and communities, deliver Covid related services, and develop our workforce.

### **A growing and aging population**

We are the second smallest Local Authority in mainland Scotland but the fastest growing. This will continue to pose challenges for health and social care services whilst also changing some local communities. As people live for longer many more people will be living at home with frailty and/or dementia and/or multiple health conditions. An increasing number of people live on their own, and for some this will bring a risk of isolation.

### **Higher Rates of Long-Term Conditions**

Managing long-term conditions is one of the biggest challenges facing health care services worldwide, with 60% of all deaths attributable to them. Older people are more susceptible to developing long-term conditions; most over 65s have two or more conditions and most over 75s have three or more conditions. People living in areas of multiple deprivation are at particular risk with, for example, a much greater likelihood of early death from heart failure. They are also likely to develop 2 or more conditions 10-15 years earlier than people living in affluent areas.

### **High rates of mental health needs**

Many mental health problems are preventable, and almost all are treatable, so people can either fully recover or manage their conditions successfully and live fulfilling healthy lives as far as possible. The incidence of mental health issues in Midlothian, while similar to the rest of Scotland, is a concern. Living in poverty increases the likelihood of mental health problems but also mental health problems can lead to greater social exclusion and higher levels of poverty. People who have life-long mental illness are likely to die 15-20 years prematurely because of physical ill-health.

### **Our services are under pressure**

People place a high value on being able to access effective health services when they need them. People expect to receive high quality care services when these are needed whether as a result of age, disability or long term health conditions. Yet there are a number of pressures on our services.

#### **Financial pressures**

Financial pressures on public services are well documented. There is no doubt that we need to do things differently: the traditional approach to delivering health and care services is not financially sustainable.

#### **Workforce Pressures**

The Covid-19 pandemic has and will continue to influence the demand for, and deployment of, the health and social care workforce for the foreseeable future.

Recruitment and retention of nursing, care, allied health professional and medical staff will continue to be a challenge. Mass vaccination programmes and other large scale recruitment programmes related to COVID 19 have increased pressure on an already stretched resource.

How the workforce interacts with people has also changed with an increased use of digital or telephone interactions.

### **Unpaid carers**

Unpaid carers fulfil significant, valuable and wide-ranging roles helping to keep people with care and support needs within our communities. During the pandemic many people have become carers for the first time, or seen changes to their caring role, resulting in them providing significantly more care for their elderly, sick or disabled family, friends and neighbours. Through this period Community services supporting carers have continued to offer a range of support, including digitally, and by telephone, though services supporting the person they provide support to may have been reduced, e.g. respite and day services, resulting in an impact on carers. It is essential that we work to reduce the significant pressure and impact of caring that carers report feeling, by continuing to explore innovative options to enable support to be given to both carers and the cared-for, and for there to be opportunities for breaks from caring leading to caring being more sustainable. We are constantly looking for ways to offer respite and support to reduce the stress and impact of caring.

### **Acute hospitals**

Acute hospitals are under huge pressure due to unsustainable demand and financial restrictions. We need to invest in community based alternatives and work with carers to minimise avoidable and inappropriate admissions and facilitate earlier discharge. By treating people closer to home, or in their own home we can support admission avoidance and improve patient outcomes.

## **8. Health Inequality across Midlothian**

Health inequalities are the unfair and avoidable differences in people's health across social groups and between different groups.

The Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership is increasing the focus on prevention and early intervention, planning service delivery according to greatest need where appropriate, and working to ensure our workforce understands inequality, its impact on people's health and wellbeing and how services should respond to this.

Emerging evidence from the Scottish Government describes that the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis are affecting some groups disproportionately; they are more likely to be infected with the virus and to experience poor health outcomes, including in some cases death. There are also concerns about the widening of economic inequalities with some groups more likely to experience unemployment and poverty.

These are arising from the direct and indirect effects of contracting the illness, as well as the lockdown measures put in place to control spread of the virus.

We work with our partners to draw together our assets, activities and resources, to reduce health inequalities and improve the health of people in Midlothian. We have strong local communities in Midlothian and we harness the strengths they can bring to improving health and wellbeing. Voluntary organisations, volunteers, neighbours and extended families are all vital to helping people who are vulnerable to stay safe and well. Active, supportive communities are fundamental to a good quality of life for people vulnerable through age, illness or disability. It is important to address the harmful effects of social isolation which can lead to poorer physical and mental ill health and an increased risk of hospital or care home admission.

People affected by poverty and social disadvantage have poorer health and are more likely to die at a younger age than their neighbours with more resources. People also experience disadvantage through, gender, sexual orientation, social position, ethnic origin, geography, age and disability.

Domestic abuse is also linked to inequalities. Although being female is the key risk factor for experiencing domestic abuse, not all women are equally at risk. Factors such as age, poverty, economic dependence, disability, homelessness and insecure immigration status can heighten women's vulnerability to abuse or entrap them further.

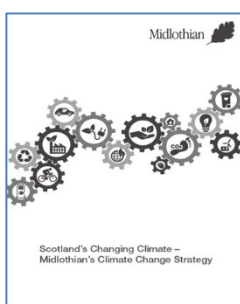
People living in some communities are more likely to be living in poorer health and die younger with higher rates of cancer, stroke, diabetes and heart disease. People with disabilities are more likely to have lower educational achievements, higher rates of poverty and poorer health outcomes. Unpaid or family are more likely to experience emotional stress, anxiety, and fatigue. The impact of caring for others can significantly impact on their own physical, mental, and emotional health and wellbeing, also impacting on finances and relationships.

## 9. Sustainability of Health and Social Care Services

The delivery of integrated care is fundamental in providing sustainable adult and social care services.

- We are working to develop efficient, effective and sustainable approaches to supporting our service users against the challenges we face.
- We are promoting healthy lifestyles and supporting people to manage their own health and live independently.

## 10. Climate Change Emergency



Public services have an important role in shaping the climate change agenda, both in terms of protecting communities from the adverse impacts of climate change and in supporting a transition towards more sustainable living.

Midlothian Council at its meeting of 17th December 2019 declared a climate emergency that requires urgent action. The Health and Social Care Partnership is strongly committed to work in partnership and is supporting



the delivery of the Council's 2020 Climate Change Strategy approved in August 2020 which sets out the ambitious commitment to achieving a net zero carbon status by 2030.

## 11. Self-Assessment

Self-Assessment will be a high priority during 2021-22. The impact of the pandemic on society has been severe. It is essential Adult Health and Care reviews its priorities and its approach to service delivery to ensure it is fit for purpose in the post-pandemic future.

1. **Outcomes Approach:** The service has undertaken to implement a new approach to performance management, which will place Outcomes at the centre. This will entail mapping all activities at strategic and service levels and using this as the basis for improvement plans. Formal self-evaluation will be built into this programme of work with ongoing advice from the Care Inspectorate Link Inspector. The initial phase will focus upon Strategy; Number 11; and Frailty.
2. **Scirocco Exchange - Capacity Building for Integrated Care:** The Scirocco Exchange, a European Self-Evaluation Programme, was put on hold during the pandemic. This will be resurrected during 2021-22 with a focus on three areas: Population Management, Public Engagement and Digital Infrastructure. The plan is to establish links and learn from other European countries, such as the Basque Country, about how we can improve our work in these areas.
3. **Oversight Group:** To ensure self-assessment is embedded as a key requirement during 2021-22 a senior Oversight Group for Self-Evaluation activities will be established. The link inspector from the Care Inspectorate has agreed to join this group in an advisory capacity.

The role of the group will include:

- a. Consideration of self-assessment activities in relation to major service redesign including Home First and Cancer Services.
  - b. Oversee areas of weakness identified through the Outcome Mapping programme.
  - c. Consider actions required as a result of the planned self-evaluation of the IJB.
  - d. Take any action required arising from developing approaches to service evaluation at a national level by bodies such as the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland.
  - e. Ensure the continued implementation of agreed actions from Self-Evaluation exercises including the MSG Improvement Plan and the Scirocco Programme.
4. **Joint Needs Assessment:** We oversee the production of a Joint Needs Assessment (JNA) to assess and forecast the health and wellbeing needs of the adult population in Midlothian. The data captured helps to inform key health care priorities; and focus commissioning in order to improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of individuals and communities. The JNA informs the development of the Strategic Plan helping to ensure



our health and social care services are designed in a planned, evidence based and transparent way to meet the current and future needs of the population.

## 12. Financial Strategy

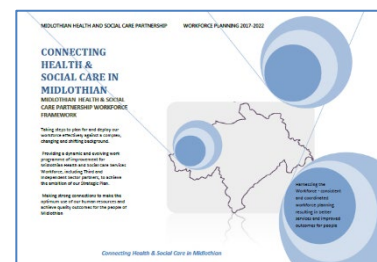


The Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnerships Financial Strategy articulates, in financial terms, how the strategic plan will be delivered whilst also outlining the measures that will be taken to reduce its costs and ensure that the IJB fulfills its responsibilities to the Midlothian population within the financial resources available. The [2019-22 Financial Strategy](#) was approved in September 2018, and a 5 year action plan in June 2019.

The budget for Midlothian Council Adult Social Care services is managed directly by the Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership. The delegated funding to be offered to the Midlothian IJB, and the budget for non-delegated services, was approved at February Council.

## 13. Workforce Plan

Consistent and coordinated workforce planning results in better services and improved outcomes for our service users. The Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnerships [Workforce Plan for 2017-22](#) brings together information about our workforce across all sectors of our partnership and recognises that workforce planning is a central corporate responsibility for NHS Lothian, Midlothian Council and the many voluntary and independent health and care providers which provide services in Midlothian.



The Plan provides a strong foundation to build on, as integration progresses and is currently being refreshed based on Scottish Government guidance to develop a 3 year Workforce Plan no later than 31st March 2022. An interim workforce plan was submitted to the Scottish Government in April 2021 to cover the period from April 2021 to March 2022 setting out a cohesive picture of our workforce across the Health and Social Care Partnership.

## 14. Performance Reporting

### Integrated Joint Board

Performance reports are presented to the Midlothian IJB to monitor a core suite of national and local outcomes that support the delivery of our strategic priorities, and monitor the changes across the system of health and social care which need to take place in the design and delivery of our services. We have a legal requirement to report on the Directions set by the IJB and publish an Annual Performance Report.

The development of an outcome focused approach is being rolled out across the Health and Social Care Partnership to better evaluate the outcomes for service users and carers. Measuring the contribution made by each service is significantly complex and requires a combination of both hard data and qualitative information. The approach being adopted involves the development of Outcome Maps at each level of the organisation to capture the

steps that link the activities of the service to the outcomes that are most important. The use of a new software programme, OutNav, make it possible to capture and link a wide range of evidence for evaluating and demonstrating progress.

### Midlothian Council

Performance reports are presented to Midlothian Council to demonstrate progress against the outcomes in the Single Midlothian Plan and key Service priorities for the year. The report is introduced by a front page highlighting the successes and challenges during the period of review. This is followed by a performance indicator summary, an action section and a performance indicator section. Performance reports are [published online](#).

The Midlothian Council's Balanced Scorecard approach provides a strategic performance management tool which allows each service area to consider and contribute to core Council outcomes and priorities in terms of planning and performance management. The following shows the Balanced Scorecard perspectives that are applicable across the Council Services. Those specifically relevant to Adult and Social Care are highlighted.

Customer/Stakeholder	Financial Health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving outcomes for children, young people and their families.</li> <li><b>Ensuring Midlothian is a safe place to live, work and grow up in.</b></li> <li><b>Creating opportunities for all and reducing inequalities.</b></li> <li>Growing the local economy and supporting businesses.</li> <li><b>Responding to growing demand for Housing and Adult Social Care Services.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Maintaining financial sustainability and maximising funding sources.</b></li> <li><b>Making optimal use of available resources.</b></li> <li><b>Reducing costs and eliminating waste.</b></li> </ul>
Service Improvement	Learning and Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Improve Community engagement Strengthen partnerships.</b></li> <li><b>Improve and align processes, Services and infrastructure.</b></li> <li><b>Manage and reduce risk.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Develop employee knowledge, skills and abilities.</b></li> <li><b>Improve engagement and collaboration.</b></li> <li><b>Develop a high performance workforce.</b></li> </ul>

## Appendix A: Single Midlothian Plan Priorities

### Priorities for 2021-22

The community planning priorities and actions for 2021-22 set out under the 5 themes of community planning are designed to improve life outcomes for the people of Midlothian. These one year priorities are intended as steps towards achieving the three year outcomes (2019-22) and long term vision of the Community Planning Partners.

#### ADULT HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

- People are able to look after and improve their own health and wellbeing and live in good health for longer.
- Develop approaches to prevent or address isolation and reduce the detrimental impact on physical and mental health.
- People, including those with disabilities/long term conditions or who are frail are able, wherever possible, to live independently and in their own home.
- Health and Social Care have contributed to reducing health inequalities For example Work with MFIN to maximise income of people who are vulnerable or at particular risk of inequalities.
- Unpaid carers are supported to look after their own health and wellbeing.
- Multi-agency teams are supported to work in an integrated way and address the workforce challenges including recruitment and retention of health and social care staff.
- Engage with communities effectively. This includes implementation of the Engagement Statement and specific programme with CPP partners to foster asset-based community development approaches to work with communities.
- Work with partners, including communities, to develop the Strategic Plan for 2022-25.

#### COMMUNITY SAFETY and JUSTICE

##### Community justice

- Support people to attend school and/or gain qualifications
- Support people to reduce/manage drug use
- Work with young people to reduce early anti-social behaviour
- Help to improve family life and parenting skills
- Support people with mental health issues

##### Community safety

- Reduce violent crime
- Reduce substance (alcohol and drug) misuse
- Reduce domestic abuse and protect women and girls
- Educate people regarding speeding, drink driving and responsibly parking

#### GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY MIDLOTHIAN CHILD

- Raise educational attainment of care experienced children and young people and reduce the number excluded from school
- Improve access to services for children and young people needing support to maintain mental health and wellbeing
- Reduce child poverty across the county
- Improve access to the specialist services some children and young people require to help them recover from trauma

- Improve outcomes and experiences for care experienced young people transitioning into adulthood
- Raise the attainment of children and young people with additional support needs

#### **IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE IN MIDLOTHIAN**

- The number of households in poverty across Midlothian is reduced
- The number of children living in households in poverty is reduced
- Participation measures for young people over 16 increase
- The qualification levels of people in Midlothian increases
- The number of people who are economically active increases
- The annual turnover of third sector organisations and volunteering rates increases
- Health inequalities for people in Midlothian are reduced

#### **SUSTAINABLE GROWTH in MIDLOTHIAN**

##### **Economy**

- Maximise opportunities for inward investment and funding to the area
- Place based economic development approach to support the regeneration of Town Centres
- Work with Midlothian employers to understand skills needs and provide local employment opportunities
- Driving forward inclusive economic growth by working in partnership with stakeholders, and ensuring business community benefits in the supply chain to maximise opportunities for local people.

##### **Housing**

- Increasing the supply of affordable housing in Midlothian.
- Revise Midlothian Council's Housing Allocation Policy to address the backlog of homeless households already in temporary accommodation, and reduce the time taken to house homeless households in the future.
- Seek alternative models of temporary accommodation to end the need for bed and breakfast accommodation.
- Ensure homeless households are supported to access a wide range of housing options, including the private rented sector.
- Develop a 'housing first' approach in Midlothian to house homeless households with complex needs.
- Develop and implement a Homeless Prevention Strategy.

##### **Climate**

- Place the Climate Emergency and Midlothian Council's Climate Emergency Declaration at the centre of the replacement Midlothian Local Development Plan, and its development strategy and policies, so that the new plan facilitates promotion of carbon neutral development, mitigation of, and adaptation to, the effects of the Climate Emergency

## Appendix B: Service Actions and Performance Indicators 2021-22

Action	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target
Service Priority: Health Inequalities			
Support people living with long term health conditions or facing challenging life situations through the Midlothian Wellbeing service based in Midlothian GP Practices.	31.03.22	Number of people receiving the wellbeing service across all 12 GP Practices.	1,000
Support people vulnerable to health inequalities by referral to the Community Health and Inequalities Team.	31.03.22	Number of people who received a health assessment from the Community Health Inequalities Team.	150
Work with Red Cross to support people who are frail to access financial support available to them.	31.03.22	Additional benefit income to Midlothian residents identified as frail.	£150,000
Deliver Welfare Rights service to people with health and social care needs.	31.03.22	Number of people supported with cancer.	250
Service Priority: Assessment and Care Management			
Reduce waiting times for occupational therapy and social work services.	31.03.22	Average wait time for occupational therapy services.	6 weeks
		Average wait time for social work services.	6 weeks
Continue to implement and monitor self-directed support.	31.03.22	Proportion of people choosing SDS Option 1	Note 1
		Proportion of people choosing SDS Option 2	Note 1
		Proportion of people choosing SDS Option 3	Note 1
		Proportion of people choosing SDS Option 4	Note 1
		Increase % of people who feel they are participating more in activities of their choice.	75%
Service Priority: Carers			
Provide carers with the tools and skills to manage their caring role through the provision of Adult Carer Support Plans and 1 to 1 support.	31.03.22	Number of Carers receiving 1:1 support via VOCAL	500
		Number of Carers receiving an adult carer support plan of their care needs by Adult Social Care.	Data only
		Number of Carers receiving an adult carer support plan of their care needs by VOCAL.	500
Support and enable Adult Carers to access breaks from caring through	31.03.22	Number of carers accessing short breaks through VOCAL Wee	300

Action	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target
the VOCAL Wee Breaks Service.		Breaks Service.	
<b>Service Priority: Older People</b>			
Use efrailty data to inform prioritisation of Care at Home waiting list.	31.03.22	Monitor the percentage of people with moderate to high frailty waiting for a Care at Home package.	<i>Data only</i>
Implement block contracts for external Care at Home Providers	31.03.22	Block Contracts in place	100%
		Contractual requirements fulfilled	100%
Explore and expand options to offer day support to people in Midlothian to reduce isolation.	31.03.22	Number of people accessing day support to reduce isolation	<i>Data only</i>
Support older people to attend activity groups hosted by Ageing Well each year.	31.03.22	Number of people attending activity groups hosted by Ageing Well.	20,000
Consult with extra care housing tenants re the impact of Covid-19 on their health and wellbeing and identify common themes of concern around future engagement in one to one, group or wider community settings to aid future extra care housing service planning.	31.03.22	Number of consultation questionnaires /interviews from Sept 2020 to March 2021.	2
		Number of extra care housing tenants consulted.	67
Work with Building Services and Housing to seek and achieve planning permission for extra care housing projects at Gorebridge and Bonnyrigg.	31.03.22	Planning permission granted for extra care housing at Gorebridge and Bonnyrigg.	2
<b>Service Priority: Mental Health</b>			
Implement Individual Placement Support specialist employment support for people with mental health issues.	31.03.22	Number of people (per annum) in employment or education following intervention.	13
Enhance community resources for social prescribing by running a specific stress control classes in community venues.	31.03.22	Number of stress control classes run in community venues.	1
Expand mental health development in Primary Care.	31.03.22	Number of individuals accessing the Midlothian Access Point.	600
<b>Service Priority: Learning Disability</b>			
Strengthen joint working of Learning Disability Services and care providers to inform longer-term changes in how adult social care is planned and delivered.	31.03.22	Activity of Day Service Providers' Group incorporated into the Remobilisation programme.	1
Support people with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities to live in suitable accommodation by supporting the renovation of Primrose Lodge in Loanhead for three people and with the provision of respite for two people.	31.03.22	Renovation of Primrose Lodge complete.	1

Action	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target
Support people with complex needs in crisis by training practitioners on positive behavioral support as part of embedding PBS in Learning Disability services.	31.03.22	Positive behavioral support pathway to be updated to include staff training at level one.	1
<b>Service Priority: Substance Misuse</b>			
Ensure those most at risk of overdose have continued access to take-home Naloxone kits to.	31.03.22	Number of Naloxone kits replenished by MELD, SMS and Peer Workers.	<i>Data only</i>
Expand the offer of buprenorphine prolonged release injections as part of Medication Assisted Treatment options.	31.03.22	Number of people taking up offer of buprenorphine prolonged release injections.	<i>Data only</i>
Deliver 'rapid access to prescribing and treatment' to help individuals who have dropped out of treatment re-engage.	31.03.22	Number of people assisted via 'rapid access to prescribing and treatment'	<i>Data only</i>
<b>Service Priority: Justice Service</b>			
Further develop the No11 Practitioners Allocation Meeting to maximise the range of services offered to people involved in the justice service by working collaboratively with Health, Substance Misuse Services, Social Work, Housing and third sector agencies.	31.03.22	No 11 Allocation Meeting adapted to support individuals assessed suitable for the Alcohol Problem Solving Court.	1
Increase referrals through the Safe and Together approach for non-court mandated domestic abuse perpetrators.	31.03.22	Number of individuals referred through the Safe and Together approach.	4
Develop a trauma informed service that focuses on tailored, structured intervention and access to wraparound services for men on Community Payback Order supervision.	31.03.22	Service planned, designed and implemented.	1
<b>Service Priority: Adult Support and Protection</b>			
Raise awareness of self-neglect and hoarding.	31.03.22	Number of self-neglect and hoarding referrals which resulted in an investigation.	5
<b>Service Priority: Adults with long term conditions, physical disabilities and sensory impairment</b>			
Deliver weight management programmes to help address and prevent obesity and type 2 diabetes.	31.03.22	Number of people referred to Weight Management Triage.	200
Improve awareness and understanding of sensory impairment among HSCP staff and partners by delivering training with RNIB and Deaf Action.	31.03.22	Number of training awareness sessions.	<i>Data only</i>
Encourage the need for early identification of housing needs and solutions by acting early and having the right housing conversation with individuals.	31.03.22	Number of housing solutions online training sessions.	2
		Number of people who attended housing solutions training	<i>Data only</i>

Action	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target
		sessions	
Support those living with, or previously affected by cancer to stay active by taking part in physical activity to help prevent and manage some of the effects of treatment.	31.03.22	Number of referrals into Move More or equivalent physical activity referral programme from ICJ (Improving the Cancer Journey)	<i>Data only</i>
		% of the total participants in the physical activity programmes	<i>Data only</i>
Collaborative approach to develop a pathway for people living with a neurological condition.	31.12.23	Pathway activity development for 2021/22 completed for people living with a neurological condition.	100%
<b>Service Priority: Digital</b>			
Pursue and explore options to progress incrementally a data exchange mechanism between the Council and NHS Lothian to improve our use of health and social care data.	31.03.22	Data exchange mechanism between the Council and NHS Lothian is in place	1
Lead on development of national technology enabled care project exploring frailty system of care.	31.03.22	Completion of phase 3 and 4 of the national technology enabled care project.	1
Establish a mechanism that provides HSCP Senior Management oversight and proper business partner support within a governance framework for accountability to plan and deliver.	31.03.22	Digital Governance Group established	1
		Identified workstreams agreed	1

**Note 1** *There is no target for self-directed support options as this is included in order to monitor the spread of uptake which is determined by service user choice and includes those under the age of 18.*





# Children, Young People and Partnerships 2021/22

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

***Children, Young People and Partnerships Division -  
People and Partnerships Directorate***

# Children, Young People and Partnerships – key statistics and activity

The last year has brought unprecedented challenges with the COVID pandemic. Service plan priorities were reassessed as staff refocused their activity to critical service delivery, whilst maintaining essential frontline services and providing a range of additional supports to some of our most vulnerable children, families and communities.



**7,943** pupils in primary schools  
**5,427** pupils in secondary schools  
**88** pupils at Saltersgate

*pupil-teacher ratio of 16.1 in primary and 12.5 in secondary*



**9.16%**

living in most deprived compared with 14.37% living in least deprived areas.

**28.9%** of children and young people with ASN



**10** specialist provisions, with approximately **210** children and young people attending

**3.15%** of children and young people recorded as care experienced

**2,168**



children accessing funded ELC, almost all taking up the full **1140 hour** offer, **across 31 council settings** (comprising 2 nursery schools, nursery classes in 26 primary schools and Hawthorn Family Learning Centre, Scots Corner ELC and Vogrie Outdoor ELC); 34 partner provider with whom we commission ELC places and 50 childminders

## During 20/21:

**20+**

Federation of Community Council meetings supported, 15 resilience groups, 10 asset transfer expression of interests and 2 grant programmes supported by the communities team within CLL

**1,010**



young people attended positive destinations projects

**813**



adults and families attended our community projects which includes **FOCUS** (one-to-one employability support for those with multiple barriers), Parental Employability Support project (for parents with multiple barriers to employment) and Beeslack "**lend an ear**" community resilience project

**£938,964**



in external funding awarded to deliver bespoke programmes including No One Left Behind, Young Person's Guarantee, Parental Employability and Foundation Apprenticeships.

**9**

'Domestic Abuse: Revised Approaches in Midlothian' briefings delivered to **125** people across the Council



**169** people attended English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Literacy or Numeracy opportunities for adults

In total, **477** qualifications were achieved through CLL



**4,500+**

households provided with food fund vouchers Dec 20 to March 21



**194**

young people started Duke of Edinburgh awards

**765**

children attended Early Year's settings or activity hubs during summer



**62**

people with a disability/barriers to work received one-to-one support from us

# Introduction

This service plan is a key component of Midlothian's strategic framework which brings together the medium and long-term activity that will ensure our children, young people, families and our communities are supported through and out of the current pandemic, building a sustainable future that is equitable and provides opportunities for all.

Midlothian's children, families and communities have needed urgent and critical support through the pandemic, and the Council has faced demands and pressures never previously experienced. Innovative ways of working have been introduced and services adapted to respond to the needs of our citizens, in particular those experiencing the greatest levels of poverty and inequality, at pace.

This plan describes how Children, Young People and Partnership service areas will continue to build on this learning moving forwards, harnessing the energy, flexibility and creativity demonstrated by our workforce, to embed a culture of continuous improvement and innovation across the Directorate, in partnership with colleagues and services within the Place Directorate.

# Vision

The Children, Young People and Partnerships service plan sets out how we will achieve our vision, what actions we will undertake and how we will measure our success.

Our vision is underpinned by recently agreed value statements that will support our joined up and collective efforts to achieve improved outcomes for children, young people, families and our communities.

## Value statements

To enable our vision we commit to:

- Ensuring Midlothian is a great place to support children, young people and adults to grow and develop. We will strive to support children, young people, adults and families through high quality local resources, including accessible and inclusive environments.
- A trauma informed system that focuses on *safety, trust, choice, empowerment* and *collaboration*.
- A *Nurture* approach that is based on a culture of acceptance, kindness and positive relationships – for our children, young people, adults and staff.
- A *Person Centred approach* – which acknowledges children, young people and adults are part of a system, a family and a community. We will view a child, young person or adult and their needs in context.
- Acknowledge that basic needs must be met before we expect a child, young person or adult to be ready to engage, or learn.
- Focusing on supporting children, young people, adults and communities to engage with local activities and *lifelong learning* thereby securing achievement in its widest sense.
- *Decision making* that is *compassionate* and *needs-led*, acknowledging every child, young person, parent and carer is an individual.
- Consistent, *transparent communication, engagement and co-creation* with stakeholders to ensure the views of children, young people, parents and carers are an active part of the decision making process.
- *Effective collaboration* that recognises and respects each other's skills, knowledge and experience to support a shared focus on positive outcomes for children, young people, adults and families. Including actively partnering with our communities and third sector supports.
- Invest in our staff by providing support and time to enable development and training.
- Strong value based leadership that models the values and evidences commitment to the vision



# Midlothian's profile



people live in Midlothian

We are one of the smallest Local Authority in mainland Scotland but the **Fastest Growing.**



**18%** of people are over 65

**20%** are under 16

**Inequalities:** Midlothian is made up of **115** (SIMD) data zones,

**10** of which fall within the **most deprived areas**, giving Midlothian a **8.7%** local share of data zones within the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland.

**Working population** (aged 16-64) of **57,100** with **1,700** unemployed

**5,900** people furloughed as of March 2021, 2,900 males and 3,000 females

**Life expectancy at birth is:**



## Health Conditions

The leading cause of death rates for both males and females is **Heart diseases and dementia.**



Females  
81.7 years



Males  
77.7 years

## Midlothian's growing and ageing population

Data source: Midlothian Council Area Profile (nrsscotland.gov.uk), SIMD - gov.scot, nomis.web.co.uk



### Population rise

The population of Midlothian is projected to increase from 91,340 to 103,945 by 2028. An increase of 13.8%, which compared to a projected increase of 1.8% for Scotland as a whole. Midlothian is projected to have the highest percentage change in population size out of the 32 council areas.



### Increase in households

The number of households in Midlothian is projected to increase from 39,122 to 45,374 by 2028. This is a 16% increase, which compares to a projected increase of 4.9% for Scotland as a whole. Midlothian is projected to have the highest percentage change in household numbers out of the 32 council areas.



### Increase in over 75s

The 75 and over age group is projected to see the largest percentage increase (+40.9%). As people live for longer many more people will be living with frailty and/or dementia and/or multiple health conditions. This will pose challenges for all our health and social care services whilst also changing the face of some of the local communities.

# Strategic framework

## Single Midlothian Plan 2019-22

Midlothian's Community Planning Partnership set out a vision for the long term future of Midlothian based on two key principles – 'people' and 'place'. The CPPs priorities are to reduce inequalities in four key areas – learning outcomes, health outcomes, economic circumstances and the impact of climate change. There are three geographical areas that additional focused activity to tackle poverty takes place – Mayfield, Gorebridge and Woodburn, recognising the increased inequalities that these communities experience.

## Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Council has recognised the need for a strategic step change in the form of the development and agreement of a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), which sets out budget projections for the next three financial years together with the proposed resource allocation measure that will allow the Council to balance revenue budget for each financial year.

To inform the MTFS, a public consultation visionary exercise was carried out in April 2019 and highlighted the following key priorities for what Midlothian should be like in 2040:

- **A sense of belonging:** Pride in communities, working in partnership, transparency in decision making and accessibility in service provision
- **A balanced infrastructure:** Manageable housing numbers, vibrant towns, protected green spaces, a clean, carbon neutral environment and improved community transport
- **Learning and working together:** High quality education and training, jobs close to where people live, a main provider of local food production, maximising technological solutions
- **Intergenerational opportunities:** Reimagined older people services, being able to grow old in the one community, with support and good access to health and social care.

In addition to the visioning exercise the following key themes were explored as part of the consultation programme:

- **One Council - Working with You, For You** is underpinned by a commitment to deliver a one council strategy which reduces silo working within services, increases cross party working at a political level and uses holistic approaches which place individuals and communities at the heart of our work.
- **Preventative and Sustainable** responds to Communities telling us strongly that they want to live in a clean, carbon neutral environment with protected green spaces and improved environmentally friendly community transport options.
- **Efficient and Modern** recognises that Midlothian Council needs to adapt to change by doing things differently to get improved results and increasing financial sustainability by addressing inefficiencies.

- ***Innovative and Ambitious*** recognises our ambition for Midlothian and to make sure it is a great place to grow, now and in the future.

## **Key drivers for change**

In June 2019 the Council approved the key drivers for change and agreed to adopt a Service Dominant Logic. This places citizens and communities at the heart of our daily work. A key step change is moving from silo-based working to holistic working, focused on continuous improvement and ensuring that we are data-driven and improve performance based on information gathered.

The nine key drivers for change provide a strong foundation to design and shape services. Building on these, learning from the pandemic, in September 2020 Cabinet approved the recommendations from the Nesta 'Listen and Learn' report which was informed from staff insight. The Nesta recommendations articulate Midlothian's Future Vision, centred around:

- Valuing communities
- Remote/flexible working
- Digital first
- Leading new ways of working
- Education

## **Regional Growth**

Midlothian is Scotland's fastest growing mainland local authority with an expected population growth of almost 14% by 2028. In July 2017, Midlothian signed Heads of Terms with its neighbouring local authorities, evidencing their commitment to the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal, a programme to accelerate growth, create new economic opportunities and tackle inequalities. The ambitious programme, worth over 1.3bn, will work with government, learning providers, public and private partnerships, to deliver transformational change across the following five themes:

- Research, development and innovation
- Integrated regional employability and skills
- Transport
- Culture
- Housing

Complementary to the deal is Midlothian's extensive and ambitious Capital Programme, circa £0.8 billion. This includes a number of capital investment and regeneration projects that are enhanced by this regional partnership, and a number of innovative expansion projects that respond to Midlothian's local growth agenda,

The Children, Young People and Partnership's service areas makes a meaningful and measurable contribution towards the strategic framework, described in the performance section of the plan.



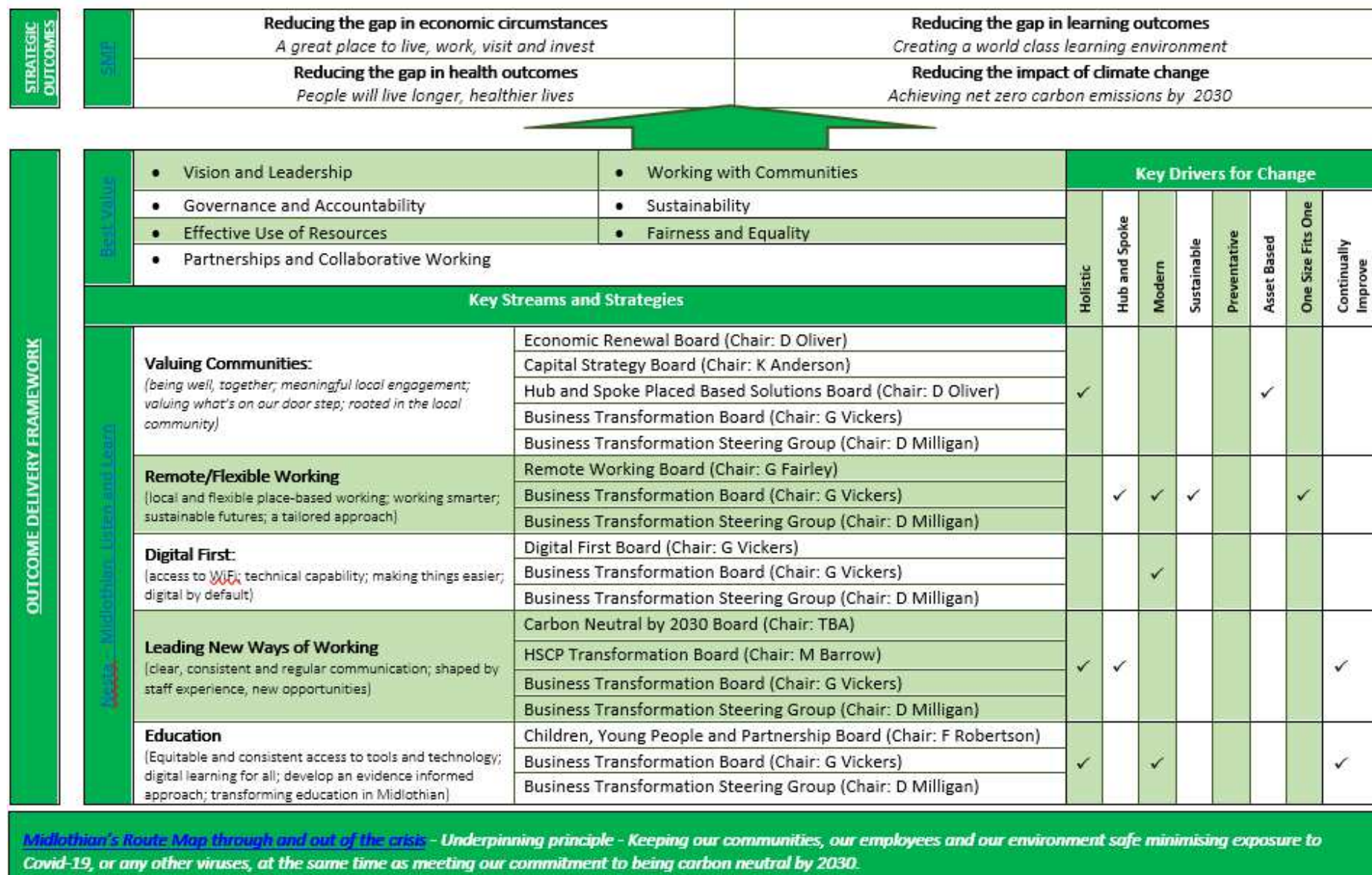


Figure 1: Strategic framework

# Children, Young People and Partnerships

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

The challenges for Midlothian continue to grow with the impact of COVID-19 and our recovery out of the pandemic, the growing and ageing population and the increasing demand for services that this brings. Population growth over the next 10 to 15 years will see Midlothian remain the fastest growing Council in Scotland. A 0-15 population increase is projected at 20% and 75+ population increase is projected at 100% between 2014 and 2039. Over the last year we have also seen 6,700 residents furloughed in Midlothian due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pace of growth demands additional capacity within the school estate to cope with the projected increase in pupil numbers and the associated children's and education services to support this growth. As part of work to address the issue of significant population growth and demographic changes within Midlothian, the key drivers of change in delivery of sustainable and transformational services and regeneration of our communities must be viewed holistically.

Children, Young People and Partnerships is made up of a number of services, focussed on communities and lifelong learning, education, employability, early intervention and prevention and looked after children. This directorate service plan provides a summary of each of the service areas key successes and achievements as well as the key priorities for the coming year.

# Service Areas

## Communities and Partnerships

### Community Planning

This service area takes a lead in supporting the five themes of community planning, the Community Planning Working Group and Community Planning Board. We do this through the production of the Single Midlothian Plan, Midlothian Profile, The Midlothian Strategic Assessment, supporting neighbourhood plans, hosting the annual engagement conference with partners and ensuring robust scrutiny of the achievements and impacts of community planning are in place and reported.

Over the last year the team supported 20+ Federation of Community Council meetings, 15 resilience groups, 10 asset transfer expression of interests and 2 grant programmes.

### Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability (CLLE)

The Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability (CLLE) Service has a statutory duty to work with communities, young people, adults and families to improve their life chances and the quality of life of their communities. We do this by working with local people and participants to build skills for learning life and work specifically offering:

- Community capacity building support to community groups including setting up groups, securing funding, asset transfer and support to community councils
- Opportunities to get back into learning and secure qualifications for all ages including through family learning, literacy, numeracy and ESOL services.
- Employment support to adults to secure a job, get a better job or change careers.
- Support to young people to secure positive destinations through our own and externally funded programmes for example Foundation Apprenticeships and Youth Guarantee programmes
- Opportunities to take part in youth work activities including youth clubs, Duke of Edinburgh and other group work opportunities including volunteering.
- Opportunities through our vocational skills centre
- Support for equality protected characteristic groups including poverty.

## Children's Services

Children's services have a range of statutory duties delivered through the following services and teams:

- **3 x Early Intervention & Prevention Teams** – undertake all initial assessments, child protection, short term work, report writing and parent capacity assessments.
- **2 x Early Intervention & Prevention Development Officers** – support early years, primary and secondary schools including 3<sup>rd</sup> sector partners to identify supports for families who require additional support.

- **0-12 Permanence Work** – work with children who are looked after at home and away from home, who are assessed as requiring permanent care out with their parents care, report writing for children’s hearing, permanence panels and court and parenting capacity assessments
- **12+ (12-26) Care Experienced Young People/Continuing Care and After Care/Corporate Parenting** - manage all allocated cases via looked after process or those who are in continuing care placements or after care. Also manage cases for 16-18 year olds who have come into the justice system. Report writing for courts and children’s hearings, and ensure that everyone is aware of their duties under corporate parenting.
- **Residential Services** - care for and support those young people who reside in Midlothian’s own children’s houses.
- **Family Placement Team – Fostering/ Adoption/ Kinship** – ensure there are sufficient foster carers and adopters to meet the needs and to offer ongoing support and training to them including kinship carers.
- **Hawthorn Family Learning Centre** - offer support and guidance to parents pre and post birth. Also offer ongoing support to families via various groups and work with education to offer 1140 hours within the centre
- **Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO)**: IRO’s chair all child protection, looked after away from home and looked after at home reviews. They ensure that planning is being progressed and highlight and report on any drift or barriers within the care planning. They provide a monthly quality assurance report to senior officers highlighting good practice, areas for development and any particular trends within practice. This information is shared with team leaders and our learning and development colleagues to inform future training needs.

## Education

The Education Service consists of the following services and teams:

### Additional Support Needs (ASN)

Delivers the statutory duty to ensure that additional support needs are met through:

- Inclusive practices and support in all mainstream schools
- 6 specialist provisions in mainstream primary schools; 4 secondary schools and one special school
- Specialist outreach teachers and professionals supporting young people with specific additional needs.

### The Education Leadership Team

Delivers the following services to fulfil the duties set out in statute:

- Improve the quality of Early Learning and Childcare and schools through support and challenge of schools to improve to ensure a consistency of service
- Support for probationers, newly qualified teachers; policy development and quality assurance
- Strategic leadership of the development of the curriculum including literacy

- and numeracy
- Strategic direction of learning, teaching and assessment
- Strategic planning and delivery of Career Long Professional Learning and Leadership
- Liaison with national groups and forums for education
- National and local policy relating to education
- Strategic resource planning for schools
- Tracking and monitoring of pupils via attainment and achievement
- Prepare ELC and schools for inspection including Care Inspectorate.

#### Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)

Delivers the statutory duty to provide ELC to entitled two year olds and children from the term after their third birthday. In Midlothian we provide a flexible service for parents and children through delivery of 1140 hours expanded Early Learning and Childcare provision in:

- 2 nursery schools, a standalone setting at Scots Corner, an outdoor ELC setting at Vogrie and Hawthorn Family Learning Centre
- Nursery classes in 26 primary schools
- 34 partner providers with whom we commission ELC places and 50 child minders.

#### Digital Learning Team

Implements and delivers Midlothian's Digital Learning Strategy, specifically:

- Advise and quality assure the use of technology to enrich learning and teaching in Midlothian schools
- Deliver the statutory duty to safeguard young people's use of the internet
- Support assistive technology solutions for learners with additional support needs
- Provide professional learning opportunities on the use of digital technology, including in-class support for pupils and teachers
- Incubate innovative projects and emerging technologies within the Digital Centre of Excellence
- Facilitate the implementation of online tools for learning, including ensuring compliance with data security requirements
- Manage the deployment of mobile devices for, including iPads and Chromebooks, within the Midlothian Schools network.

#### Educational Psychology Service (EPS)

The EPS has a statutory function to provide advice to the local authority, social work services and parents on the education of children and young people with Additional Support Needs. The five core functions are:

- Assessment
- Intervention
- Consultation
- Training
- Research



The EPS also provides advice and training for the general school population and delivers development activities across the authority on a range of topics to promote high quality education for all pupils on a range of topics to promote high quality education for all pupils

#### Additional Support Needs

Delivers the statutory duty to ensure that additional support needs are met through:

- Inclusive practices and support in all mainstream schools
- 6 specialist provisions in mainstream primary schools, 4 secondary schools and one special school
- Specialist outreach teachers and professionals supporting young people with specific additional needs.

#### School Years

Delivers the statutory duty to:

- Provide primary education through provision in 31 primary schools
- Provide secondary education through provision in 6 secondary schools and 1 special school.

#### Education Resources and Performance Teams

These teams are responsible for:

- Pupil Placement
- Pupil Roll Projections
- Learning Estate Planning including school catchment areas, advice on new schools and extensions, statutory consultations
- Scheme of devolved school budget management (DSM)
- Authorise significant school expenditure and HT purchase cards
- Staffing allocations
- Job sizing for teachers
- School and Early Years (EY) staff recruitment
- Partnership Funded Provider ELC payments
- Project support for EY expansion
- Performance and improvement reporting
- Information management and data analysis

# Performance and Continuous Improvement

Due to the events of the last year, it is recognised that priorities from the 2020/21 service plan have not all been realised. In addition, we are still responding to the ongoing pandemic emergency which add significant pressure to the Council's resources.

To inform the actions for each of the service areas plans, a review of the 2020/21 action plans was undertaken. Actions were assessed against the following criteria:

- progress to date
- alignment to the strategic outcomes
- contribution to the recovery through and out of the pandemic

## Communities and Partnerships - Key Successes and Achievements

The Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability Service (CLLE) have been supporting communities in partnership with the Red Cross to provide support with prescription delivery and shopping during the pandemic. The team have been a key partner in the delivery of the vouchers for the Midlothian Food and Key Essential Fund delivering 4613 vouchers and fuel support.

The team have continued to deliver on their responsibility to support all age groups to build skills for learning life and work. The learning offer has been blended online and face to face in small groups or gate visit when permitted. The team have also supported vulnerable individuals' specifically young people, families seeking employment and those accessing support through our literacy, numeracy and ESOL Service. The family learning offer has been recognised as having significant impact on participants by Education Scotland. CLL has provided one to one support to 473 adults and young people over the course of the last year in a variety of settings e.g. gate visits. Although overall engagement with local people through face to face contact was significantly reduced due to COVID-19 restrictions and lock downs, new engagement recovery targets are being revised for the next year.

In addition the volume of grants that have been on offer to young people and adults to support them into further training or employment are being progressed. Significant funding (over £1.5 million) has been secured for employability programmes including Foundation Apprenticeships, No One Left Behind, Modern Apprenticeships, third sector Kickstart partnership, Parental Employability Support and the young person's guarantee. School Leaver Destination figures published in Feb 2021 was encouraging at 94.7% and ninth across Scotland despite challenging circumstances.

We have now entered into the strategic planning phase to deliver on the new Community Learning and Development partnership plan for 21/24 which will be presented to council and the community planning partnership in September 2021. This will cover the joined up learning and communities offer, staff development needs, identify unmet need and ensure provision is adequate and efficient to meet our statutory duties as per the Education Act (1980).

## **Children's Services - Key Successes and Achievements**

### **Early Intervention and Prevention**

The three Early Intervention and Prevention teams have operated an office based duty and assessment service during the pandemic, and have seen an overall 20% increase in referrals this year. This increase has placed additional demands on the Early Intervention and Prevention service and in response to this, and the requirement to better manage the transition of work between them and other service areas, we are in the process of reviewing thresholds for intervention and how we manage Child Protection, Looked After Children, Looked After and Accommodated Children and permanence work.

It is hoped that this will allow us to re-focus on earlier intervention and, through consultation, work more collaboratively with our partners in Education and Health. We are therefore proposing a short term pilot in Early Intervention and Prevention with the establishment of a separate standalone team which will review and progress the highest tariff and complex cases in a timely manner. The two remaining teams will focus on referral assessments and the short term non statutory intervention work. Both teams will remain involved in providing a duty service.

### **Safe and Together**

Over the past year we have delivered nine 'Domestic Abuse: Revised Approaches in Midlothian' briefings to 125 people across the council and are training a further 19 workers in the Safe and Together core principles. Nine managers are also completing the supervisory training. Our second annual audit is now due to be completed to evidence how this training is impacting on practice.

We are continuing to develop the Families First Perpetrator programme and are now rolling out referrals into this programme to partner agencies. We acknowledge that we need to continue to develop work with perpetrators of Domestic Abuse and are in the process of introducing a Developing Dads Group that will create informal steps to engage with Safe and Together principles to support preparatory work to reflect on the impact of their behaviour on family functioning.



### **Family Placement Team**

Children's services have a Family Placement Team who manage fostering, adoption and continuing cares services, all of which are regulated. The team has the responsibility of recruitment and assessing all potential foster carers and adopters. In addition to recruitment and assessment, the team are also involved in running a number of evening and weekend groups to prepare potential carers as well as provide support groups and offer ongoing post fostering and adoption support to ensure that they are suitably skilled and supported to undertake this task.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, detailed that as of April 2015, a young person born after 1 April 1999 who is looked after in foster, kinship or residential care is eligible to remain in their current care placement until they turn 21. The 2014 Act builds on the principles of the 'Staying Put' guidance and places a duty on local authorities to formally support looked-after young people to remain in their care placement post 16. Once in continuing care the young person will no longer be defined as 'looked after' though they will continue to receive the same supports. In 2019 Midlothian Council became a registered continuing care service - this involved having to develop the infrastructure, policy and processes to develop the service.

Throughout the last year we have continued to recruit and train foster carers despite the restrictions, in addition to holding fostering and permanence panels, thus ensuring that the future planning for our children and young people did not cease.

### **Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs)**

IRO's are a critical part of children's services with regard to continuous improvement, in that they offer a quality assurance role ensuring that all statutory reviews are held within timescales and reports are written with a care plan that meet an agreed standard. Their findings are shared monthly with senior officers in the first instance to discuss good practice and identified areas for improvement. This information is then shared with team leaders and learning and development colleagues who devise a training plan based on their findings. The IRO also has a role to play in ensuring policies are updated as and when new legislation comes into force.

### **Residential care**

Midlothian Council undertook a review of its care provision for young people in 2018/19 and redesigned the provision based on local need. The data available highlighted that while there was a decrease in young people being accommodated, there was a significant increase in young people with complex and enduring needs which could not be met locally. Children's Services entered into a collaborative partnership with Barnardo's who agreed to provide the staffing and skills needed to keep our young people within their own community through the use of an existing provision.

We now have three sites:

- Woodburn Court: 5 beds
- Lady Brae: 4 + 1 emergency bed
- Pentland way (Barnardos): 4 beds for complex care

The review also included further investment in our workforce through the provision of additional care home senior staff alongside an extensive leadership and staff learning and development programme. Key to the various learning and development opportunities; safe and together, confident staff-confident children, trauma informed and relationship based practice, is introducing a nurturing approach throughout our care homes. An overarching document called 'Building Positive Relationships' was introduced after consultation with staff and carers from across the Local Authority.

Future planning for our young people include:

- Three young people aged 17 years on Continuing Care basis – staying put as we are their home.
- One young person about to transition to National Housing Project – own secure tenancy for life.
- Five young people at college, introduction to care, early years and childcare and hair and beauty.
- Four young people on Lifelong Learning and Employability Pave programmes gaining qualifications, employability skills.
- Two young people whose presenting behaviours included high levels of violence and abuse have transitioned back to us from secure care and close support
- Both the above young people are settled and engaged in learning and have requested continuing care.

### **External Residential Provision**

Children's services have seen a marked reduction in children and young people being placed externally. However, our recent data suggests that there is a real change in the age and profile of the few children who have been placed externally, mainly due to the level of distress and trauma these children aged 5-12 present. Some small children are unable to cope with the intimacy, which is part of family living, and can only cope with residential provision at that point in their lives. In February 2021 Midlothian Council agreed funding for a local therapeutic environment for a small number of children to help them heal and recover from their previous experiences and in doing so be able to be reintroduced into family living. A project board has been established to begin planning with the aim of being fully functioning in April 2022.

### **Family Group Decision Making**

In 2019, Children's Services decided to pilot a Family Group Decision Making service. This tailored service meant there was an opportunity to meaningfully involve, engage and work with families at an earlier stage. The intention was that Family Group Decision Making would become a central feature of the supports offered to families when decisions need to be made about how best to support, protect and care for children at risk of being accommodated.

During the period October 2019 - October 2020, the service managed 45 referrals which is comparable with the more established and larger Family Group Decision Making services across Scotland. Since October 2020 – January 2021, the service has already received 25 referrals with only two families choosing not to engage. This decrease in non-engagement demonstrates that with the appropriate resources local families will engage.

Given the success of the project we have agreed that Family Group Decision Making service will be part of our core business going forward. We are currently negotiating the composition of the service. While the project was originally attached to the Family Placement Team, it is more appropriate the services sit within the auspices of early intervention going forward.

In addition, Midlothian Council has a proven track record in its approach to working with kinship carers. Local kinship carers have long been regarded as crucial to caring for our children and are viewed as a valued and respected group. Historically, Midlothian have had high numbers of kinship carers though we have noted an increase in the number of kinship placements made recently and believe this is due to the success of the Family Group Decision Making Project. While this growth area is to be welcomed, we do acknowledge that our current kinship resources are directed towards the assessment and care planning demands of kinship care. As a consequence, there is little time to provide early interventions and supports within the wider community. Our proposal is that we align early intervention and engagement with kinship care alongside the Family Group Decision Making Service.

### **0-12 Team**

Permanence planning remains the primary focus for the 0-12 Team. This area of work is highly technical and requires skilled workers who are able to produce analytical reports that are written to a high standard; have a developed understanding of the legislation that governs their practice and are confident in assessing and managing risk.

### **12+ Team**

The 12+ Team is a resilient; robust; skilled and experienced team who work with children; young people and adults from the ages of 12 to 26. This service user group can often be chaotic and unpredictable and this requires the team to be flexible; creative and realistic in their approach. The team have established relationships with a number of stakeholders including NHS Lothian, local

schools/colleges, Police Scotland, National House Project, Community Lifelong Learning and Justice. The partnership work with the Community Lifelong Learning team is a particular example where a collaborative approach is helping to keep young people in local schools and communities where ordinarily they would be at risk of accommodation and/or school exclusion. It is extremely rare for the 12+ Team to remove a child from their home/community setting – this practice and culture has developed over time and is aligned to the current national drivers (The Promise).

### **Corporate Parenting**

Corporate Parenting duties are part of a suite of support introduced by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 in order to offer support for looked after children and care leavers. All looked after children and all young people who were looked after on or beyond their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday and who are under the age of 26, are entitled to this support.

Midlothian Council's revised Corporate Parenting Plan (2020-2023) was launched on 3rd December 2019. The plan brings together care experienced young people, senior representatives from the Council and other key stakeholders across the community planning partnership on issues that are important to children and young people with care experience. This group is called the Champions Board and the Board meets 4 times a year to review the plan.

In addition to the Champions Board and in order to widen and encourage participation with care experienced young people, there are a range of groups held, including a fortnightly core group for 12-26 year olds, monthly satellite groups at each of Midlothian's secondary schools and sessions for the mini-champs (under 12s). All of the groups focus on the positives and negatives of care in Midlothian, with a key focus on education; employment; health & safety, housing, care, communication and relationships.

### **Hawthorn Family Learning Centre**

COVID-19 has had a profound impact on Hawthorn and the way the service has been run. Most significantly, restrictions have limited the ability to provide day care and family support in the usual fashion, and yet it provided opportunities to learn, to try new and creative solutions and continue to develop our service and support for families and the community.

The team were an active part in providing whole family support via a Hub in March – August supporting existing children, their siblings and new families. Over 18 weeks of lockdown and school holidays Hawthorn provided 89 days of support. This included support for 121 children from 63 vulnerable families. During this time, 2162 children crossed the door, were provided food and supported with learning and activities.

The community engagement during COVID-19 lockdown and the increase of referrals has evidenced the changing nature of the service and the change in the community perception of the support that Hawthorn can provide.

Based on the learning from COVID Hawthorn has made a range of changes to make referral and induction to the service easier, to reintroduce 3-5 placements, routinely provide home learning packs and extend our registration and support from birth to the end of primary school. 2021 will provide new opportunities with the introduction of 1140 hours, being supported by the long awaited service and restructure. The intention is that staff will be recruited in the new structure before the end of the year.

### **Quality Assurance**

The Independent Reviewing Team is responsible for reviewing the plans of children and young people subject to Child Protection Registration or Looked After procedures - this includes both children and young people accommodated out-with parental care and children/young people looked after at home. The team is pivotal in improving the outcomes for children and young people. The Independent Reviewing Team can question and offer advice on the key areas of a child and young person's life such as health, education, well-being, and future planning.

#### Children's Services Quality Assurance Framework

The Children's Services Quality Assurance Framework is now well established and used as reference for practice. The standards within the Quality Assurance Framework have an impact on existing policy and both are being continuously revised and amended to reflect improvement in practice. The Independent Reviewing Team is in the process of reviewing the guidance and templates in place for all Looked After and Accommodated Children (LAAC)/Looked After Children (LAC) and child protection case conferences. The purpose of this is to streamline the quality of minutes produced, while re-focusing on the purpose of each and every meeting held. The team audit a number of individual case files as well as undertake audit on behalf of child protection; safe and together and other practice issues as directed by senior managers. The team are in the process of reflecting and reviewing their own practice in light of the Independent Care Review, in particular The Promise.

#### Joint Inspection of services for children and young people in need of care and protection in Midlothian

Between February and March 2020 the Care Inspectorate completed a joint Children's Services Inspection in Midlothian with the following grades awarded:

- Leadership and Direction – GOOD
- Impact on Families – GOOD
- Impact on Children and Young People – GOOD

- Improvement in the safety, wellbeing and life chances of vulnerable children and young people – GOOD

Working collaboratively with partners in health, police, education, SCRA and the third sector, a partnership approach will now be taken to implement an action plan to meet the areas identified for improvement. These areas for improvement and subsequent plan will monitored via the Getting It Right for Every Midlothian Child (GIRFEMC) Board.

## Education - Key Successes and Achievements

### Education Service Improvement Priority 1: Attainment and Achievement

#### 1.1 Improve attainment within the BGE, by focusing on:

*a) Curriculum Frameworks: Planning, tracking and assessment, curriculum design and progression.*

An initial meeting was held with members of the Education Strategic Group and a senior Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI) to gather examples of good practice and to outline a programme of support and engagement. This was put on hold when the second lockdown began but has restarted in May 2021. A further meeting is scheduled, with guaranteed continued support from HMI for a programme of supports for session 2021/22.

*b) Innovative pedagogical approaches and enhanced use of digital technology to support learning.*

Teaching staff have demonstrated an increased use of digital technology in their classroom practice, both while delivering learning remotely and since the re-opening of schools. The Digital Learning Team have supported practitioners to maximise the impact of digital tools on attainment and achievement, working with a number of target schools and delivering over 100 hours of professional learning opportunities as live and pre-recorded videos sessions and individual mentoring.

To assure the quality of remote learning across Midlothian Council, a programme of virtual school visits was in place. Schools Group Managers undertook virtual quality assurance visits with every school Head Teacher and where appropriate senior leadership teams to discuss the remote learning offer, the school's own approaches to quality assurance and self-evaluation, and to provide appropriate support and challenge. The frequency of these visits varied according to need. These visits also focused on wellbeing and supporting vulnerable learners. All Head Teachers provided information on planning learning, assessment, tracking and monitoring, digital exclusion, and partnership working. Schools also provided more detailed self-evaluation data in relation to

safeguarding and their use of digital technology. Each school was asked to submit a digital return with screenshot examples of the remote learning on offer at each stage. This provided an insight into the nature, quality and range of the online experience for children and young people. This exercise generated further discussion within schools and provided opportunities for dialogue and moderation of remote learning. The submissions allowed the digital team to identify issues which they could address by providing further support, as well as examples of effective practice worth sharing across all schools.

Local authority officers used this information to gain an authority-wide overview of challenges, support needs and examples of good practice. Information from quality assurance processes supported planning for targeted and proportionate support. The data and evidence gathered was used to identify areas which may need authority wide guidance or support. SGMs collated information from each school's tracking of engagement to inform authority-wide intelligence and reporting. Where officers identified effective practice, this was shared at Head Teachers' meetings either sectorally or authority-wide as appropriate. As a result of these approaches, staff were involved in collective problem solving to improve practice and local authority officers have a more detailed and accurate picture of provision across all schools and establishments. Feedback on the approaches used was also sought from parents and carers with positive results received.

#### *c) Early Level Pedagogy*

This priority was not progressed due to the pandemic. It will carry over into session 2021/22.

#### *d) Reduce the attainment gap between the most and least deprived children, including care-experienced children.*

In April, a local authority Scottish Attainment Challenge Impact Evaluation Report was produced in collaboration with our Education Scotland Attainment Advisor. It highlighted the following key strengths in Midlothian with regards to equity:

- Practitioners' increasing understanding of poverty and its impact on health and learning outcomes
- The reduction in exclusions of pupils living in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) quintile 1 in the primary and secondary sectors
- Between 2016/2017 and 2018/2019 improvements in the attainment of pupils living in SIMD quintile 1 as follows:
  - Literacy attainment increased at P4, P7 and S3 (third and fourth levels)
  - Numeracy attainment increased at P4, P7 and S3 (third level)
- Between 2016 and 2019, the number of school leavers attaining qualifications at SCQF level 5 in literacy, and SCQF levels 4 and 5 in numeracy increased

- Progress in closing the poverty-related attainment gap, the gap in attainment between pupils living in SIMD quintile 1 and those living in SIMD quintile 5, as follows:
- Between 2016/2017 and 2018/2019 the attainment gap decreased in reading at P4, P7 and S3 (third level), and in writing at P4 and P7
- Between 2016/2017 and 2018/2019 the numeracy attainment gap decreased at P7 and S3 (third level)
- Between 2016 and 2019, the attainment gap (school leavers) at SCQF levels 4 and 5 in literacy, and SCQF level 4 in numeracy decreased
- The increased attainment of CECYP in literacy at SCQF levels 5 and 6, and in numeracy at SCQF levels 4, 5 and 6

The report states that to build on the progress outlined above and ensure further improvements in outcomes, future developments should include a focus on the following areas:

- Attendance and exclusions, particularly of pupils living in SIMD quintile 1 and Care Experienced Children and Young People (CECYP)
- Maximising the impact of CECYP fund, including an increased focus on raising attainment and increasing positive destinations
- Maximising the impact of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) in closing the poverty-related attainment gap, to include an increased focus on using data to support effective PEF planning
- Q1 attainment, in particular:
  - Attainment levels and gaps at P1
  - Attainment levels and gaps at S3
  - Numeracy attainment and gaps at P1, P4, P7 and S3
  - Attainment levels and gaps at S4-S6

The report also comments that Midlothian schools are alert to poverty and its impact. School staff have an increasing understanding of the barriers faced by pupils most affected by poverty. Schools know their pupils well and with the support of PEF have been working to improve outcomes for pupils and their families. PEF clinics led by the attainment advisor have supported schools in their approaches to closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

Engagement with partners such as the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) with a focus on the cost of the school day, is resulting in schools adapting and improving approaches to become more inclusive. Schools across Midlothian have worked with families to maximise income and ensure families can access entitlements such as free school meals. During the initial school closure period



from March to June 2020, Midlothian Council demonstrated its understanding of the challenges arising from poverty through the introduction of a digital devices programme for families. The local authority, supported by school staff, provided school lunches to primary pupils and lunch payments for secondary pupils. Places in hubs and at Midlothian Council's summer programme were made available to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils in addition to the children of key workers. Schools also demonstrated their commitment to supporting their most vulnerable and disadvantaged families: supporting wellbeing, learning, food insecurity, and financial challenges. Schools report that feedback from families has been very positive in relation to the support provided.

At the start of 2020, the attainment advisor worked with local authority staff to create an initial data set for P1-S3, to support schools in the identification of their poverty-related attainment gaps using SIMD comparisons. The attainment advisor introduced the data set at individual PEF meetings held with almost all schools. Schools reported that they found this information very useful and that discussion of the data helped them to identify future PEF priorities. This work led to two schools, one primary (P1-7 data) and one secondary (S4-S6 data), requesting follow-up data sessions with the attainment advisor. Midlothian Council intends to develop a minimum data set and support schools to improve their data literacy. These areas of work have been included as priorities in the 2020/2021 Service Plan.

Attainment data has not been gathered nationally since 2018/19, and will be collected again in August 2021. A snapshot of current data has been taken in April 2021 which will be quality assured through support and challenge meetings with Schools Group Managers prior to submission.

### **1.2 Improve senior phase attainment through curriculum planning, consortium arrangements and partnership delivery, including addressing the ASN attainment gap for leavers**

Over the past year our secondary schools have had little opportunity to undertake any major curriculum review due to the impact of the pandemic. This academic session has very much been focused on supporting our young people to achieve to the best of their ability whilst adhering to the public health and national education guidance. Secondary schools were making positive progress in expanding and modifying their curriculum offer to meet the diverse needs and aspirations of their learners, including partner delivery. It is anticipated that as COVID-19 restrictions ease, schools will reflect on the impact of the pandemic on curriculum design and delivery, particularly in relation to partner delivery.

As part of our support for our care experienced children and young people a number of interventions have been put in place to improve attainment and engagement in learning, these include:

- Funded support from Artlink – 20 Places for Therapeutic Intervention, for CECYP
- Outdoor Learning – 37 CECYP have ½ day OL intervention from our Principal Teacher, Inclusion and Equity
- Dedicated CSP's for CECYP - 47 have been supported with improving their attendance
- Funding Applications from CECYP/Multi-Agency Teams – 13 pupils/Teams have accessed this fund for:
  - Play Therapy
  - Bedroom Furniture
  - Study Desk
- Dedicated Educational Psychologist (EP) for CECYP (.4fte) – Our EP holds 17 on her caseload and supports their educational progress alongside the school.
- Survey produced for our CECYP, through Midlothian Champions Board, to use 'Pupil Voice' in the effective use of 'their' funding.

With these interventions, Artlink, CSPs, Educational Psychologist and, Outdoor Learning – full evaluations are being carried out to determine the impact on attendance, attainment and/or wellbeing. Each of these evaluations are presented to the Scottish Government in August for the final submission whilst also being strategically reviewed by Education and Children Services Managers.

In addition, School leavers who are looked after typically have lower attainment compared to those who are not looked after. The Education Service continues to work closely with schools and partner services/agencies to raise the attainment and achievement of our care experienced young people. Overall, due to the small numbers in the looked after cohort trends in data tend to fluctuate widely.

## 2020 SQA National Course Awards

Highlights for performance in SQA awards in 2019/20 include:

- The number of course entries for National Qualifications is 10482 (Nat 3 - A Higher) representing an increase of 5% compared to 2019 (9907)).
- Overall pass rates for all qualifications and year groups increased by 0.65% (90.63% 2019/20 compared to 89.38% 2018/19).
- 87.05% of candidates who sat National 5 qualifications passed with an A-C award , an increase of 10.59% on last year's rate of 76.46%
- The percentage of pupils passing Highers decreased by 0.1% (86.65% 2019/20, 86.76% 2018/19).
- Number of pupils sitting Advanced Higher (AH) (250) and passing AH (228), compared with previous year 91.33% 2019/20, (294 + 259) 88.10% 2018/19.
- The pass rate at A-C for National 5 English (88.85%) is below the national (91.25%) pass rate
- The pass rate at A-C for National 5 mathematics (74.03%) is below the national (78.65%) pass rate
- The pass rate at A-C for Higher English (81.06%) is below the national (87.12%) pass rate
- The pass rate at A-C for Higher mathematics (82.20%) is below the national (82.31%) pass rate

### *Senior Phase Qualifications 2020 leavers*

SCQF level	2018/19	2019/20	% point change	VC 2020
3 or better	99.31%	98.84%	-ve 0.77	97.64%
4 or better	96.67%	97.17%	+ve 0.50	95.23%
5 or better	86.01%	84.43%	-ve 1.58	85.60%
6 or better	56.08%	60.62%	+ve 4.54	60.63%
7 or better	19.27%	21.88%	+ve 2.61	21.88%

*Table 1: % of school leavers gaining 1+ at SCQF levels 3-7 in 2019/20 and % point difference to 2018/19*

<b>Literacy</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>VC 2019/20</b>	<b>National</b>
SCQF level 3 or better	97.25%	97.43%	95.12% ( <i>Much greater than VC</i> )	96.18%
<b>Numeracy</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>VC 2019/20</b>	<b>National</b>
SCQF level 3 or better	98.05%	97.30%	95.12% ( <i>Much greater than VC</i> )	96.07% ( <i>Above national</i> )
SCQF level 4 or better	93.23%	92.79%	89.97% ( <i>Greater than VC</i> )	91.56% ( <i>Above national</i> )
SCQF level 5 or better	68.23%	70.27%	66.31% ( <i>Greater than VC</i> )	71.03% ( <i>Below national</i> )
SCQF level 6 or better	20.41%	20.46%	23.51% ( <i>Lower than VC</i> )	28.01% ( <i>Below national</i> )

*Table 2: % of school leavers attaining SCQF levels 3-6 Literacy and Numeracy in 2019/20 and % point change on previous year*

#### *Senior Phase Qualifications: Closing the Gap 2019/20*

##### Comparison SIMD 20% least and most deprived

School leavers living in the 20% most deprived areas typically have lower attainment compared to those living in the 20% least deprived areas. The attainment gap between school leavers living in the most deprived areas and those in the least deprived areas is wider at higher levels of qualifications.

The attainment gap ranges from 7.46 percentage points at SCQF Level 4 to 41.37 percentage points at SCQF Level 6. Overall the gap shows a slight decrease over the last five years across SCQF Levels 3 to 6.

- 90.9% of school leavers from the most deprived areas gained 1 or more qualifications at SCQF Level 4 in 2020, (92.8%% on 2019). The gap between leavers from the most and least deprived areas at SCQF level 4 in 2020 increased by 1.9 percentage points on the previous year.
- 70.1% of school leavers from the most deprived areas gained 1 or more qualifications at SCQF Level 5 in 2020 (73.2% on 2019). The gap between leavers from the most and least deprived areas at SCQF level 5 in 2020 increased by 3.1 percentage points on the previous year.

- 41.6% of school leavers from the most deprived areas gained 1 or more qualifications at SCQF Level 6 in 2020 (34.0% on 2019). The gap between leavers from the most and least deprived areas at SCQF level 6 in 2020 decreased by 7.1 percentage points on the previous year.

The 2019-20 data (Table 3) shows that a higher proportion of secondary pupils from the least deprived areas achieved the SCQF Level grades compared to pupils from the most deprived areas with the gap being greater at Higher levels.

SCQF level	SIMD Q1 (77 leavers)	SIMD Q5 (123 leavers)	Gap % points
1+ Level 4	90.91%	98.37%	7.46
5+ Level 4	70.13%	95.12%	24.99
1+ Level 5	70.13%	95.12%	24.99
5+ Level 5	44.16%	83.74%	39.58
1+ Level 6	41.56%	82.93%	41.37
3+ Level 6	31.17%	70.73%	39.56
5+ Level 6	18.18%	55.28%	37.10

*Table 3: Comparison SIMD 20% least and most deprived*

### Care experienced leavers

School leavers who are care experienced typically have lower attainment compared to those who are not care experienced. The attainment gap between school leavers who are care experienced and those that are not care experienced is lower at higher level of qualifications. The attainment gap increases from 20.3 percentage points on average at SCQF Level 4 to 53.6 percentage points on average at SCQF Level 5.

- 76.9% of care experienced school leavers gained 1 or more qualifications at SCQF Level 4 in 2020 (81.3% on 2019). The gap between leavers who are care experienced and those who are not at 1+ SCQF Level 4 increased from 15.4 percentage points in 2019 to 21.3 percentage points in 2020.
- 30.77% of care experienced school leavers gained 1 or more qualifications at SCQF Level 5 in 2020 (56.25% on 2019). The gap between leavers who are care experienced and those who are not at SCQF Level 5 increased from 29.8 percentage points in 2019 to 53.7 percentage points in 2020.
- Overall, the trend has fluctuated widely due to the small numbers in the looked after cohort.

SCQF level	2019 CA (16 leavers)	2020 CA (13 leavers)	2020 (All leavers – 777 leavers)	% point gap 2020
1+ Level 4	81.25%	76.92%	97.17%	20.25%
1+ Level 5	56.25%	30.77%	84.43%	53.66%
1+ Level 6	25.00%	23.08%	60.62%	37.54%

*Table 4: Care experienced leavers*

### Leavers with Additional Support Needs

School leavers with additional support needs typically have lower attainment compared to school leavers with no additional support needs. The attainment gap between school leavers with ASN and those without ASN is wider at higher levels of qualifications. The attainment gap increases from 3.5 percentage points on average at SCQF Level 4 to 12.8 percentage points on average at SCQF Level 5 and 15.7 percentage points at SCQF Level 6.

- 93.7% of school leavers with an additional support need gained 1 or more qualifications at SCQF Level 4 in 2020 (91.8% on 2019). The gap between leavers with an additional support need and those without in 2020 decreased by 1.4 percentage points on the previous year.
- 71.6% of school leavers with an additional support need gained 1 or more qualifications at SCQF Level 5 in 2020 (70.0% on 2019). The gap between leavers with an additional support need and those without in 2020 decreased 3.2 percentage points on the previous year.
- 44.9% of school leavers with an additional support need gained 1 or more qualifications at SCQF Level 6 in 2020 (33.1% on 2019). The gap between leavers with an additional support need and those without in 2020 decreased by 7.3 percentage points on the previous year.

Table 5 shows the gap in attainment at SCQF Levels 4, 5 and 6 for leavers with additional support needs in Midlothian. The number of leavers with additional support needs increased by 11% from 2019 to 2020.

SCQF level	ASN (285 leavers)	Midlothian (777 leavers)	ASN Gap % points
1+ Level 4	93.68%	97.17%	3.49%
1+ Level 5	71.58%	84.43%	12.85%
1+ Level 6	44.91%	60.62%	15.71%

*Table 5: Leavers with Additional Support Needs*

## **Education Service Improvement Priority 2: Included, Engaged and Involved; Wellbeing and Equity**

### **2.1 Develop a Nurturing Authority- Year 1**

The three year strategy for developing a Nurturing Authority was launched this session at the first Directorate Conference in February 2021. By June 2021 the following will have been completed:

- Communication
  - universal communication to school staff through 4 Nurture articles in the Wednesday Wellbeing Bulletin, as well as 2 Nurture Newsletters across the Directorate
  - internal and external presentations and group discussions at 2 Directorate conferences (February and May 2021)
  - #nurturemidlothian to be set up by June 2021
- Staff development
  - an on-the-ground Nurture Network through Nurture Leads across 40 schools and EY settings and 8 C&F settings has been established
- Resource Bank
  - nurture in practice resources collated and shared with Nurture Leads by email and the EPS website
  - GLOW resource Hub to be set up and populated with resources by June 2021
- Self Evaluation
  - Nurture Self-Reflection Audits shared with all schools, Early Learning and Childcare settings and Children and Families services/teams
  - themes and training needs from these audits will be identified and shared with LA/schools/services by August/Sept 2021

### **2.2 Develop and improve the Health and Wellbeing curriculum to support the wellbeing of all children and young people, from Early Level to Senior Phase.**

This priority was not progressed due to the pandemic. It will carry over into session 2021/22.

### **2.3 Support schools and ELC settings to provide high quality early years services, which focuses on early intervention and prevention.**

This session the extension to the early learning and childcare (ELC) entitlement to 1140 hours per year was postponed as a result of the pandemic. Although this was the case all eligible families in Midlothian have benefitted from the increased hours this year. Midlothian had the infrastructure and workforce in place to introduce the increased hours from August 2020. The Capital works programme continued and additional capacity has been created in both local authority settings and providers in the PVI sector.

The early years workforce in the council increased from around 170 in 2017-18 to over 390 in February 2021, with 30 further staff expected to be recruited over the next year. Much of this increase has been achieved through the Modern Apprentice programme, along with HNC qualification pathways for career changers. Growing our own workforce enables Midlothian to have skilled and qualified staff that ensure high quality ELC provision.

The Quality Assurance programme continued virtually this session and regular virtual meetings and support sessions with council and funded providers have continued throughout the pandemic. The Early Years Pedagogues and Equity and Excellence leads have been based in settings this session due to COVID-19 restrictions. The Care Inspectorate introduced a new Quality Indicator to focus on COVID-19. Almost all inspections have been virtual, with almost all evaluations made from evidence discussed through phone conversations and paperwork submitted. 88% of settings are good or above in Care Inspectorate gradings and targeted support has been given to the remaining 12%.

This work has been recognised as good practice:

- Evaluation of remote learning in one of our settings has been recognised as good practice by Education Scotland and is available as a case study on the Education Scotland website.
- A Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) grant allowed development of a numeracy project across a small group of settings and this project has been endorsed by Education Scotland and is available on their website.
- The four Equity and Excellence leads (E&ELs) funded by Scottish Government give targeted support to identified groups of learners and support closing the poverty related attainment gap. An evaluation by the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland recognised the Midlothian model as good practice. A case study has been published in a report, 'Equity and Excellence Leads: Report on the Care Inspectorate Special Inspection Focus and Update on Development of the Role'.



### Early Intervention and Prevention

The GIRFEC Early Years Subgroup has continued to develop the family learning approach to early year's services and a Midlothian Family Learning Strategy is in development which builds on the successes of the approach in the early years to include children from birth to eighteen. An innovative tier 1 intervention supporting healthy eating and good nutrition has begun and is being piloted in the Mayfield area. Staff have been trained and this work will be developed next session. This will ensure a consistent message across multiagency services to support families with children under 5.

All partners supporting families with children in the early years continued their support throughout the lockdown periods. A mixture of online communication, doorstep visits and engagement with Hub provision ensured that families continued to receive timely interventions and appropriate services. All partner organisations have adapted their early year's services to ensure they are aligned to local and national guidelines and innovative practice has been developed to support parents with children's learning at home.

### Transitions

A Mid Mouse transition and intergenerational project was developed to build back from lockdown and support transitions from ELC to school to "knit our Midlothian community together". This will provide a knitted mouse for each child entering Primary 1 along with a series of stories with associated experiences to promote the principles of successful transition. This project has generated much interest from the community and across Scotland. There has been over 1000 hits to the website containing the knitting pattern and the first social media post reached 32,449 people with 3,816 engagements (latter posts had similar success). There has been an intergenerational impact with knitters of all ages contributing and over 1200 mice created to date.

## **2.4 Implement school-based counselling service (Pilot)**

The School Counselling Service pilot run by Midlothian Young People's Advice Service (MYPAS) was launched at the end of October 2020 and guidance teams in high schools were introduced to their allocated counsellor in early November 2020. The figures below about the numbers of children and young people who have accessed this service reflecting the situation as of end of February 2021 when the latest monitoring data was supplied. Referrals continue to be received and the next round of monitoring data is due in June 2021.

<b>Number of Young People accessing service</b>	61 (11 ended) Approximately 10 currently 'on hold' while not attending school
<b>Predicted to complete</b>	By end March – 18 By end April – 32

With this pilot successfully underway we are now undertaking a competitive tendering process in order to award a new contract for the ongoing provision of a local school counselling service, in line with the Scottish Government's requirement.

The service will be available 52 weeks a year and support at least 250 children and young people annually, helping them to explore, understand and overcome issues in their lives which may be causing them difficulty, distress and/or confusion, with the aim of reducing their emotional distress and improving their mental wellbeing.

The procurement process closes in June 2021 with the new contract due to commence in September.

#### Implement Penicuik Mental Health Project

The Penicuik Mental Health and Wellbeing Project, (Jigsaw), is a whole system of preventative and early intervention approaches to support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.

From September 2020 the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) has worked closely with the participating schools to gather the baseline data for the project and develop a delivery plan for each school.

Delivery and outcomes have been impacted by COVID-19 and a second school closure in January 2021. The EPS made a successful bid to extend the funding from Midlothian Early Action Partnership (MEAP) for 2021-22 in order to continue the project.

The EPS with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) have delivered a 2 session online programme, Parent Anxiety Workshop (PAW) to 29 families from both secondary and primary schools. Feedback was consistently positive.

The EPS has also delivered a school development session on staff wellbeing at Cornbank Primary School. Further staff development sessions on Trauma Informed Practice are planned for Strathesk Primary School (May) and Penicuik High School (2021-22). Pupil workshops have been delivered by the EPS jointly with CLL on Digital Well Being for the P7 class at Cornbank. The EPS is currently delivering the Headstrong Programme (5 sessions) to all P7s in Penicuik.

All the schools are participating in SHINE (Schools Health and Wellbeing Improvement Research Network) mental health surveys to support evaluation of the project overall.

#### Implement Strategy for Staff Wellbeing

The Staff Health and Wellbeing Strategy group was convened to address an aspect of the Midlothian Service Plan Priority 2. The group's aims are to create a culture and ethos in which everyone feels they are part of a nurturing authority and where Mental Health and Wellbeing is promoted and supported at all levels.

The group comprises Head Teacher, Depute Head Teacher, Educational Psychology and Union representatives, and is chaired by the Education Support Officer for Leadership and Professional Learning.

Since October, the group created wellbeing questions for Head Teachers which were included in School Visit 1. The Head teacher question answers showed that Head Teachers felt they were well supported. From the success of the Head Teacher questions, the group moved to consult teachers, creating a wellbeing survey to baseline existing provision and approaches. All staff were encouraged to complete the survey in January 2021, which also asked for focus group volunteers. The survey had 37 responses, with 9 people taking part in the focus group session in March.

The survey and focus groups identified that staff felt there are a variety of health and wellbeing supports available and they can access them either through Midlothian corporate benefits or through their schools. Schools shared approaches which they felt other schools may find useful, and local supports were often more valued than generic Midlothian supports. Currently all Health and Wellbeing supports and services are shared through the weekly Education Bulletin. The survey highlighted that an easily accessed central storage place for all Health and Wellbeing materials and supports would be useful. The next step for the group is to have a portal on Athena readily accessible to all who work in schools.

## Education Service Improvement Priority 3:Self-Improving Systems

### 3.1 Empower leaders at all levels, leading to an empowered system.

*a) Support schools to develop a quality improvement framework to achieve Good or better in Learning, Teaching and Assessment (linked to 1.1)*

*b) Improving quality of leadership at all levels*

Since 2017, schools have been required to report on the evaluations for three of the main National Improvement Framework Quality Indicators. All schools are required to carry out ongoing self-evaluation with pupils, staff and parents. They then use this evidence to inform an overall judgement in the following three key quality indicators from How Good Is Our School 4? (HGIOS? 4) using a six point scale.

<b>1.3 – Leadership of Change and Improvement</b>	Almost all
<b>2.3 – Learning, Teaching and Assessment</b>	Almost all
<b>3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</b>	Almost all
<b>3.2 – Raising Attainment and Achievement</b>	Almost all

*Table 6: Primary School NIF Quality Indicators 2020/21 evaluated as satisfactory or better:*

Explanation of terms of quality used by Education Scotland in line with NIF reporting:

<b>All</b>	<b>Almost all</b>	<b>Most</b>	<b>Majority</b>	<b>Minority</b>	<b>A few</b>
100%	91% - 99%	75% - 90%	50% - 74%	Less than half 15% - 49%	Less than 15%

*c) Delivering a minimum data set and supporting data literacy to improve self-evaluation.*

At the start of 2020, the attainment advisor worked with local authority staff to create an initial data set for P1-S3, to support schools in the identification of their poverty-related attainment gaps using SIMD comparisons. The attainment advisor introduced the data set at individual PEF meetings held with almost all schools. Schools reported that they found this information very useful and that discussion of the data helped them to identify future PEF priorities. This work led to two schools, one primary (P1-7 data) and one secondary (S4-S6 data), requesting follow-up data sessions with the attainment advisor. This priority needs further development and will be carried over into Session 2021/22.

### 3.2 Develop Parental Engagement Strategy

This priority will be carried forward into Session 2021/22. The recruitment of the Pupil and Parent Engagement Officer will take place in May 2021 and this priority will be one of the key tasks of the new post holder.

### Education Service Improvement Priority 4: Lifelong Learning and Career Ready

#### 4.1 Improve the number of young people entering further and higher education (see 1.2):

*a) Implement a positive destination strategy - Improve the number and type of positive destinations including for young people with ASN and care-experienced young people*

#### Positive Destinations

##### Initial School Leaver Destinations

Information on the initial destinations of school leavers is provided from the 'Opportunities for All' shared dataset managed by Skills Development Scotland (SDS). The data on initial post school destinations is taken from the February 2021 release of the senior phase benchmarking tool, 'Insight' and forms one of the four National Benchmarking measures. The data provides information on the outcomes for young people as recorded in October 2019, approximately three months after leaving school.

Post school participation in Midlothian shows an improving trend since 2008/09 with almost all young people (94.47%) in a positive destination in 2019/20, and 1.1 percentage point above the national average. The main findings in 2019/20 are as follows:

- 94.5% of 2019/20 school leavers were in a positive destination approximately three months after leaving school compared to 93.8% in 2018/19.
- The percentage of leavers in positive initial destinations has increased 1.1 percentage points over the five year period from 2014/15 when 93.4% of pupils were in a positive destination.
- 70.27% of school leavers continued their education within Higher or Further Education establishments in 2019/20 compared to 55.4% in 2018/19.
- The percentage of leavers entering employment decreased from 35.8% in 2018/19 to 20.2% in 2019/20.
- In 2019/20 92.31% of our care experienced young people went into a positive destination compared to 81.40% nationally.

- In 2019/20 92.98% of leavers with additional support needs went into positive destinations compared to 89.64% nationally.
- The percentage of school leavers living in the most deprived areas in a positive initial destination increased by 5.6% (86.6% in 2018/19 to 92.2% in 2019/20)

Overall the gap in positive destinations between leavers from the most deprived areas and the least deprived areas is 4.5% - an decrease of 8.7% on 2018/19.

#### Follow-up School Leaver Destinations

In March of each year, SDS collects further information on the destination of school leavers (follow up destination). This information is presented in a Scottish Government publication in June, with further breakdowns by pupil characteristics (e.g. stage of leaving and gender). The leaver cohort for the National Statistics publication includes S3 leavers which aren't included in the initial leaver destinations publication or Insight stats. The Midlothian 2018/19 follow-up destinations performance (published in August 2020) is as follows:

- The percentage of all 2018/19 school leavers in a positive *follow-up* destination was 93.4%, compared to 92.1% nationally.

#### Annual Participation Measure (APM)

SDS also reports on the Annual Participation Measure (APM) which takes account of an individual's status over a whole year and reports the proportion of 16-19 year olds participating in education, training or employment. This measure is the data source for the 'Increase the proportion of young people in learning, training and work' indicator in the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework.

The latest APM data published at the end of August 2020 showed that of the 16-19 year olds in Midlothian 93.4% were in education, employment or training and personal development compared to 92.1% nationally. This represents a 0.5% point increase on the previous year. 3.4% were not participating (a 0.6% increase on 2019), compared to 2.8% nationally. 3.3% had an unconfirmed status (a 1% decrease on 2019), compared to 5.1% nationally

## 4.2 STEAM

*a) Continue to support STEAM activities to increase uptake in related qualifications and progression into STEAM career pathways*

### Scottish Schools Education Research Centre (SSERC) Primary science programme

Three Associated School Groups (ASGs) (Lasswade, Newbattle and Dalkeith) participated in Year 2 of the SSERC primary science mentor programme and professional learning opportunities were offered to schools. The professional learning opportunities are being extended up until September 2021 to ensure that all schools have the opportunity to participate in workshops on science which will result in the delivery of a wider science curriculum for children and young people.

### Professional Learning in Numeracy

Education Scotland in conjunction with SEIC provided three professional numeracy learning sessions on number and number processes, decimals, fractions and percentages and problem solving for all primary numeracy coordinators. The content of the Education Scotland webinars was decided partly in response to the Midlothian primary numeracy audit. The Midlothian numeracy leads provided professional learning on high quality assessment in response to this being identified as an area of need through the numeracy audit. Professional learning on the MUMPS approach was provided as professional learning for both NQTs and RQTs. A secondary maths teacher from each of the Midlothian secondary schools participated in three SEIC professional learning sessions on pedagogical approaches in maths. There are four SEIC numeracy professional learning sessions planned between September-October for all Midlothian primary numeracy coordinators.

### STEM Grants –Phase 2

Five Midlothian schools and the Early Years successfully bid for Phase 2 STEM grants. Due to COVID-19, three schools were unable to proceed with their STEM project. However, two schools and Early Years were able to progress their STEM projects.

### Learning for Sustainability

A small working party for taking forward Learning for Sustainability in Midlothian has recently been established. This work is to coincide with the COP26 Conference taking place in Glasgow in November 2021.

### The Midlothian Science Festival 2020

The number of Midlothian schools participating in the virtual Midlothian Science Festival in October 2020 can be seen in the table below.

	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020*</b>
Number of Nursery Schools	0	0	0	3
Number of Primary Schools	13	18	21	20
Number of Secondary Schools	6	5	2	3
Total Number of Schools	19	23	23	23

The number of nursery, primary and secondary pupils participating in the 2020 Midlothian Science Festival was 3859, despite the capacity initially being 2450 pupils.



## Education Service Improvement Priority 5: Finance and Resources

### 5.1 Deliver Best Value through:

*a) Reviewing and implementing the Learning Estate strategy, taking cognisance of the ASN learning estate.*

During 2020/21 a number of learning estate projects have been completed which either have provided much needed additional capacity, to meet the demand for pupil places arising from housing development across Midlothian, including places for children with additional support needs, or have addressed the poor condition and suitability of some of our schools. These projects included:

- Extension of Cuiken Primary School in Penicuik, adding 6 classes and replacing the ASN provision
- Replacement of St Mary's Primary School in Bonnyrigg
- Extension of Burnbrae Primary School, in Bonnyrigg, including a new ASN provision
- Reburishment and extension of Sacred Heart Primary School in Penicuik
- Extension of Lawfield Primary School in Easthouses, adding one class
- Repurposing of the old Mayfield library building to provide additional class spaces on the Mayfield School Campus for Mayfield and St Luke's Primary Schools
- Replacement of Danderhall Primary School with a larger school, doubling its capacity

We were successful in our bid to Scottish Government for funding as part of phase 2 of the Learning Estate Investment Programme for the replacement of the Mayfield School Campus and Penicuik High School, which are our highest priorities in addressing the remaining condition and suitability issues of our schools.

*b) Robust workforce planning*

The growth in pupil numbers across our schools, both primary and secondary, and in Early Years settings leads to a recurring growth in the staff complement required to meet our children's needs. Staff planning during the year has ensured that we have employed an increased number of staff, in particular teachers, and met our requirements while at the same time maintaining our pupil teacher ratio (PTR). Our combined ratio for primary and secondary schools is 14 pupils to 1 teacher, slightly higher than the national ratio. The 2020 Primary PTR is 15.4 nationally and 16.1 in Midlothian and the 2020 Secondary PTR is 12.5 nationally and 12.5 in Midlothian.

## **5.2 Implement the Education Digital Asset strategy, ensuring that digital learning tools are high quality and support excellence in learning and teaching (see 1.1)**

Prior to the pandemic, cross-directorate collaboration between the Digital Learning Team and Digital Services achieved agreement on a baseline provision of technology to be provided in a Midlothian classroom, articulated in the Education Digital Asset Strategy document. From assessment of the existing estate, St Luke's RC Primary School, Mayfield Primary School, Burnbrae Primary School, St Mary's RC Primary School and Danderhall Primary School all received asset upgrades in line with the agreed baseline provision.

Digital devices and internet connectivity were central to school's continued delivery of education in a remote context. The Education Service committed to provide a device for any Midlothian pupil who requested one (including internet connectivity, if required) and supplied 4,000 devices to families.

The coronavirus pandemic fuelled the need to accelerate our digital ambitions and strategic work was undertaken to bring forward plans to supply every Midlothian child of school age with a device to support learning. These proposals were accepted by Council and will be brought forward within the Education Service improvement priorities for 2021/22.

# Service plans

Service Improvement Plans have been developed for each of the Children, Young People and Partnership service areas, however, it is important to note that these priorities will be taken forward by cross service area and partnership strategic groups. Below is a summary of high level priorities for the Education, Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability and Children's Services.

In order to achieve our ambition, we recognise that our biggest asset is our workforce. Investing in, and developing our workforce to increase capacity and expertise is a key priority of Midlothian's future vision. Over the last year our staff have faced huge adversity, and have responded positively to the challenge, embracing change and developing innovative ways of working. The service plans will be complemented by a comprehensive work force plan that harnesses the energy, flexibility and creativity demonstrated by our workforce, and fosters continuous improvement.

## Education

In order to secure the required improvements, we have identified 5 key areas for improvement. These are the areas where current data analysis and evidence shows improvement is urgently required.

### Priority 1: Attainment and Achievement

*Single Midlothian Plan Priority: Reducing Inequalities in Learning Outcomes*

#### Actions:

1.1 Improve attainment within the broad general education stages, by focusing on:

- Improvements in planning, tracking and assessment and curriculum design and progression (including STEAM)
- Innovative pedagogical approaches and enhanced use of digital technology to support learning
- Pedagogy, play and progression cross Early Level

1.2 Improve attainment with the senior phase by maximising opportunities through curriculum planning, consortium arrangements and partnership delivery, including addressing the ASN Senior Phase attainment gap

1.3 Identify and reduce the attainment gap between the most and least deprived children, including ASN and carer-experienced children

*Improve attainment within the broad general education stages, by focusing on:*

- *Improvements in planning, tracking and assessment and curriculum design and progression (including STEAM)*
- *Innovative pedagogical approaches and enhanced use of digital technology to support learning*
- *Pedagogy, play and progression cross Early Level*

Performance Indicator	Due date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Managed By	Source	New Target?
Increase the number of children in P1, P4, P7	March 22		<u>2018/19 Data</u> % of children reaching the expected level.	<u>2017/18 Data</u> % of children reaching the expected level.	SGM	SEEMIS	No

and S3 achieving the expected Curriculum for Excellence levels in Reading, Writing, Listening & Talking and Numeracy.		Above the national average	<p>P1 Reading – 83.3% Writing – 82.45% L&amp;T – 89.54% Numeracy – 84.22%</p> <p>P4 Reading - 78.89% Writing – 74.12% L&amp;T – 88.78% Numeracy – 76.59%</p> <p>P7 Reading – 77.72% Writing – 69.68% L&amp;T – 83.51% Numeracy – 71.84%</p> <p>S3 Reading – 88.96% Writing – 87.72% L&amp;T – 91.23% Numeracy – 89.56%</p>	<p>P1 Reading – 87.05% Writing – 83.61% L&amp;T – 92.69% Numeracy – 86.78%</p> <p>P4 Reading – 78.81% Writing – 75.51% L&amp;T – 84.84% Numeracy – 78.34%</p> <p>P7 Reading – 79.23% Writing – 75.98% L&amp;T – 83.76% Numeracy – 74.80%</p> <p>S3 Reading – 84.98% Writing – 81.84% L&amp;T – 84.98% Numeracy – 87.96%</p>			
<i>Improve attainment within the senior phase by maximising opportunities through curriculum planning, consortium arrangements and partnership delivery, including addressing the ASN Senior Phase attainment gap</i>							
Performance Indicator	Due date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Managed By	Source	New Target?
DYW KPI % of young people achieving vocational qualifications	March 22	Above the national average	<u>2020 Figures</u> Leaver data 1+ award at Level 5 a) Midlothian - 84.43% b) ASN - 71.58%	<u>2019 Figures</u> Leaver data 1+ award at Level 5 a) Midlothian - 86.01% b) ASN - 70.04%	SGM	Insight	No

at SCQF Level 5 or better			c) LAC - 30.77% d) SIMD Q1 - 70.13%	c) LAC - 56.25% d) SIMD Q1 - 73.20%			
<i>Identify and reduce the attainment gap between the most and least deprived children, including ASN and care-experienced children</i>							
<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Previous Trend Data</b>	<b>Managed By</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>New Target?</b>
Increase the number of children in P1, P4, P7 and S3 in receipt of FME achieving the expected Curriculum for Excellence levels in Reading, Writing, Listening & Talking and Numeracy across the BGE.	March 22	Above the national average	<u>2019 Figures</u> Gap between most and least deprived pupils reaching expected level  P1 Reading – 23.4% Writing – 19.9% L&T – 14.1% Numeracy – 26.0%  P4 Reading – 17.0% Writing – 21.5% L&T – 14.7% Numeracy – 18.3%  P7 Reading – 18.8% Writing – 31.6% L&T – 21.8% Numeracy – 23.1%  S3 Reading – 26.47% Writing – 24.51% L&T – 23.53% Numeracy – 16.58%	<u>2018 Figures</u> Gap between most and least deprived pupils reaching expected level  P1 Reading – 15.79% Writing – 13.62% L&T – 8.01% Numeracy – 11.95%  P4 Reading – 12.04% Writing – 13.62% L&T – 13.42% Numeracy – 11.58%  P7 Reading – 27.24% Writing – 17.31% L&T – 25.32% Numeracy – 24.04%  S3 Reading – 13.66% Writing – 15.17% L&T – 17.76% Numeracy – 18.35%	SGM	SEEMIS	No

## Priority 2: Included, Involved and Engaged: Wellbeing and Equity

### *Single Midlothian Plan Priority: Reducing Inequalities in Health Outcomes*

2.1 Improve Equity and Inclusion, through the following areas:

- Nurture
- Attendance and Engagement
- Family Learning
- ASN
- Embedding the principles of UNCRC and The Promise

2.2 Develop and improve health and wellbeing of staff and all children and young people, from Early Level to Senior Phase through:

- HWB curriculum development
- Local Authority, school and community supports

*Improve Equity and Inclusion, through the following areas:*

- *Nurture*
- *Attendance and Engagement*
- *Family Learning*
- *ASN*
- *Embedding the principles of UNCRC and The Promise*

Performance Indicator	Due date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Managed By	Source	New Target?
Pupil survey – SHANARRI indicators	March 22	100%	Available June – September 2021	None	PEP	Parental engagement survey Pupil wellbeing survey	No

<i>Develop and improve health and wellbeing of staff and all children and young people, from Early Level to Senior Phase through:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>HWB curriculum development</i></li> <li>• <i>Local Authority, school and community supports</i></li> </ul>							
<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Previous Trend Data</b>	<b>Managed By</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>New Target?</b>
Pupil survey – SHANARRI indicators	March 22	100%	Available June – September 2021	None	SGM	Pupil wellbeing survey	No

### **Priority 3: Self-improving Systems**

*Single Midlothian Plan Priority: Reducing Inequalities in Learning Outcomes*

3.1 Develop a quality improvement framework to support ELC and schools to achieve Good or Better in inspection Qis through:

- Empowering leaders at all levels, leading to an empowered system
- Improving quality of leadership at all levels, including leadership of learning
- Delivering a minimum data set and supporting data literacy to improve self-evaluation
- Developing a Parental Engagement Strategy

<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Previous Trend Data</b>	<b>Managed By</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>New Target?</b>
Number of settings achieving Good or above for QI1.3 Leadership of change  Number of settings achieving Good or better for QI2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	March 22	100%	Majority of primary schools  Most secondary schools	Less than half of primary schools  Majority of secondary schools	SGM	Education Scotland inspections NIF QI submission Parental Survey Employee Survey	No



Parental survey Parents / carers have been fully involved in school self-evaluation and the school improvement process this session Employee survey I am proud to work for Midlothian Council							
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#### Priority 4: Lifelong Learning and Career-Ready Employability

##### *Single Midlothian Plan Priority: Reducing Inequalities in Economic Outcomes*

4.1 Improve senior phase progression pathways to increase positive destinations, including for young people with ASN and those who are care experienced

4.2 Prepare children and young people for the world of work:

- Carry out an audit of career education standards 3-18 and embed them within learning and teaching across all levels in our schools, in partnership with stakeholders in order to provide pathways for learners that best support the realisation of young peoples' future aspirations

Performance indicators for this priority are included in CLL improvement plan

## Priority 5: Finance and Resources

*Single Midlothian Plan Priority: Reducing Inequalities in Learning Outcomes*

5.1 Deliver Best Value through:

- Reviewing and implementing the Learning Estate Strategy, taking cognisance of the ASN learning estate
- Robust workforce planning
- DSM review

5.2 Implement the first phase of the '*Equipped for Learning*' programme to support transformational change in digital learning

*Deliver Best Value through:*

- *Reviewing and implementing the Learning Estate Strategy, taking cognisance of the ASN learning estate*
- *Robust workforce planning*
- *DSM review*

Performance Indicator	Due date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Managed By	Source	New Target?
Improvement in Core facts condition, suitability and sufficiency statistics	March 2022	85% 2020 condition A/B 85%	2019 Condition A/B 83%	2017 Condition A/B 78%	Resource Manager	Learning Estate Core Facts Census	No
Children and young people with ASN are educated within Midlothian		75% 2020 suitability A/B 75%	2019 Suitability A/B 73%	2018 Suitability A/B 68%	?		Yes
			TBC June 2021				

Teacher: pupil ratio		Maintain a pupil teacher ratio in line with the national average  2020 Primary PTR is 15.4 nationally and 16.1 in Midlothian  2020 Secondary PTR is 12.5 nationally and 12.5 in Midlothian	14	14	Resource Manager		Yes
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*Implement the first phase of the 'Equipped for Learning' programme to support transformational change in digital learning*

Performance Indicator	Due date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Managed By	Source	New Target ?
% of pupils with access to allocated device to support learning	March 22	100%	3%	None	QIO, Digital Learning	Yes	Yes
active devices within a 7-day period		8,000	1,200	None	QIO, Digital Learning	Yes	
active users within a 7-day period		10,000	Unknown	None	QIO, Digital Learning	Yes	
% of teaching staff accessing digital professional learning		100%	25%	None	QIO, Digital Learning	Yes	
Schools in receipt of Digital Schools Award		8	3	+1 per year		No	

## Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability

**Service Priority: Improving skills for Learning, Life and Work. Supporting communities to be a great place to live, work and grow up in**

*Action: Provide Community and Lifelong Learning Opportunities to all areas of Midlothian and Community Groups*

Performance Indicator	Due Date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Team	Managed By	Source	New indicator for 2020/21. yes or no
Number of local people engaged with CLL projects (show percentage by age and thematic work area e.g. youth work, employability or adult learning)	31/03/2022	4000	2,000 (COVID)	n/a	CLL	Annette Lang	Internal systems	Yes
Number of people receiving CLL 1:1 support	31/03/2022	500	473 (COVID)	n/a	CLL	Annette Lang	Internal systems	Yes
Number of CLL Opportunities / Projects / Courses offered	31/03/2022	500	412 (COVID)	n/a	CLL	Annette Lang	Internal systems	Yes
Ensure CLL opportunities reach all areas of Midlothian (SIMD breakdown of engaged participants)	31/03/2022	20% participation from SIMD Decile 1+2	154 (COVID)	n/a	CLL	Annette Lang	Internal systems	Yes
Number of Community groups receiving support from CLL	31/03/2022	40	New indicator	n/a	CLL	Annette Lang	Internal systems	Yes

**Service Priority: Improving skills for Learning, Life and Work. Supporting communities to be a great place to live, work and grow up in**

*Action: Positive outcomes secured through CLL programmes*

Performance Indicator	Due Date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Team	Managed By	Source	New indicator for 2020/21. yes or no
Qualifications achieved through CLL	31/03/2022	750	477 (COVID)	n/a	CLL	Annette Lang	Internal systems	Yes
Participant satisfaction with CLL services	31/03/2022	97%	96.7%	n/a	CLL	Annette Lang	Internal systems	Yes
Key skills improved through CLL services	31/03/2022	78%	77%	n/a	CLL	Annette Lang	Internal systems	Yes
Modern Apprenticeships completed through CLL	31/03/2022	70%	TBC	n/a	CLL	Annette Lang	Internal systems	Yes
Foundation Apprenticeships completed through CLL	31/03/2022	85%	TBC	n/a	CLL	Annette Lang	Internal systems	Yes

**Service Priority: Improving skills for Learning, Life and Work. Supporting communities to be a great place to live, work and grow up in**

*Action: Financial income generated to support CLL activities*

Performance Indicator	Due Date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Team	Managed By	Source	New indicator for 2020/21. yes or no
Amount of funding gained to meet income/external funding target of £650,000	31/03/2022	£650,000	£938,964 (external funding)	n/a	CLL	Annette Lang	Internal systems	Yes

## Children's Services

<b>GIRFEMC: Reducing the gap in economic circumstances (3 year priority)</b>								
<i>Service priority: Reduce the number of CEYP going into homeless accommodation (1 year priority)</i>								
<i>Action - Develop a pathway with alternative models of care for those CEYP who are entitled to aftercare</i>								
Performance Indicator	Due Date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Team	Managed By	Source	New indicator for 2020/21. yes or no
Number of CEYP who enter homeless accommodation vs other suitable accommodation	30/07/20	0	New Measure	3	CS	S McCallum /J Foley	Internal systems	Yes
<i>Action - Implement National House Project and identify 8-10 young people who shall work towards independent living via this resource</i>								
9 Young people are currently in the NHP.	31/03/22	8 to 10	New Measure	19/20 homeless CEYP 8	CS	S McCallum /J Foley	Internal systems	Yes
<i>Action - Implement and evaluate the effectiveness of the revised Continuing Care policy and approach</i>								
Average age of young people in foster care / care homes moving into after care	30/03/21	Age 18	New Measure	Age 16	CS	J Foley	Internal systems	Yes

**GIRFEMC: Reducing the gap in economic circumstances (3 year priority)**

*Service priority: Early intervention will be effective and maintain children within Universal Services*

*Action - Regular audit of repeat referrals into early intervention and prevention to ascertain effectiveness of previous intervention for future learning*

Performance Indicator	Due Date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Team	Managed By	Source	New indicator for 2020/21. yes or no
Reduced number of repeat referrals into the service	31/03/22	25% reduction in repeat referrals	New Measure	N/A	CS	Lesley Watson	Internal systems	Yes

**GIRFEMC: Reducing the gap in economic circumstances (3 year priority)**

*Service priority: Expand existing pathway to support families impacted by poverty at an earlier stage*

*Action - Increase capacity of the income maximisation workers*

Performance Indicator	Due Date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Team	Managed By	Source	New indicator for 2020/21. yes or no
Increase number of families offered an income assessment	31/03/22	200	104	N/A	CS	Lesley Watson	Internal systems	No

Increase worker capacity to provide income maximisation assessment	31/03/22	1.5FTE	0.40FTE	N/A	CS	Lesley Watson	Internal systems	No
<i>Action - Introduce supper club at Hawthorn Family Learning Centre</i>								
Number of families who attend supper club	31/03/21	100 families	New Measure	N/A	CS	Rebecca Hooton	Internal systems	Yes
<i>Action - Provide food hampers throughout the year</i>								
Percentage of requests for food hampers provided	31/03/21	90%	New Measure	N/A	CS	Lesley Watson/ Rebecca Hooton	Internal systems	Yes
<i>Action - Provide lunch packs during school holidays</i>								
Percentage of requests for lunch packs provided	31/03/21	90%	New Measure	N/A	CS	Lesley Watson/ Rebecca Hooton	Internal systems	Yes
<i>Action - Provide food vouchers to families in need</i>								
Percentage of requests for food vouchers provided	31/03/21	90%	New Measure	N/A	CS	Lesley Watson/ Rebecca Hooton	Internal systems	Yes
<b>GIRFEMC: Reducing the gap in economic circumstances (3 year priority)</b>								
<i>Service priority: Provide a clear pathway for kinship support</i>								



<i>Action - Consult with kinship carers to develop clear pathway</i>								
Performance Indicator	Due Date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Team	Managed By	Source	New indicator for 2020/21. yes or no
Feedback from Kinship Carers about support	30/11/20	80% engage	New Measure	N/A	CS	Jo Foley /Scott McCallum	Internal systems	Yes
<i>Action - Review and update policy and create pathway for support.</i>								
Percentage of staff who attend the launch of the new policy and pathway for Kinship Support	31/03/21	80% of staff attend Launch/ development day on Kinship pathway	New Measure	N/A	CS	Jo Foley	Internal systems	Yes
Percentage of kinship carers who understand the pathway to access support	31/03/21	80% of Kinship carers understand the pathway to access support.	New Measure	N/A	CS	Jo Foley	Internal systems	Yes
<b>GIRFEMC: Reducing the gap in economic circumstances (3 year priority)</b>								
<i>Service priority: Develop and embed Family Group Decision Making service</i>								
<i>Action - Embed a Family Group Decision Making approach in early intervention and prevention</i>								

Performance Indicator	Due Date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Team	Managed By	Source	New indicator for 2020/21. yes or no
Percentage of families of Pre- birth Child Protection Case Conferences who are offered Family Group Decision Making	31/03/21	75% are offered FGDM	New Measure			Jo Foley	Internal systems	Yes
Percentage of families who agree to take up Family Group Decision Making	31/03/21	50% progress through FGDM process	New Measure			Rebecca Hooton	Internal systems	Yes
<i>Action - Families with children under the age of 5 on CPR are considered for referral to Family Group Decision Making by the point of de-registration</i>								
Percentage of Child Protection Case Conferences held for children under the age of 5 years who are offered Family Group Decision Making	31/03/21		75% are offered FGDM	New Measure		Rebecca Hooton	Internal systems	Yes
Percentage of families who agree to take up Family Group Decision Making	31/03/21		50% progress through FGDM process	New Measure		Rebecca Hooton	Internal systems	Yes
<b>GIRFEMC: Reducing the gap in economic circumstances (3 year priority)</b>  <i>Service priority: Ensure regulated resources work towards continuous improvement</i>								

<i>Action - Local residential care homes will provide high quality care and support</i>								
Performance Indicator	Due Date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Team	Managed By	Source	New indicator for 2020/21. yes or no
Care inspection Grading of GOOD	31/03/22	3	New Measure	N/A	CS	Jo Foley	CI inspection Grades	Yes
<i>Action - Local adoption services will provide high quality care and support</i>								
Care inspection Grading of GOOD	31/03/22	3	New Measure	N/A	CS	Jo Foley	CI inspection Grades	Yes
<i>Action - Local fostering services will provide high quality care and support</i>								
Care inspection Grading of GOOD	31/03/22	3	New Measure	N/A	CS	Jo Foley	CI inspection Grades	Yes
<i>Action - Local Continuing Care/Adult services will provide high quality care and support</i>								
Care inspection Grading of GOOD	31/03/22	1	New Measure	N/A (new service)	CS	Jo Foley	CI inspection Grades	]Yes
<b>GIRFEMC: Reducing the gap in economic circumstances (3 year priority)</b>								
<i>Service priority: Develop 1 year pilot to support children remain at home using family systemic practice</i>								
<i>Action - Implement a 1-year family systemic pilot practice model across Children's Services</i>								

Performance Indicator	Due Date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Team	Managed By	Source	New indicator for 2020/21. yes or no
Number of families that engage with the pilot	31/03/22	12	New Measure	N/A (new service)	CS	Lesley Watson	Internal systems	Yes
<b>GIRFEMC: Reducing the gap in economic circumstances (3 year priority)</b>								
<i>Service priority: Reduce the number of deferred Children's Hearings</i>								
<i>Action - Monitor the number of Children's Hearings that are deferred and the reasons why</i>								
Performance Indicator	Due Date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Team	Managed By	Source	New indicator for 2020/21. yes or no
Number of CHs deferred	31/03/22	4	New Measure	N/A	CS	Scott McCallum	Internal systems	Yes
<b>GIRFEMC: Reducing the gap in economic circumstances (3 year priority)</b>								
<i>Service priority: Ensure parents of children and young people in receipt of an SDS package of care have an identified person to contact</i>								
<i>Action - All operational managers are aware that families in receipt of a SDS package of care have an identified person to contact</i>								
Performance Indicator	Due Date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Team	Managed By	Source	New indicator for 2020/21. yes or no
Complaints received	31/03/22	0	New Measure	N/A	CS	Scott McCallum	Internal systems	Yes

**GIRFEMC: Reducing the gap in economic circumstances (3 year priority)**

*Service priority: Increase the number of social workers and practitioners who are skilled in engaging children and young people in life-story work*

*Action - Establish who has been trained and then develop/source a programme for workers to attend and develop their skills*

Performance Indicator	Due Date	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Team	Managed By	Source	New indicator for 2020/21. yes or no
Number of staff trained	31/03/22	5	New Measure	N/A	CS	Scott McCallum	Internal systems	Yes

# Further information

## Equalities

The service plans set out our commitment to promoting equality and diversity. An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has been carried out, enabling Midlothian Council to meet its legal duties to consider equality, human rights, sustainability and the environment. The assessment ensures that the planned services and policies promote equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination and harassment; and promote good relations between those with protected characteristics and those with none. They also allow broader inequalities to be addressed, ensuring that the needs of all people are met.

For further information or to view a copy of the IIA please contact: [insert link/contact details](#)

This document can be made available in different formats and in different languages. If you would like a copy in another language or format, please email [equalities@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@midlothian.gov.uk) or phone 0131 271 3658

## Key contacts

Further information about this plan is available from the contacts below:

Fiona Robertson, Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships – [Fiona.Robertson@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:Fiona.Robertson@midlothian.gov.uk)

Joan Tranent, Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities – [Joan.Tranent@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:Joan.Tranent@midlothian.gov.uk)

***Corporate Solutions will deliver forward looking services fit for a modern 21<sup>st</sup> Century organisation and put the citizen at the centre of service redesign***

# Introduction

The Corporate Solutions service plan sets out how we will achieve our vision, what actions we will undertake and how we will measure our success. This service plan is a key component of Midlothian's strategic framework which brings together the medium and long term activity that will ensure our communities continue to be supported through and out of the current pandemic, building a sustainable future that is equitable and provides opportunities for all.

The last year has brought unprecedented challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic. Service plan priorities were reassessed as staff across Corporate Solutions refocused their activity to critical service delivery, whilst maintaining essential frontline services. They did this whilst maintaining robust governance, effective financial management, and security and resilience for our digital networks and infrastructure. Key activity included:

- Facilitating the rapid deployment of remote working, through the physical distribution of mobile devices, laptops etc., increasing the capacity of the ICT network, introducing electronic workflows at scale and providing enhanced ICT security
- Administering a range of emergency and crisis payments such as the food and key essentials funds for vulnerable communities
- Supporting the Kindness@Midlothian engagement and communications programme to promote community cohesion and wellbeing for Midlothian's citizens
- Reassessing the financial impact of the pandemic on the local authority as it was constantly evolving, maintaining oversight of the financial position and ensuring that financial compliance was met throughout this period
- Implementing temporary governance arrangements that ensured oversight, compliance and scrutiny as we moved to emergency decision making and critical service delivery
- Ensuring that the Council's staff were supported to shift to a new way of working, keeping those that were shielding safe and providing a comprehensive people centred approach to staff wellbeing.

This plan describes how Corporate Solutions are supporting the recovery and the retention of the best elements of transformation that took place in response to the pandemic and securing permanent changes to the way the Council delivers its services in order to build back better. We are harnessing the energy, flexibility and creativity demonstrated by our workforce, through the creation of a wellbeing economy which will achieve wellbeing and fairness for our people and the rest of nature. The redesign of services and the changes to build back better are predicated on the overarching principle that in delivering services, whether commissioned internally or externally, we will keep our communities, our employees and our environment safe, minimising exposure to COVID-19, or any other viruses, at the same time as meeting our commitment to being carbon neutral by 2030.



# Midlothian's profile

 92,460

people live in Midlothian

We are one of the smallest Local Authority in mainland Scotland but the **Fastest Growing.**



18% of people are over 65

20% are under 16

**Inequalities:** Midlothian is made up of **115** (SIMD) data zones,

**10** of which fall within the **most deprived areas**, giving Midlothian a **8.7%** local share of data zones within the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland.

**Working population** (aged 16-64) of **57,100** with **1,700** unemployed

**5,900** people furloughed as of March 2021, 2,900 males and 3,000 females

**Life expectancy at birth is:**



## Health Conditions

The leading cause of death rates for both males and females is **Heart diseases and dementia.**



Females  
81.7 years



Males  
77.7 years

## Midlothian's growing and ageing population

Data source: Midlothian Council Area Profile (nrsscotland.gov.uk), SIMD - gov.scot, nomis.web.co.uk



### Population rise

The population of Midlothian is projected to increase from 91,340 to 103,945 by 2028. An increase of 13.8%, which compared to a projected increase of 1.8% for Scotland as a whole. Midlothian is projected to have the highest percentage change in population size out of the 32 council areas.



### Increase in households

The number of households in Midlothian is projected to increase from 39,122 to 45,374 by 2028. This is a 16% increase, which compares to a projected increase of 4.9% for Scotland as a whole. Midlothian is projected to have the highest percentage change in household numbers out of the 32 council areas.



### Increase in over 75s

The 75 and over age group is projected to see the largest percentage increase (+40.9%). As people live for longer many more people will be living with frailty and/or dementia and/or multiple health conditions. This will pose challenges for all our health and social care services whilst also changing the face of some of the local communities.

# Strategic framework

## Single Midlothian Plan 2019-22

Midlothian's Community Planning Partnership set out a vision for the long term future of Midlothian based on two key principles – 'people' and 'place'. The CPPs priorities are to reduce inequalities in four key areas – learning outcomes, health outcomes, economic circumstances and the impact of climate change. There are three geographical areas that additional focused activity to tackle poverty takes place – Mayfield, Gorebridge and Woodburn, recognising the increased inequalities that these communities experience.

## Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Council has recognised the need for a strategic step change in the form of the development and agreement of a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), which set out budget projections for the remaining budgets which will be determined during the term of the Current Council prior to the Local Government elections in May 2022. A corporate solution was secured for the current year's budget which meant that no new service reductions were required at what was already a challenging time for communities. A similar corporate solution is proposed for the 2022/23 budget which will also allow the leadership Team to develop a sustainable MTFS for the term of the next Council elected in May 2022.

To inform the MTFS, a public consultation visionary exercise was carried out in April 2019 and highlighted the following key priorities for what Midlothian should be like in 2040:

- **A sense of belonging:** Pride in communities, working in partnership, transparency in decision making and accessibility in service provision
- **A balanced infrastructure:** Manageable housing numbers, vibrant towns, protected green spaces, a clean, carbon neutral environment and improved community transport
- **Learning and working together:** High quality education and training, jobs close to where people live, a main provider of local food production, maximising technological solutions
- **Intergenerational opportunities:** Reimagined older people services, being able to grow old in the one community, with support and good access to health and social care.

In addition to the visioning exercise the following key themes were explored as part of the consultation programme:

- **One Council - Working with You, For You** is underpinned by a commitment to deliver a one council strategy which reduces silo working within services, increases cross party working at a political level and uses holistic approaches which place individuals and communities at the heart of our work.
- **Preventative and Sustainable** responds to Communities telling us strongly that they want to live in a clean, carbon neutral environment with protected green spaces and improved environmentally friendly community transport options.

- **Efficient and Modern** recognises that Midlothian Council needs to adapt to change by doing things differently to get improved results and increasing financial sustainability by addressing inefficiencies.
- **Innovative and Ambitious** recognises our ambition for Midlothian and to make sure it is a great place to grow, now and in the future.

## Key drivers for change

In June 2019 the Council approved the key drivers for change and agreed to adopt a Service Dominant Logic. This places citizens and communities at the heart of our daily work. A key step change is moving from silo-based working to holistic working, focused on continuous improvement and ensuring that we are data-driven and improve performance based on information gathered.

The nine key drivers for change provide a strong foundation to design and shape services. Building on these, learning from the pandemic, in September 2020 Cabinet approved the recommendations from the Nesta 'Listen and Learn' report which was informed from staff insight. The Nesta recommendations articulate Midlothian's Future Vision, centered around:

- Valuing communities
- Remote/flexible working
- Digital first
- Leading new ways of working
- Education

## Regional Growth

Midlothian is Scotland's fastest growing mainland local authority with an expected population growth of almost 14% by 2028. In July 2017, Midlothian signed Heads of Terms with its neighbouring local authorities, evidencing their commitment to the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal, a programme to accelerate growth, create new economic opportunities and tackle inequalities. The ambitious programme, worth over £1.3bn, will work with government, learning providers, public and private partnerships, to deliver transformational change across the following five themes:

- Research, development and innovation
- Integrated regional employability and skills
- Transport
- Culture
- Housing

Complementary to the deal is Midlothian's extensive and ambitious Capital Strategy and approved Capital Programme, with expenditure across a range of projects estimated to reach £0.8 billion over the next 5 years. This includes a number of capital investment and regeneration projects that are enhanced by this regional partnership, and a number of innovative expansion projects that respond to Midlothian's local growth agenda. It also reflects the Council continued commitment to providing affordable housing through its ambitious new build programme where the completion of phase 1 provided 864 additional houses over a period of 7 years

with a total budget of £108.7m. Phase 2 targeted providing a further 490 additional homes with a budget of £77.1m and Phase 3, 4 and 5 plans a further 870 additional homes.

Corporate Solutions is responsible for a number of key work streams in the strategic framework and also makes a meaningful and measurable contribution towards the others, described in the performance section of the plan. Current transformational work and initiatives are aligned with the above themes and the service will continue to deliver change, whilst maintaining financial stability, good governance, an empowered and supported workforce and driving forward the digital strategy needed to foster growth.

DRAFT



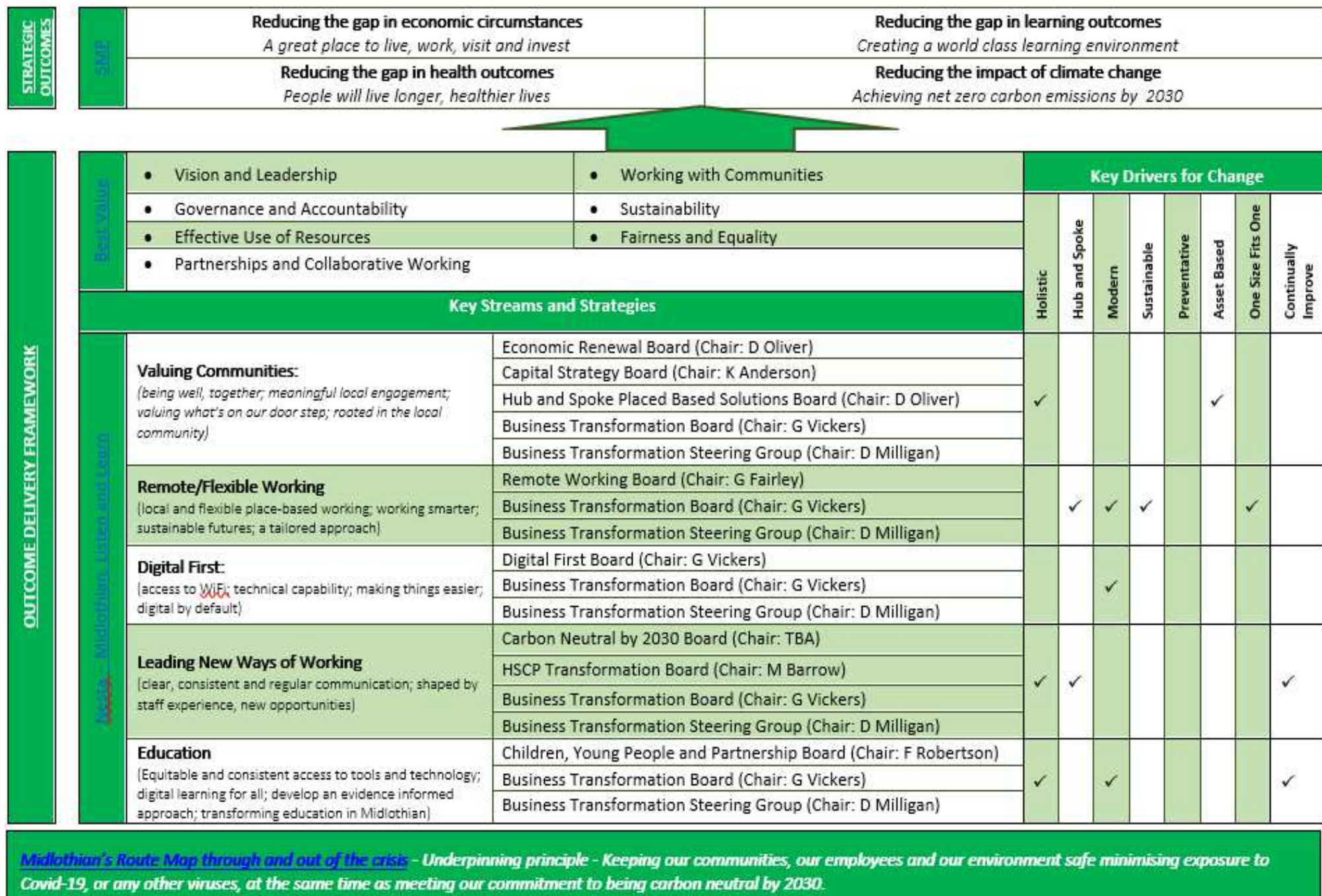


Figure 1: Strategic framework

# Corporate Solutions

***Corporate Solutions will deliver forward looking services fit for a modern 21<sup>st</sup> Century organisation and put the citizen at the centre of service redesign.***

The challenges for Midlothian are articulated above with the impact of COVID-19 and our recovery out of the pandemic, the growing and ageing population and the increasing demand for services that this brings. Population growth over the next 10 to 15 years will see Midlothian remain the fastest growing Council in Scotland. A 0-15 population increase is projected at 20% and 75+ population increase is projected at 100% between 2014 and 2039.

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) combines seven different aspects of deprivation: income; employment; health; education, skills and training; geographic access to services; crime; and housing. By identifying small areas where there are concentrations of multiple deprivation, strategies and resources can be targeted at the places with greatest need to address inequalities in our communities. Midlothian is made up of 115 SIMD data zones, 10 of which fall within the most deprived areas, giving Midlothian an 8.7% local share of data zones within the 20% most deprived in Scotland where people have fewer opportunities and resources in health and education as well as low income and unemployment.

This pace of growth demands additional capacity within the school estate to provide the best possible learning environment. The general population growth forecast places additional pressure on our infrastructure, including the increased demand on the digital network capability and the pressure to scale up service delivery whilst still achieving financial balance in the face of a continued real terms reduction in government funding for core services.

Corporate Solutions will lead on delivering the Council's ambition to be a high performing, citizen-focused and modern local authority. The service provides strategic leadership, developing and managing innovative corporate solutions and transformation that benefits a modern 21st Century organisation. The plan sets out how we will promote a culture of collaboration, co-operation, partnership, innovation and empowerment to support the re-imagining of future service delivery.

The population growth brings with it specific funding challenges and a key element of securing continued financial sustainability will be to secure a fair funding deal for the Council and its community planning partners. We will continue to work to secure a funding settlement from government which recognises and supports rapid and repetitive growth - growth which is central to the wellbeing of the Scottish Economy as a whole.

The approved £0.8bn Capital Programmes sets out the immediate infrastructure required to meet those demographic pressures and the financial contributions Midlothian will make to the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal. The longer term capital strategy provides a 10 year assessment on the investment required to maintain our existing asset base, whether schools, the road network, our vehicle fleet and to provide the additional infrastructure to support a growing population.

# Priorities

Corporate Solutions is committed to developing the whole organisation and, in turn our community, through the development of our people. We promote a supportive, people-centred environment with a highly-valued employee benefits package supported by our Council vision 'Midlothian: A Great Place to Grow'. This ensures we have the right people to deliver a wide range of services for our communities, maximising attendance, promoting healthy working lives, high performance and effective and visible leadership. Allowing all staff to develop their potential, providing clear progression pathways along with a positive ethos, embracing new thinking and the generation of bold and creative ideas, enables Midlothian to fulfil its potential as a 'Great Place to Grow'. In delivering and transforming service provision all staff adopt the Council's nine key drivers.

Due to the events of the last year, it is recognised that priorities from the 2020/21 service plan have not all been realised. In addition, we are still responding to the ongoing pandemic emergency and recovery which adds significant pressure to the Council's resources.

To inform the actions for this plan, a review of the 2020/21 action plan was undertaken. Actions were assessed against the following criteria:

- progress to date
- alignment to the strategic outcomes
- contribution to the recovery through and out of the pandemic

The revised action plan takes account of all these factors to identify the key activity that Place will focus on for the next 12 months, and demonstrates how this activity contributes to the wider ambitions of the Council. Progress will be demonstrated through service measurements and follow Midlothian's agreed performance monitoring approach.

## **Workforce planning**

In order to achieve our ambition, we recognise that our biggest asset is our workforce. Investing in, and developing our workforce to increase capacity and expertise is a key priority of Midlothian's future vision. Over the last year our staff have faced huge adversity, and have responded positively to the challenge, embracing change and developing innovative ways of working. The service plan will be complemented by a comprehensive service work force plan that harnesses the energy, flexibility and creativity demonstrated by our workforce, and fosters continuous improvement.

# Performance

## Corporate Solutions - Outcomes

### Workforce

- Our People deliver high performing services
- We build an entrepreneurial council for future
- We demonstrate strong and consistent leadership
- We Promote Equality, diversity and fairness

### Digital

- We pledge to optimise the ways in which the Council does digital, data and technology to work effectively, collaborate, make decisions, adapt and innovate
- We pledge to create better relationships between the Council and its communities by providing modern digital services that communities want to use
- We pledge to maximise opportunities for digital, data and technology to enhance quality of life, the economy, sustainability and individual opportunity in Midlothian

### Our Customers

- Our customers have choice in the way Council services are accessed and provided
- Channel-shift has increased by the adoption of new digital tools and automated practices
- Delivery of customer service excellence to our communities

### Financial

- The Council's budget gap is reduced and financial sustainability secured
- The Council has robust and effective financial management arrangements

### Procurement

- Best Value is evidenced Council wide in the procurement of goods and services
- Effective contract and supplier management across the whole of the procurement journey.



## Customer Services



*Extract, Customer Services Strategy 2015-2021*

The Customer Service Strategy defines the key drivers that will enable Midlothian Council to deliver 'customer service excellence' to our communities. It outlines the commitment to provide choice to the customer in the way services are accessed and provided. This includes innovation, partnership working and optimising the use of technology within resource constraints. Through a refresh of the strategy the Valuing Communities strand of the NESTA Listen and Learn Report will be fully embraced and this will help us to articulate our approach to how we will change the way we deliver services utilising the latest technologies and linking to national frameworks.

As the fastest growing local authority in Scotland, the Council cannot support more customers using the current resources, systems and processes. The adoption of the digital first approach will be key to continuing to provide a seamless customer journey, satisfying enquiries at the first point of contact and meeting increased demand.

Customer self-service and new automated processes can help deliver some key services without customers dealing directly with a member of staff and will transform the way the Council delivers services. We already have a well-managed public facing website with SOCITM awarding our site four stars. Midlothian is one of only four Councils in Scotland to achieve this accolade. Our Web Team 'get it' and already we have been able to transform how our customers interact with the Council. During 2020/21, increasing the pace of digital transformation, particularly in front-facing customer services, will be a service and corporate priority, for Midlothian Council – one that can deliver the required efficiencies without negatively affecting customer experience.

We continue to provide innovative models of service delivery in our libraries which have been recognised as best practice nationally. We have increased the availability of self-service technologies across libraries which has extended opening hours for our customers and communities with no revenue budget impact. In addition we have carried out a range of projects and activities to extend services to our wide range of different user groups, often securing competitive external funding, including:

- Removing old and outdated use of library fines
- Positioning our library facilities to support the local delivery of Council services and be a key asset in developing the “20 minute neighbourhood” model
- Continuing to secure funding for our Bibliotherapy services which has enabled us to expand this service into two of our secondary schools to support young people in improving their mental health
- Introducing a new online learning service for customers to develop and improve digital skills
- Continuing to deliver Code Clubs, Lego Clubs, reading groups and crafting groups in all of our libraries in response to community demand
- Launching 'Every Child a Library Member' with our Registrar services to ensure that every baby born in Midlothian is registered with the library service
- Continuing to deliver our outreach book delivery service for house bound customers in partnership with local community volunteers, and working with care homes and supported accommodation services to deliver library collections to customers
- Working in partnership with colleagues in Health and Social Care, the ALLIANCE and Education to develop a new model of service delivery for young people accessing library services.

<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our customers have choice in the way Council services are accessed and provided</li> <li>• Channel-shift has increased by the adoption of new digital tools and automated practices</li> <li>• Delivery of customer service excellence to our communities</li> </ul>			
<b>Service priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refresh the Customer Services Strategy to deliver citizen centred public services, co-producing solutions and service transformation with them not to them</li> <li>• Implementation of the online payments and services (OPAS) platform</li> <li>• Continue to ensure that library services, both face to face and online, are accessible to all, in particular our most vulnerable communities</li> </ul>			
<b>Strategic framework</b>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the gap in economic circumstances</li> <li>• Reducing inequalities in the health of our population</li> <li>• Reducing the inequalities in the outcomes of learning in our population</li> </ul>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan thematic outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People have better access to the services they require, including welfare, health and wellbeing, housing and employability</li> <li>• There is greater equality in learning</li> <li>• The public is informed and engaged in service development and delivery</li> </ul>	<b>Drivers for change:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holistic</li> <li>• Modern</li> <li>• Sustainable</li> <li>• Hub and Spoke</li> <li>• Preventative</li> <li>• Asset Based</li> <li>• One Size Fits One</li> <li>• Continually Improve</li> </ul>	<b>Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer Services Strategy</li> <li>• Digital Services strategy</li> </ul>

### Current Service Measures

REF	INDICATOR	LEAD	COMMENTS	ANNUAL/QUARTERLY
CORPS.P.1.3a	Number of virtual library visits	Libraries		QUARTERLY
C&L5a	% of adults satisfied with library service	Libraries		LGBF - ANNUAL
C&L2	Corporate Indicator - NET Cost per library visit	Libraries		LGBF - ANNUAL
New	Number of service implementations as part of the customer services platform project (phase 1)	Customer services/Digital Services	Target 35 modules in first phase	QUARTERLY
CR.CC.1	Number of contact centre calls received	Contact Centre	Already being reported monthly	QUARTERLY

CR.CC.2	% of Contact centre calls answered within 60 seconds	Contact Centre	Already being reported monthly	QUARTERLY
CR.CC.4	% of calls abandoned in Contact centre	Contact Centre	Already being reported monthly	QUARTERLY
CR.EM.01	Number of web forms received to Contact centre	Contact Centre	Already being reported monthly	QUARTERLY
CR.EM.06	Number of social media contact received to Contact centre	Contact Centre	Already being reported monthly	QUARTERLY

## Human Resources

Encouraging the highest standards of integrity, probity and professional conduct in our approach to our work at the service we provide, the HR team operates as a strategic, integrated, business-oriented and solution-focused service. Leading on the delivery of the council's workforce strategy the team has a strong focus on the development and effective management and wellbeing of our workforce. Facilitating an inclusive organisational culture where continuous improvement is at the heart of everything we do, the HR team promotes strong and effective leadership where employees have a focus on performance, overseeing the development and implementation of the workforce strategy and overseeing the effectiveness of service workforce plans. The Service Workforce Plans will be re-aligned to support delivery of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and longer term service demands, our transformational change programme and to reflect the financial context the Council operates in. The service level workforce plans must continue to be at the heart of service planning in order to fulfil our commitments to our communities.

The team ensures the appropriateness and effective implementation of a range of People Policies for the Council and the provision of professional HR advice to senior managers on all HR and employee relations matters to ensure that equity, fairness and transparency shape and inform our policies, practices and processes. The team has a central role in supporting the delivery of transformational change and ensuring that this is done in a positive way and that there are effective channels to communicate change and wider organisational values to all employees.

The purpose of the Workforce Strategy is to ensure that the Council continues to have a workforce that is able to deliver positive outcomes for the people of Midlothian. It sets out an approach to supporting, developing, nurturing and reshaping the workforce now and in the future in response to changes whether as a consequence of national or local issues. It is underpinned by the Council's values and vision. It outlines the organisation's approach to articulating how workforce issues will be managed to ensure the Council has the people and skills to manage change and deliver service. The strategy will ensure we have the right people at the right time and who have the right skills, knowledge and attitude to provide excellent services confidently and competently.

The Workforce Strategy has thirteen themes as detailed below:

1. Employee Terms and Conditions
2. Employee Performance
3. Recruitment and Retention of Employees
4. Reshaping the Workforce
5. Health & Social Care Integration

6. Expansion of Learning and Childcare
7. Building Leadership Capacity
8. Digital Leadership
9. Delivering Excellence and Talent Management
10. Employee Relations
11. Midlothian as an Equal Opportunities Employer
12. Managing an Ageing Workforce
13. Volunteering

<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our People deliver high performing services</li> <li>• We build an entrepreneurial council for future</li> <li>• We demonstrate strong and consistent leadership</li> <li>• We Promote equality, diversity and fairness</li> </ul>			
<b>Service Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nurture a highly engaged, motivated and effective workforce</li> <li>• Shape the people agenda through continuing to implement the Workforce Strategy 2017-22 and the development of service workforce plans</li> <li>• Deliver the Wellness@Midlothian agenda to support our employees to look after their overall wellbeing in accordance with the Employee Wellbeing Strategy</li> <li>• Value and celebrate difference while upholding the highest standards of quality of opportunity for all</li> <li>• Address recommendations set out in the NESTA report in order to maintain and develop positive changes to future working practices</li> </ul>			
<b>Strategic framework</b>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the gap in economic circumstances</li> <li>• Reducing inequalities in the health of our population</li> <li>• Reducing the inequalities in the outcomes of learning in our population</li> </ul>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan thematic outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People have better access to the services they require, including welfare, health and wellbeing, housing and employability</li> <li>• Poverty (including child poverty - shared with GIRFEMC) levels in Midlothian are reduced</li> <li>• There is greater equality in learning</li> </ul>	<b>Drivers for change:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holistic</li> <li>• Modern</li> <li>• Sustainable</li> <li>• Preventative</li> <li>• One Size Fits One</li> <li>• Continually Improve</li> </ul>	<b>Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce Strategy 2017-22</li> <li>• Wellbeing Strategy</li> <li>• Remote Working Policy</li> <li>• Equalities Strategy</li> <li>• Engagement Strategy</li> </ul>

## Current Service Measures

REF	INDICATOR	LEAD	COMMENTS	ANNUAL/QUARTERLY
CORP3bi	Total number of women employees in top 5%	HR		CORPORATE INDICATOR - QUARTERLY
CORP3c	The gender pay gap %	HR		CORPORATE INDICATOR - QUARTERLY
CORP6	Corporate Indicator - Sickness Absence Days per Employee (All employees)	HR		CORPORATE INDICATOR - QUARTERLY
CORP6a	Sickness absence days per teacher	HR		LGBF – QUARTERLY
CORP6b	Sickness absence days per employee (non-local government workers)	HR		LGBF – QUARTERLY
BS.MC.MPI.4 2	Percentage of employees who are performing as 'Outstanding' in their individual performance framework	HR		BALANCED SCORECARD – ANNUAL
BS.MC.MPI.4 3	Percentage of employees who are performing as 'High' in their individual performance framework	HR		BALANCED SCORECARD – ANNUAL
BS.MC.MPI.4 4	Percentage of employees who are performing as 'Good Overall' in their individual performance framework	HR		BALANCED SCORECARD – ANNUAL
BS.MC.MPI.4 5	Percentage of employees who are performing as 'Below Standard' in their individual performance framework with appropriate improvement plans in place	HR		BALANCED SCORECARD – ANNUAL
BS.FIS.01	Percentage of staff turnover (including teachers)	HR		BALANCED SCORECARD - QUARTERLY
BS.FIS.08	Employee Survey - I enjoy the work I do	HR		BALANCED SCORECARD – ANNUAL
BS.FIS.09	Employee Survey - I am proud to work for Midlothian Council	HR		BALANCED SCORECARD – ANNUAL
BS.FIS.10	Employee Survey - I can see how my objectives link to the councils objectives and priorities	HR		BALANCED SCORECARD – ANNUAL
BS.FIS.22	Progress against Council's mainstream report (Equality and Diversity)	Equalities officer		BALANCED SCORECARD – ANNUAL
New	Gain council approval of New wellbeing strategy		Indicator outcome – “yes/no”	

## Financial Services

Leading on delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, Financial Services has a central key role in managing the financial affairs of the Council ensuring robust and effective financial management and strong financial stewardship. The service focuses on ensuring effective financial management of all service areas and on the development and implementation of appropriate strategies to maintain and strengthen the Council's financial sustainability. It provides Financial and Management Accountancy Services across the Council, covering gross expenditure in excess of £300 million. The team leads on the development and delivery of the Council's medium term financial plans to ensure delivery of change and financial sustainability.

The team deals with a wide range of functions from supporting managers with budgeting, preparation of financial reports and publishing financial documents to managing the Council's insurance policies and managing the Council's treasury and investment strategy including a loan portfolio of £230 million and investments of £74 million.

Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Council's budget gap is reduced and financial sustainability secured</li><li>• The Council has robust and effective financial management arrangements</li></ul>
Service Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy</li><li>• Continuing to manage the Council's financial portfolio</li><li>• Strengthen the Council's financial sustainability</li><li>• Implement the business partnering model to provide financial and management accountancy services across the Council</li></ul>



<b>Strategic framework</b>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing the gap in economic circumstances</li> <li>Reducing inequalities in the health of our population</li> <li>Reducing the inequalities in the outcomes of learning in our population</li> </ul>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan thematic (3 year) outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners plan and deliver services in a more strategic and collaborative way</li> <li>The local economy is more productive and inclusive</li> <li>Sustainable town centre regeneration is visible</li> <li>More social housing has been provided taking account of local demand, including specialist housing</li> <li>Health inequalities are reduced and the health of people in Midlothian is improved</li> </ul>	<b>Drivers for change:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holistic</li> <li>Modern</li> <li>Sustainable</li> <li>Preventative</li> <li>Asset Based</li> <li>Continually Improve</li> </ul>	<b>Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium Term Financial Strategy</li> <li>Treasury and Investment Strategy</li> <li>Reserves Strategy</li> <li>Capital investment Strategy</li> <li>Capital Plan</li> <li>HRA capital Strategy</li> </ul>

## Current Service Measures

REF	INDICATOR	LEAD	COMMENTS	ANNUAL/QUARTERLY
CORPS.P.3.2	Completion of the unaudited Statutory Accounts for 2020//21 to ensure that we maintain strong financial management and stewardship and address the actions set out in previous external audit reports	Finance	Indicator Outcome: Yes/No	QUARTERLY
CORPS.P.3.3	Deliver quarterly financial reports and commentary to Council	Finance	Indicator Outcome: Yes/No	QUARTERLY
FINSUS1	Total useable reserves as a % of council annual budgeted revenues (LGBF)	Finance		LGBF – ANNUAL
FINSUS2	Uncommitted General Fund Balance as a % of council annual budgeted net revenue (LGBF)	Finance		LGBF – ANNUAL

FINSUS3	Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Stream General Fund (LGBF)	Finance		LGBF – ANNUAL
FINSUS4	Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Stream Housing Revenues Account (LGBF)	Finance		LGBF – ANNUAL
FINSUS5	Actual outturn as a percentage of budgeted expenditure (LGBF)	Finance		LGBF – ANNUAL
New	Capital expenditure (£)	Finance	Indicators to be defined	QUARTERLY
New	Borrowing (£)	Finance	Indicators to be defined	ANNUAL or HALF YEARLY

## Digital Services

Digital Services are supporting the work of the newly formed Digital First Board, which is driving the Council's vision to create better services that provide improved outcomes by forming a Digital Council that delivers digital services to digitally connected places and communities. The aim of the board is to make the best use of opportunities presented by digital, data and technology to work effectively, create better relationships between the Council and its communities, and transform Midlothian into a leading destination for opportunity and quality of life.

The Digital Services team is responsible for the provision of all digital services, strategy, operational and support across the organisation. It is the focal point for all aspects of information and communication technology (ICT) across the Council and ensures that ICT infrastructure and facilities are fit for purpose and they effectively and efficiently underpin delivery of council services in alignment with the Single Midlothian Plan and the National ICT Strategy for Scotland. Main duties comprise:

- Ensure that the Council is well positioned to take advantage of emerging national initiatives and collaboration opportunities;
- Exploiting technology in order to reduce costs and improve services;
- To ensure that appropriate governance, security and information management policies and standards are in place.

The focus of the Digital First Board and refresh of the Council's Digital Strategy and the associated digital learning strategy will have a key role in creating a more effective and efficient range of services council wide by encouraging collaboration, reducing duplication, making appropriate use of digital technologies and sharing services where possible. Key drivers of the strategy come from the economic climate that we find ourselves in, the needs of our customers, and our aspirations for the future of Midlothian.

The delivery of transformational change, at pace, in how services are designed and provided is required if the Council is to be able to provide appropriate and effective services for a growing population in a way which is sustainable with the resources the Council expects to have available. The pandemic response has changed a large part of Midlothian's digital foundation and how Council staff and citizens now use Council services as a result. There is still work to be done to ensure the changes that were made at speed to underlying business applications, technologies and processes are reviewed and consolidated to ensure wider stability and resilience can be maintained.

The reliance and the scale of change to the new normal has to recognise the importance that digital solutions plays in the overall transformational and business activities. Corporate Solutions Service will continue to be reshaped, the key strategies which underpin the work of the service refreshed, business processes reviewed and adapted to embrace technology solutions.

<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We pledge to optimise the ways in which the Council does digital, data and technology to work effectively, collaborate, make decisions, adapt and innovate</li> <li>• We pledge to create better relationships between the Council and its communities by providing modern digital services that communities wants to use</li> <li>• We pledge to maximize opportunities for digital, data and technology to enhance quality of life, the economy, sustainability and individual opportunity in Midlothian</li> </ul>			
<b>Service Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to drive the Council's vision to improve outcomes using digital and data through the Digital First Board</li> <li>• Implement the new Digital Strategy that has been developed with SOCITM</li> <li>• Ensure that the Council is well positioned to take advantage of emerging national initiatives and collaboration opportunities;</li> <li>• Exploiting technology in order to reduce costs and improve services;</li> <li>• Ensure that appropriate governance, security and information management policies and standards are in place.</li> </ul>			
<b>Strategic framework</b>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the gap in economic circumstances</li> <li>• Reducing the inequalities in the outcomes of learning in our population</li> <li>• Reducing the impact of climate change</li> </ul>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan thematic (3 year) outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health inequalities are reduced and the health of people in Midlothian is improved</li> <li>• More children and young people receive timely and effective support when they need it</li> <li>• There is greater equality in learning</li> <li>• The public is informed and engaged in service development and delivery</li> </ul>	<b>Drivers for change:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holistic</li> <li>• Hub and Spoke</li> <li>• Modern</li> <li>• Sustainable</li> <li>• Preventative</li> <li>• Asset Based</li> <li>• One Size Fits One</li> <li>• Continually Improve</li> </ul>	<b>Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Strategy</li> <li>• Digital Learning Strategy</li> <li>• Remote Working Policy</li> </ul>

## Current Service Measures

REF	INDICATOR	LEAD	COMMENTS	ANNUAL/QUARTERLY
New – CORP.P.8a	Number of Service desk Incidents receive	Digital services		QUARTERLY
New - CORP.P.8b	Number of Service desk Incidents resolved	Digital services		QUARTERLY
New - CORP.P.9a	Number of Service desk Service requests received	Digital services		QUARTERLY
New - CORP.P.9b	Number of Service desk Service requests resolved	Digital services		QUARTERLY
New - CORP.P.10	Customer User Satisfaction Survey	Digital Service		ANNUAL

## Communications and Marketing

The team co-ordinates and delivers communication activity for the Council, both planned and responsive alongside the development and delivery of major communication and engagement activities as set out in our communications and marketing strategy 2022/23.

The teams vision is to work together innovatively to create customer-focused, cost effective communications that support council priorities and deliver successful, measurable results, achieving this vision through the adoption of the UK Government Communications Service (GCS) Modern Communications Operating Model.

- Align our communications to council priorities
- Plan our campaigns following GCS best practice standards
- Focus on audience understanding
- Evaluate our strategic communications to demonstrate value and make sure we are achieving measurable objectives
- Integrate all communications

The team's core functions are:

**Strategic:** leading on communications plans with SMART objectives for services, giving trusted communications advice, based on insight and research, to senior management and agreeing an overall communications plan and vision.

**Horizon scanning:** Identifying long term risks and opportunities, making sure the communications team has regular meetings with individual services and other external bodies to collaborate effectively, pool resources, track progress of campaigns, etc.

**Insight:** Evaluating all campaigns to establish what works and what doesn't in order to influence and improve future campaigns, using online research to shape campaigns, making good practice models and toolkits available to other communications professionals both internally and externally.

**Evaluation:** Setting SMART objectives for communications plans using the OASIS planning model; ensuring that communications' lessons are learned and shared; demonstrating the value of our activity in an engaging way and making sure we are adopting best practice by regular peer reviews, ongoing training etc.

Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We build an entrepreneurial council for future</li> <li>• We demonstrate strong and consistent leadership</li> <li>• We Promote equality, diversity and fairness</li> <li>• Our customers have choice in the way Council services are accessed and provided</li> <li>• Channel-shift has increased by the adoption of new digital tools and automated practices</li> </ul>			
Service Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting and articulating the council's vision, strategy and plans such as "Great Place to Grow" and longer term wellbeing ambition, the "route map through and out of the coronavirus crisis", Midlothian climate change strategy and carbon charter to both an internal and external audience.</li> <li>• Supporting how public services operate by encouraging residents and stakeholders to take part in consultations such as Midlothian Local Development Plan, participatory budgeting, town centre regeneration projects, and catchment area consultations.</li> <li>• Supporting service redesign and the delivery of change, for example, supporting the shift to the new customer-service platform which will allow residents to do much more online via our website.</li> <li>• Promotion of behavioural change, for example by encouraging residents of Midlothian to recycle more or travel more actively or improve their health and wellbeing by signing up for Ageing Well classes etc. thus helping the council achieve its carbon neutral targets by 2030 or improve their health and wellbeing.</li> </ul>			
Strategic framework	<b>Single Midlothian Plan priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the gap in economic circumstances</li> <li>• Reducing the inequalities in the outcomes of learning in our population</li> <li>• Reducing the impact of climate change</li> </ul>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan thematic outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health inequalities are reduced and the health of people in Midlothian is improved</li> <li>• People are able to look after and improve their own health and wellbeing and live in good health for longer</li> <li>• Poverty (including child poverty - shared with GIRFEMC) levels in Midlothian are reduced</li> </ul>	<b>Drivers for change:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holistic</li> <li>• Hub and Spoke</li> <li>• Modern</li> <li>• Sustainable</li> <li>• Preventative</li> <li>• Asset Based</li> <li>• One Size Fits One</li> <li>• Continually Improve</li> </ul>	<b>Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications and Marketing Strategy 20/23</li> <li>• Communication plan 2021/22</li> </ul>

### Current Service Measures

REF	INDICATOR	LEAD	COMMENTS	ANNUAL/QUARTERLY
NEW	Visits to Midlothian website	Communications		QUARTERLY
NEW	Number of fostering enquires as part of the Foster Midlothian campaign 21/22	Communications	Target of 90 enquires for 21/22	ANNUAL



## Business Services

Business Services encompasses Business Applications, the provision of operational support, Democratic and Document Services, Executive Officer Support, Employment & Reward and a centralised stores function. These teams, based within various locations, provide a wide range of essential support across the Council.

- **Business Applications** team is responsible for support for all Council business critical systems. As well as providing helpdesk support to users, the team are involved in systems developments, upgrades and implementations, working closely with colleagues in Digital Services and our software suppliers. The team work with service managers and staff across the Council to help support efficient service provision to customers and are responsible for all management information and reporting requirements for each system/application including Integra financials, iTrent HR & Payroll System; Revenues Control; MOSAIC (Social Care), Total (Roads and Property) and Seemis (the National Education Management information System) together with a range of other essential systems.
- **Operational Support** carry out transactional and financial processing such as invoice payment processing, client financial assessments and charging, job costing and sundry debt processing, utilising a number of Council business critical systems on a daily basis. They are also responsible for customer applications, payments for services and the administration of any associated processes.
- **Democratic and Document Services** carries out a range of diverse and critical functions across the organisation. This includes ensuring the proper governance of the decision making process of the Council, supporting the delivery of the statutory services of the Council, delivering an efficient and compliant records, archives and document management service and providing effective business support to services across the organisation. This area is also responsible for the contract management of the managed print service across all Council facilities.
- **Executive Officer Support** brings together the support to the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Chief Officers/heads of Service. The team provide comprehensive administrative and secretarial support working closely with the Senior Leadership Team supporting them in the efficient and effective implementation of the Council's key priorities.
- **Employment and Reward** develop and implement effective and integrated Employment and Reward Services and provide a Payroll Service for all of the Council's employees. It manages the design, delivery, and operation of recruitment, operate payroll processes, ensuring compliance with relevant regulatory, statutory and legislative provisions and are responsible for the interpretation and implement legislation and regulation in relation to PAYE and other statutory requirements. Technical advice and guidance is available on contractual terms and conditions, Tax, National Insurance and pension issues as well as the

required administration to ensure maintenance of employment contracts and payroll records across all service areas. The team work closely with the Human Resources team recognising the shared objectives and key relationships between both teams and between them ensure the appropriateness and effective implementation of a range of People Policies and procedures for the Council.

- **Revenues Services** Responsible for the billing, collection and recovery of key revenue streams for the Council, as well as the assessment and payment of Housing Benefit claims. The functions administered by the team include the following:
  - Collection of Council Tax and water service charges
  - Collection of Council House Rents
  - Collection of Housing Benefit Overpayments
  - Collection on Non-Domestic Rates
  - Assessment and payment of Housing Benefit claims
  - Assessment and payment of Council Tax Reduction claims
  - Assessment and payment of Scottish Welfare Fund claims

<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our customers have choice in the way Council services are accessed and provided</li> <li>• Channel-shift has increased by the adoption of new digital tools and automated practices</li> <li>• We pledge to optimise the ways in which the Council does digital, data and technology to work effectively, collaborate, make decisions, adapt and innovate</li> <li>• We pledge to create better relationships between the Council and its communities by providing modern digital services that communities wants to use</li> <li>• We pledge to maximize opportunities for digital, data and technology to enhance quality of life, the economy, sustainability and individual opportunity in Midlothian</li> </ul>
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<b>Service Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support financially vulnerable households in mitigating Welfare Reform impact, award Scottish Welfare Fund monies in line with criteria set for crisis grants and community care grants to meet the needs of vulnerable claimants</li> <li>Delivery of LGW &amp; Teachers Payrolls ensuring compliance with relevant, statutory and legislative provisions.</li> <li>Upgrade/migration to hosted service for Capita ONE Housing</li> <li>Supporting the Customer Services Platform project</li> <li>Continued support for payments of Free School Meals and Business Grants</li> <li>Implementation of InterAgency Information Exchange with NHS Lothian for Mosaic</li> </ul>			
<b>Strategic framework</b>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing the gap in economic circumstances</li> </ul>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan thematic (3 year) outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poverty (including child poverty - shared with GIRFEMC) levels in Midlothian are reduced</li> <li>Health inequalities are reduced and the health of people in Midlothian is improved</li> <li>The local economy is more productive and inclusive</li> </ul>	<b>Drivers for change:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holistic</li> <li>Modern</li> <li>Sustainable</li> <li>One Size Fits One</li> <li>Continually Improve</li> </ul>	<b>Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium Term Financial Strategy</li> <li>Digital Strategy</li> </ul>

### Current Service Measures

REF	INDICATOR	LEAD	COMMENTS	ANNUAL/QUARTERLY
CORPS.P.1.4 a	Total amount granted from Scottish Welfare Fund for crisis grants and community care grants	Revenues	Since 2019/20	QUARTERLY
CORPS.P.3.4 a	In-year recovery of overpayments - % of all HB overpayments identified during the financial year	Revenues	Since 2019/20 – reporting well over target both years	QUARTERLY
CORPS.P.3.4 b	All recovery overpayments - as a % of all HB overpayment debt	Revenues	Since 2019/20 – off target every quarter	QUARTERLY
CSE.LPI.03	Average processing time for new claims	Revenues	Currently reported monthly by service	QUARTERLY
CSE.LPI.04	Average processing time for change of circumstances	Revenues	Currently reported monthly by service	QUARTERLY

HSN1b	Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year	Revenues		LGBF - ANNUAL
HSN2	Percentage of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids	Revenues		LGBF - ANNUAL
New	% of Rent transactions received by direct debit/online	Revenues	Ken to review what's measurable	
CORP4	The cost per dwelling of collecting council tax	Revenues		LGBF - ANNUAL
CORP7	Corporate Indicator - Percentage of income due from council tax received by the end of the year % (LGBF)	Revenues		LGBF - ANNUAL
RHM.R.01.3	Percentage of Direct Debit payers for Council tax	Revenues	Currently reported monthly by service	QUARTERLY
RHM.R.04.5	Number of Council tax transactions received online	Revenues	Currently reported monthly by service	QUARTERLY
CORP8	Percentage of invoices sampled and paid within 30 days (Council wide)	Business Services		LGBF – QUARTERLY
CORP1	Support services as a % of total gross expenditure	Business Services		LGBF - ANNUAL

## Legal & Procurement Services

The Legal team provide professional legal services to the Council and all services and ensures support is provided to the Returning Officer(s) for all Elections. It also ensures appropriate governance arrangements are in place and that these are effective. The Legal Services Manager acts as the Council's Monitoring Officer. Key Service areas include:

- Providing procedural advice to the Council, Committees and other Council meetings, the Licensing Board, Review Boards and Appeals Committees;
- Providing professional legal advice to elected members and officers;
- Representing or supporting the Council at public inquiries, tribunals etc.;
- Co-ordination of Elections;
- Providing a Licensing Service (civic government, liquor and other miscellaneous licenses)
- Acting as instructing Solicitor and/or representing the Council at court hearings and concluding sales, purchases, leases, formal agreements, contracts and orders.
- Assisting the council to comply with information management requirements under Data Protection legislation.

The introduction and implementation of the a range of new legislation will have an impact on services and the Legal Services team will ensure that Corporate Management Team and Business Transformation Board are sighted on all new legislation so that services can adapt to ensure the Council meets its obligations arising from new legislation and that any divergence form the existing budget or the financial impacts set out in the financial memorandum to bills is fully assessed.

The Procurement team provides a centralised advisory and support service across the whole Council and works collaboratively with external procurement partners. This team develops and updates the procurement strategy, policies and procedures which meet Council objectives, procurement best practice and legislation. The team provides support, advice and guidance to managers and stakeholder on all aspects of the full procurement journey including defining the supply need, market analysis, tendering and contract and supplier management. Key areas include:

- Spend Analysis
- Strategic Procurement

- Strategic Supplier Relationship Management
- Purchase to Pay

Through a refresh of the Procurement Strategy and fundamental review and reshaping of the Procurement Service ensuring that the Council can access the right goods and services, at the right time and right price. Further development the governance arrangements in place to ensure Best Value is evidenced Council wide in the procurement of goods and services and put in place effective contract and supplier management across the whole of the procurement journey.

The Procurement Strategy defines procurement as the process of acquiring the goods, services and works an organisation needs. It spans the whole cycle, comprising three phases:

1. Identifying needs and deciding what is to be bought and when (procurement planning/commodity strategy development).
2. The process of awarding a contract, including defining the terms on which the goods, services or works are to be provided and selecting the contracting partner that offers the best value.
3. Managing the contract to ensure effective performance.

The current Procurement Strategy sets out for the supplier market and other key stakeholders the strategic aims of the Council to be taken forward through our procurement activity over the next five years.

1. It outlines the central role of the procurement function in supporting the Council to achieve its strategic priorities To deliver and demonstrate savings through procurement by continuing to review and monitor performance;
2. Completing the Purchase to Pay project;
3. As the next stage of the Council's procurement journey, and similar to most other Councils, the aim is to deliver a robust contract and supplier management tool by rolling out guidance and training to contract owners;
4. Progressing a review of the procurement arrangements across the Council including exploring options for joint working with neighbouring Councils.

<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Best Value is evidenced Council wide in the procurement of goods and services</li> <li>Effective contract and supplier management across the whole of the procurement journey</li> </ul>			
<b>Service Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refresh the Procurement Strategy and fundamentally review and reshape the Procurement Service</li> <li>Implement the learning from the Scotland Excel review</li> <li>In partnership with Economic development and stakeholders, ensure business community benefits in the supply chain to maximise opportunities for local people</li> <li>Continue to protect the Council's legal and governance interests</li> <li>Set out strategic direction to further develop our data protection governance capability and embed this throughout the council.</li> <li>Support development in Midlothian through planning agreements (legal commercial team).</li> <li>Support vulnerable children and adults through permanence orders and guardianship orders.</li> <li>Support council as an employer through litigation cases for Employment tribunals.</li> <li>Support Housing Revenue Account through heritable court actions.</li> <li>Assist Economic development through robust licensing procedures.</li> <li>Assist council in reaching its housing target through individual buy backs and large scale housing transfers.</li> </ul>			
<b>Strategic framework</b>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing the gap in economic circumstances</li> <li>Reducing the impact of climate change</li> </ul>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan thematic (3 year) outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The local economy is more productive and inclusive</li> <li>Sustainable town centre regeneration is visible</li> <li>Fewer people are victims of crime, abuse or harm</li> </ul>	<b>Drivers for change:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holistic</li> <li>Modern</li> <li>Sustainable</li> <li>One Size Fits One</li> <li>Continually Improve</li> </ul>	<b>Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procurement Strategy</li> </ul>

### Current Service Measures

REF	INDICATOR	LEAD	COMMENTS	ANNUAL/QUARTERLY
ECON4	% of procurement spend spent on local enterprises	Procurement		LGBF - ANNUAL
New	% of revenues spend placed with contracted suppliers	Finance		QUARTERLY

New	Number of new taxi applications received	Legal		QUARTERLY
New	Number of premise licences received	Legal		QUARTERLY
New	Number of Freedom of Information requests received (Council wide)	Legal		QUARTERLY
New	Number Subject Access Requests received (council wide)	Legal		QUARTERLY



# Continuous improvement

## *Self-assessment framework/approach*

### *Best practice examples*

The Midlothian Excellence Framework (MEF) is the corporate self-evaluation tool available to support service improvement with a comprehensive review of activities and results. MEF is mapped to a number of established organisational improvement tools, including Customer Service Excellence and can be adapted for use by services across the following themes:

- Leadership
- Staff
- Service Planning
- Processes and Services
- Partnerships and Resources
- Results



In addition to the Midlothian Excellence Framework, the Council has adopted the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) standard as a corporate tool to support continuous improvement. CSE recognises customer groups and evaluating customer needs and expectations is at the heart of the Standard. The standard contains 5 criteria to be considered as follows:

- Customer Insight
- Culture of the Organisation
- Information and Access
- Delivery
- Timeliness & Quality of Service



During 2021/22 a calendar of self-evaluation/continuous improvement activities will be implemented across services within Corporate Solutions which support the Council's ongoing focus to deliver Best Value.

# Further information

## Equalities

The service plans set out our commitment to promoting equality and diversity. An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has been carried out, enabling Midlothian Council to meet its legal duties to consider equality, human rights, sustainability and the environment. The assessment ensures that the planned services and policies promote equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination and harassment; and promote good relations between those with protected characteristics and those with none. They also allow broader inequalities to be addressed, ensuring that the needs of all people are met.

For further information or to view a copy of the IIA please contact: [insert link/contact details](#)

This document can be made available in different formats and in different languages. If you would like a copy in another language or format, please email [equalities@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@midlothian.gov.uk) or phone 0131 271 3658

## Key contacts

Further information about this plan is available from the contacts below:

Kevin Anderson, Executive Director Place – [Kevin.Anderson@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:Kevin.Anderson@midlothian.gov.uk)

Gary Fairley, Chief Officer Corporate Solutions – [Gary.Fairley@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:Gary.Fairley@midlothian.gov.uk)

Saty Kaur, Executive Business Manager – [Saty.Kaur@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:Saty.Kaur@midlothian.gov.uk)

***Place is where people, location and resources combine to create a sense of identity and purpose.***

***The Place service plan will deliver more joined-up, collaborative, and participative approaches to services, land and buildings, across all sectors within a place, enabling better outcomes for everyone and increased opportunities for people and communities to shape their own lives.***

# Introduction

The Place service plan sets out how we will achieve our vision, what actions we will undertake and how we will measure our success. This service plan is a key component of Midlothian's strategic framework which brings together the medium and long term activity that will ensure our communities are supported through and out of the current pandemic, building a sustainable future that is equitable and provides opportunities for all.

The last year has brought unprecedented challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic. Service plan priorities were reassessed as staff across Place refocused their activity to critical service delivery, whilst maintaining essential frontline services and providing a range of additional supports to some of our most vulnerable communities. Key activity included:

- Meeting the increased demands placed on Environmental Health as they provided a comprehensive response to test and protect, identification of locations associated with positive cases and adopted revised working practices and engagements to reflect continual regulatory changes
- Health and Safety managing the challenging risk and contingency landscape in our workplaces to keep staff and citizens safe
- Delivery of additional cleaning services for touch point cleaning throughout the day and the sanitising/fogging of classrooms within schools where positive COVID-19 cases are reported
- The launch of the Economic Renewal Strategy, to assist the local economy recover from the pandemic; complementing Economic Development's roll out of the [Locate in Midlothian](#) website and social media channels, the creation of a jobs board and information on partner provision of employability support and grants available to support local businesses and the administering of the Newly Self Employed Hardship Fund and COVID-19 Business support packages
- Additional support of Land & Countryside, Roads, Building Maintenance and Sports & Leisure staff to assist with winter maintenance programme and waste collections, ensuring essential services continue to be delivered for Midlothian's citizens
- Land & Countryside Services working with the public to ensure social distancing was maintained on our busiest walkways and open spaces
- Building Maintenance team responding to design and build a temporary mortuary facility, vaccination centre and COVID-19 conforming election polling places, whilst delivering essential housing repairs
- Environmental Health and Contingency Planning delivering the community testing facilities in order for Scottish Government to fully understand the impact on, and transmission within, our local communities
- Roads team implemented temporary infrastructure amendments to facilitate safer active travel during lockdown

Midlothian's communities have needed urgent and critical support through the pandemic, and the Council has faced demands and pressures never previously experienced. Innovative ways of working have been introduced and services adapted to respond to the needs of our citizens, in particular those experiencing the greatest levels of poverty and inequality, at pace. The rapid response to this pandemic has resulted in a complete transformation of how the Council works.

This plan describes how Place services will continue to build on this learning moving forwards, harnessing the energy, flexibility and creativity demonstrated by our workforce, to embed a culture of continuous improvement and innovation across Place.

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# Midlothian's profile

 92,460

people live in Midlothian

We are one of the smallest Local Authority in mainland Scotland but the **Fastest Growing.**



18% of people are over 65

20% are under 16

**Inequalities:** Midlothian is made up of **115** (SIMD) data zones,

**10** of which fall within the **most deprived areas**, giving Midlothian a **8.7%** local share of data zones within the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland.

**Working population** (aged 16-64) of **57,100** with **1,700** unemployed

**5,900** people furloughed as of March 2021, 2,900 males and 3,000 females

**Life expectancy at birth is:**



Females  
81.7 years



Males  
77.7 years



## Health Conditions

The leading cause of death rates for both males and females is **Heart diseases and dementia.**

## Midlothian's growing and ageing population

Data source: Midlothian Council Area Profile (nrsscotland.gov.uk), SIMD - gov.scot, nomis.web.co.uk



### Population rise

The population of Midlothian is projected to increase from 91,340 to 103,945 by 2028. An increase of 13.8%, which compared to a projected increase of 1.8% for Scotland as a whole. Midlothian is projected to have the highest percentage change in population size out of the 32 council areas.



### Increase in households

The number of households in Midlothian is projected to increase from 39,122 to 45,374 by 2028. This is a 16% increase, which compares to a projected increase of 4.9% for Scotland as a whole. Midlothian is projected to have the highest percentage change in household numbers out of the 32 council areas.



### Increase in over 75s

The 75 and over age group is projected to see the largest percentage increase (+40.9%). As people live for longer many more people will be living with frailty and/or dementia and/or multiple health conditions. This will pose challenges for all our health and social care services whilst also changing the face of some of the local communities.

# Strategic framework

## Single Midlothian Plan 2019-22

Midlothian's Community Planning Partnership set out a vision for the long term future of Midlothian based on two key principles – 'people' and 'place'. The CPPs priorities are to reduce inequalities in four key areas – learning outcomes, health outcomes, economic circumstances and the impact of climate change. There are three geographical areas that additional focused activity to tackle poverty takes place – Mayfield, Gorebridge and Woodburn, recognising the increased inequalities that these communities experience.

## Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Council has recognised the need for a strategic step change in the form of the development and agreement of a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), which sets out budget projections for the next three financial years together with the proposed resource allocation measure that will allow the Council to balance revenue budget for each financial year.

To inform the MTFS, a public consultation visionary exercise was carried out in April 2019 and highlighted the following key priorities for what Midlothian should be like in 2040:

- **A sense of belonging:** Pride in communities, working in partnership, transparency in decision making and accessibility in service provision
- **A balanced infrastructure:** Manageable housing numbers, vibrant towns, protected green spaces, a clean, carbon neutral environment and improved community transport
- **Learning and working together:** High quality education and training, jobs close to where people live, a main provider of local food production, maximising technological solutions
- **Intergenerational opportunities:** Reimagined older people services, being able to grow old in the one community, with support and good access to health and social care.

In addition to the visioning exercise the following key themes were explored as part of the consultation programme:

- **One Council - Working with You, For You** is underpinned by a commitment to deliver a one council strategy which reduces silo working within services, increases cross party working at a political level and uses holistic approaches which place individuals and communities at the heart of our work.
- **Preventative and Sustainable** responds to Communities telling us strongly that they want to live in a clean, carbon neutral environment with protected green spaces and improved environmentally friendly community transport options.
- **Efficient and Modern** recognises that Midlothian Council needs to adapt to change by doing things differently to get improved results and increasing financial sustainability by addressing inefficiencies.

- ***Innovative and Ambitious*** recognises our ambition for Midlothian and to make sure it is a great place to grow, now and in the future.

### **Key drivers for change**

In June 2019 the Council approved the key drivers for change and agreed to adopt a Service Dominant Logic. This places citizens and communities at the heart of our daily work. A key step change is moving from silo-based working to holistic working, focused on continuous improvement and ensuring that we are data-driven and improve performance based on information gathered.

The nine key drivers for change provide a strong foundation to design and shape services. Building on these, learning from the pandemic, in September 2020 Cabinet approved the recommendations from the Nesta 'Listen and Learn' report which was informed from staff insight. The Nesta recommendations articulate Midlothian's Future Vision, centered around:

- Valuing communities
- Remote/flexible working
- Digital first
- Leading new ways of working
- Education

### **Regional Growth**

Midlothian is Scotland's fastest growing mainland local authority with an expected population growth of almost 14% by 2028. In July 2017, Midlothian signed Heads of Terms with its neighbouring local authorities, evidencing their commitment to the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal, a programme to accelerate growth, create new economic opportunities and tackle inequalities. The ambitious programme, worth over 1.3bn, will work with government, learning providers, public and private partnerships, to deliver transformational change across the following five themes:

- Research, development and innovation
- Integrated regional employability and skills
- Transport
- Culture
- Housing

Complementary to the deal is Midlothian's extensive and ambitious Capital Programme, circa £0.8 billion. This includes a number of capital investment and regeneration projects that are enhanced by this regional partnership, and a number of innovative expansion projects that respond to Midlothian's local growth agenda,

The Place service makes a meaningful and measurable contribution towards the strategic framework, described in the performance section of the plan. Current transformational work and initiatives are aligned with the above themes and the service will continue to deliver change, contribute to environmental responsibilities, support economic growth, explore entrepreneurial opportunities and shared services.



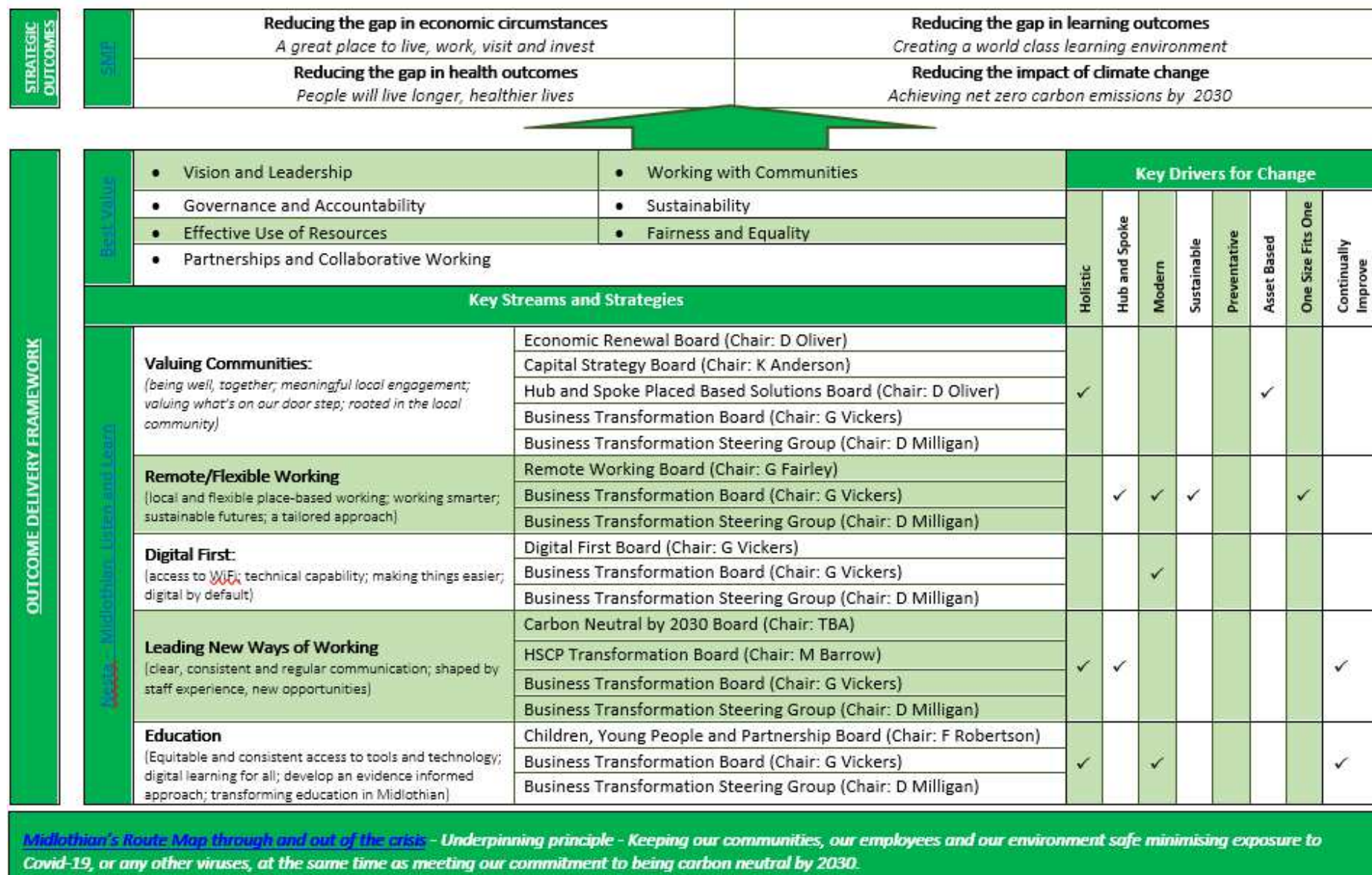


Figure 1: Strategic framework

# Place

***Place is where people, location and resources combine to create a sense of identity and purpose, and are at the heart of addressing the needs and realising the full potential of communities.***

The challenges for Midlothian continue to grow with the impact of COVID-19 and our recovery out of the pandemic, the growing and ageing population and the increasing demand for services that this brings. Population growth over the next 10 to 15 years will see Midlothian remain the fastest growing Council in Scotland. A 0-15 population increase is projected at 20% and 75+ population increase is projected at 100% between 2014 and 2039.

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) combines seven different aspects of deprivation: income; employment; health; education, skills and training; geographic access to services; crime; and housing. By identifying small areas where there are concentrations of multiple deprivation, strategies and resources can be targeted at the places with greatest need to address inequalities in our communities. Midlothian is made up of 115 SIMD data zones, 10 of which fall within the most deprived areas, giving Midlothian an 8.7% local share of data zones within the 20% most deprived in Scotland where people have fewer opportunities and resources in health and education as well as low income and unemployment.

This pace of growth demands additional capacity within the school estate to cope with the projected increase in pupil numbers. The general population growth forecast places additional pressure on our infrastructure, including the growth of the road network as new development roads are adopted, and increases the demand on essential services such as waste collection.

As part of work to address the issue of significant population growth and demographic changes within Midlothian, the key drivers of change in delivery of sustainable and transformational services and regeneration of our communities must be viewed holistically.

## **The Place Principle**

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

In implementing the place principle we:

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

# Priorities

Due to the events of the last year, it is recognised that priorities from the 2020/21 service plan have not all been realised. In addition, we are still responding to the ongoing pandemic emergency which add significant pressure to the Council's resources.

To inform the actions for this plan, a review of the 2020/21 action plan was undertaken. Actions were assessed against the following criteria:

- progress to date
- alignment to the strategic outcomes
- contribution to the recovery through and out of the pandemic

The revised action plan takes account of all these factors to identify the key activity that Place will focus on for the next 12 months, and demonstrates how this activity contributes to the wider ambitions of the Council. Progress will be demonstrated through key performance indicators and follow Midlothian's agreed performance monitoring approach.

## **Workforce planning**

In order to achieve our ambition, we recognise that our biggest asset is our workforce. Investing in, and developing our workforce to increase capacity and expertise is a key priority of Midlothian's future vision. Over the last year our staff have faced huge adversity, and have responded positively to the challenge, embracing change and developing innovative ways of working. The service plan will be complemented by a comprehensive work force plan that harnesses the energy, flexibility and creativity demonstrated by our workforce, and fosters continuous improvement.

# Performance

## Building Services

Building Services covers Building Standards and Building Maintenance. The purpose of the Building Standards system is to protect the public interest. The system sets out the essential standards that are required to be met when building work, or conversion of a building takes place in order to meet building regulations. Building Standards provides co-ordinated and integrated regulatory advice for developers, architects, surveyors, engineers and the general public on progressing buildings and development projects. The Building Standards service communicates its vision and strategy, and sets out performance against strategic goals and targets through the verification performance report which is a strategic planning and management tool that provides information about the local authority. In addition, the service has *Investors in People* and *Customer Service Excellence* status. This year, despite the challenges incurred by the COVID-19 pandemic, Building Standards managed to secure the compliance plus ratings from previous years and gain a further 3 compliance pluses.

Building Maintenance provides a wide range of property management, maintenance and a diverse range of professional and technical services to support the delivery of major projects. Key service areas include:

- Planned and Reactive Maintenance
- Void house management
- Scottish Housing Quality Standard
- Mechanical and Engineering services
- Provision of Project Management Services, Quantity Surveying Services, Clerk of Works Services and Design Services
- Energy Efficient Standard for Social Housing (ESSH).

<b>Service priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to deliver the Building Standards continuous improvement plan which forms part of the nationally adopted performance framework and is submitted to the Scottish Government.</li> <li>Continue to deliver the additional programmes of work identified by the house condition surveys to maintain the Scottish Housing Quality Standard for the Councils housing stock.</li> <li>Deliver the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH) programme.</li> <li>Continue to improve the delivery of Building Maintenance services through the review of mobile working, process improvements, income and productivity.</li> <li>Implementation of the Local Authority Carbon Management Plan and General Services Capital programme</li> </ul>			
<b>Strategic framework</b>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing the impact of climate change</li> <li>Reducing inequalities in the health of our population</li> </ul>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan thematic outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New people are able to live, as far as reasonably practicable, independently and at home or in a homely setting in their community</li> <li>Engage with house builders on insulation, energy efficiency and biodiversity mitigations</li> </ul>	<b>Drivers for change:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holistic</li> <li>Modern</li> <li>Sustainable</li> <li>Preventative</li> <li>Asset Based</li> <li>One Size Fits One</li> <li>Continually Improve</li> </ul>	<b>Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carbon Management Plan</li> <li>Climate Change Strategy</li> <li>Housing Programme</li> </ul>

### Current service measures

REF	INDICATOR	LEAD	TREND (where available)	ANNUAL/QUARTERLY
BS.PLACE.P.5.2b	Percentage of the Councils housing stock meeting the 'Modern facilities & services' Scottish Housing Quality Standard criteria	Building Maintenance	Previous data from 2011 consistently high, 98-100%	BALANCED SCORECARD - QUARTERLY
HSN3	Corporate Indicator - Percentage of the Councils housing stock meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard criteria (LGBF)	Building Maintenance		LGBF - QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.5.2a	Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the 'Free from serious disrepair' Scottish Housing Quality Standard criteria	Building Maintenance	Previous data from 2011 consistently high, 98-100%	QUARTERLY



PLACE.P.5.2c	Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the 'Healthy, safe & secure' Scottish Housing Quality Standard criteria	Building Maintenance	Previous data from 2011 consistently high, 98-100%	QUARTERLY
HSN4b	Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (LGBF)	Building Maintenance		LGBF - QUARTERLY
HSN5	Corporate Indicator - Percentage of council dwellings that are energy efficient (LGBF)	Building Maintenance		ANNUAL
New	Percentage of first priority housing repairs completed within target of 24 hrs.	Building Maintenance		QUARTERLY
New	Percentage of second priority housing repairs completed within target of 7 days	Building Maintenance		QUARTERLY
BS.PLACE.P.6.1b	Number of major adaptations completed	Building Maintenance	Since 2014 – with 100 as the figure every quarter until 20/21 where we reported 0	QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.1 0.2a	Percentage of Building warrant assessments processed within 10 days (rather than nationally adopted target of 20 days), fast tracking applications which provide economic benefit to the Midlothian area or People living with disabilities circumstances.	Building Standards	Since 2016 – for last 3 years figures are more or less 100%	QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.1 7.8a	Measure satisfaction relating to key areas in Building standards including those on delivery, timeliness, information, access and the quality of customer service	Building Standards	Since 2016/17 – improvements year on year – always above 90%	QUARTERLY

## Property and Facilities Management

Property Assets provide a wide range of professional property and valuation advice, energy management, asset rationalisation, data management and development of G.I.S. systems. They work with partner organisations and third sector groups to develop and bring forward master plan proposals in key locations. The service is responsible for the management and monitoring of energy usage and costs across all aspects of the Council's non domestic property portfolio and developing renewable energy as a sustainable means of reducing costs and addressing energy security.

A key priority for the service is delivering the 'Effective Working in Midlothian' (EWiM) strategy. This refers directly to the rationalisation of the Council's office and depot estate. It includes the introduction of space standards throughout the estate complemented with the workforce's flexible and mobile working. The pandemic accelerated the adoption of remote working and enhanced digital capability across the Midlothian estate. EWiM is now pivotal to the Council's service redesign and recovery programmes.

Facilities Services provide professional and technical management across a number of sites. This includes the management of the catering teams, building cleaning and janitorial services. They also manage the functions and vending service, oversee external facilities contracts, public toilets and café services. The service works in partnership with a range of key partners and stakeholders such as Midlothian Food and Health Alliance Working Group, United Kingdom Cleaning Professionals Academic Service, Education Scotland and Food Standards Scotland. This year, services were provided differently due to COVID-19 with early years and schools restrictions, the requirement for packed lunches, and the implementation of touch point cleaning, classroom fogging and coordination of lateral flow testing across the school establishment. This was delivered alongside the legislative changes to nutritional standards and the Early Years expansion programme.



<b>Service Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop carbon reduction targets for Council properties and work with energy partners to develop energy efficiency projects, including renewable energy, in support of sustainable low carbon energy targets and district heating schemes.</li> <li>Support the delivery of the Economic Renewal Strategy through the letting and sale of PIA properties.</li> <li>Lead the acquisition and disposal of identified sites in support of Capital and Local Plans, Learning Estate and Housing programmes and the climate change agenda.</li> <li>Continue the delivery of the Effective Working in Midlothian strategy.</li> <li>Maintain compliance and review Health and Nutrition of school meals in accordance with new Scottish Government legislation and continue the assessment of food commodities/products for school meal menus in relation to proposed changes in nutritional regulation.</li> <li>Increase revenue throughout the commercial sector of catering services.</li> <li>Continue to provide a catering and facilities service that reacts to, and meets the requirements of, the Early Years expansion programme</li> <li>Continue to improve the facilities and cleaning services and introduce new cleaning practices and methodologies.</li> </ul>			
<b>Strategic framework</b>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing the gap in economic circumstances</li> <li>Reducing inequalities in the health of our population</li> <li>Reducing the inequalities in the outcomes of learning in our population</li> </ul>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan thematic outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce health inequalities</li> <li>Deliver further affordable housing</li> <li>Increase economic participation</li> <li>Implement climate change strategy</li> <li>Develop and implement a programme of continuous improvement and efficiency to develop additional capacity</li> </ul>	<b>Drivers for change:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holistic</li> <li>Hub and Spoke</li> <li>Modern</li> <li>Sustainable</li> <li>Preventative</li> <li>Asset Based</li> <li>One Size Fits One</li> <li>Continually Improve</li> </ul>	<b>Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective Working in Midlothian (EWiM)</li> <li>Capital Plan</li> <li>Learning Estate Strategy</li> <li>Housing Programme</li> </ul>

### Current service measurements

REF	INDICATOR	LEAD	TREND (where available)	ANNUAL/QUARTERLY
C-AST1	Corporate Indicator - Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use (LGBF)	Estates		LGBF - ANNUAL
C-AST2	Corporate Indicator - Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition (LGBF)	Estates		LGBF - ANNUAL

PLACE 1.1a	Number of school meals provided in Primary Schools (quarterly)	Facilities	Since 20/21 (similar indicators reported over last 3-4 years)	QUARTERLY
PLACE 1.1b	Number of school meals provided in Secondary Schools (quarterly)	Facilities	Since 20/21 (similar indicators reported over last 3-4 years)	QUARTERLY
PLACE 1.1c	Number of Free school meals provided (Primary 1-3) (quarterly)	Facilities	Since 20/21 (similar indicators reported over last 3-4 years)	QUARTERLY
PLACE 17.1a	Total hours used for cleaning in primary schools (quarterly)	Facilities	20/21 – however similar indicator reported previous years	QUARTERLY
PLACE 17.1b	Total hours used for cleaning in secondary schools (quarterly)	Facilities	20/21 – however similar indicator reported previous years	QUARTERLY
PLACE 17.1c	Total hours used for Janitorial services in schools (quarterly)	Facilities	20/21 – however similar indicator reported previous years	QUARTERLY

## Housing

Midlothian's Housing Service are responsible for a number of key strategies that lead the development of housing stock and tackle homelessness. The Local Housing Strategy is submitted to the Scottish Government on a five-year basis and sets out the Council's housing plans for developing, improving and managing the housing stock over that period. It includes a Needs and Demand analysis to ensure the mainstream provision and also particular needs of vulnerable groups including homeless, young people leaving care, older people and people with disabilities or support needs are met, as well as those of existing tenants and families. The next cycle of the strategy is due for approval in June 2021.

The Midlothian Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) informs the Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Investment Programme (AHIP) to support the delivery of affordable housing development. The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan takes a housing-led approach for rehousing people that have experienced homelessness, making sure they reach a settle housing option as quickly as possible rather than staying in temporary accommodation or too long. In December 2020 the Council achieved its ambition to end the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation. This was principally achieved by expanding the shared accommodation project detailed in the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan and the utilisation of shared accommodation services.

The team is also responsible for developing a Tenant Participation Strategy to ensure effective participation and scrutiny which gives tenants and other customers the opportunity to influence decisions about the housing services they receive.

Midlothian is collaborating with 5 other Local Authorities as part of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Deal to examine and develop approaches and projects to scale up the procurement of construction materials on a regional basis. The Regional Housing Board is developing several housing-related opportunities such as the procurement of new affordable housing at scale, including the establishment of a regional off-site construction demonstrator supported by a significant pipeline commitment from the regional SHIP.

Service Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to develop the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan to increase the number of homeless households that obtain permanent accommodation, and half the average time taken for the Council to complete its homeless duty from 105 weeks to 52 weeks</li> <li>• Develop the Local Housing Strategy 2021/26, the Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2021/22, a Homeless Prevention Strategy and Action Plan and a Tenant Participation Strategy 2020/21</li> <li>• Increase the supply of new build affordable housing (including open market purchases) in Midlothian with the new build programme set out in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24.</li> <li>• Implement Midlothian Council's Allocation Policy</li> <li>• Implement the approach to housing those with complex needs through a 'Housing First' model</li> <li>• Promote the reuse of suitable vacant or vacated council buildings to provide a more supportive and productive environment to homeless households and achieve cost efficiencies</li> <li>• Continue to drive forward transformation through the adoption of digital platforms, review of void management to minimise re-let timescales and further development of our tenancy support to improve the sustainability of tenancies</li> <li>• Introduce a new strategy to reduce drug deaths within Midlothian homelessness accommodation</li> <li>• Invest in our workforce through the ongoing development of cross team working to upskill and capacity build and the continued rollout of the Housing Options toolkit and trauma training</li> </ul>			
Strategic framework	<b>Single Midlothian Plan priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the gap in economic circumstances</li> <li>• Reducing inequalities in the health of our population</li> </ul>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan thematic outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce health inequalities</li> <li>• Increase provision of accommodation for homeless households</li> <li>• Deliver further affordable housing</li> <li>• Develop and implement a programme of continuous improvement and efficiency to develop additional capacity</li> </ul>	<b>Drivers for change:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holistic</li> <li>• Hub and Spoke</li> <li>• Modern</li> <li>• Sustainable</li> <li>• Preventative</li> <li>• Asset Based</li> <li>• One Size Fits One</li> <li>• Continually Improve</li> </ul>	<b>Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Housing Strategy 2021/26</li> <li>• Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan</li> <li>• Strategic Housing Investment Plan</li> <li>• Homeless Prevention Strategy</li> </ul>

## Current service measurements

REF	INDICATOR	LEAD	TREND (where available)	ANNUAL/QUARTERLY
BS.PLACE. P.4.2a	Re-let time permanent properties (calendar days)	Housing	Since 2007 – no improvements in stats since 2011 – with average 50 days for 10 years. Never hit 35 day target.	BALANCED SCORECARD - QUARTERLY
NEW SMP - ref tbc	Number of new homes completed, including specialist housing	Housing		QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.4. 2b	Re-let time temporary accommodation properties	Housing		QUARTERLY
New	Length of time homeless applicants wait until receiving a permanent housing outcome	Housing	Reported to Scottish Government with National comparison	BALANCED SCORECARD - QUARTERLY
New	Length of time homeless applicants spend in temporary accommodation	Housing	Reported to Scottish Government with National comparison	QUARTERLY

## Neighbourhood Services

Neighbourhood Services is Place's new 'Hub and Spoke' service. This service adopts a locality model of delivery, bringing together a number of key Place teams – Roads (operational, assets and policy), Travel & Fleet, Waste, and Land & Countryside to improve the quality of urban and rural spaces for Midlothian's citizens.

Road Services comprises civil, road safety, structure and lighting professionals. In addition, staff provide input into major transportation projects in Midlothian and the surrounding area often in conjunction with other partners such as Transport Scotland and neighbouring Councils. The operational labour force comprises a multi skilled workforce able to undertake a comprehensive range of design maintenance, construction and servicing activities.

Travel and Fleet Services provides professional guidance and support in relation to transport legislation and driver licensing, revenue support for community transport services, and ensures that transport meets the requirements of the end user. They are responsible for the Council's full fleet, vehicle and plant maintenance, special transport, supported bus services and pool cars as well as the infrastructure for public transport, and electric vehicle charging.

Waste Management covers a wide range of functions and are flexible and focused in the delivery of the service. The Waste Strategy to 2023 sets out the direction for the service to achieve the Scottish Government's target of 70% recycling and composting of household waste by 2025 and to enable compliance with the Household Recycling Charter for Scotland. The Council's Community Waste Officer and Trade Waste Officer provide advice and guidance to households and businesses, delivering talks and presentations to local schools and community groups and encouraging participation in the Council's recycling services and increased awareness of the environmental impacts of waste and resource efficiency. Other key operational services areas include the collection of household, commercial and confidential waste collections, street cleansing, household recycling centres, household bulky uplifts and abandoned vehicles.

Land and Countryside Service consists of a multi-disciplinary team who undertake a complex and wide range of duties relating the management of Midlothian's Parks, Countryside, Cemeteries and Open Spaces. This includes the management and maintenance of horticultural, woodland, play areas, capital project landscaping and arboriculture, as well as events management, commercialisation and environmental volunteering.

Service Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver accelerated Roads Capital Programme within Midlothian's Residential Streets</li> <li>• Continue to progress the capital programme for carriageway and footway renewal and improvement schemes.</li> <li>• Implement new requirements as contained in the new Transport (Scotland) Act 2019</li> <li>• Improve and expand active travel and public transport for Midlothian residents</li> <li>• Further reduce the Council's energy consumption by increasing the use of LED street lighting</li> <li>• Transform service delivery through the adoption of digital and mobile platforms</li> <li>• Contribute to the development of the National Transport Strategy</li> <li>• Continue with preparations for the publication of the second Flood Risk Management Plan to be published in June 2022</li> <li>• Manage the parking enforcement contract and parking restrictions/charges to maximise access and safety and produce efficiencies</li> <li>• Support the delivery of the Climate Change strategy and explore options for additional funding for Electric Vehicles and Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure</li> <li>• Promote the use of environmentally friendly, low- emission vehicles.</li> <li>• Continue to progress actions to reach the Scottish government targets to recycle 70% of all waste by 2025</li> <li>• Ensure waste disposal contracts priorities maximum recycling, that waste services consider the climate impact of the service, seeking opportunities to limit the climate impact of the services approach to service delivery.</li> <li>• Reduce customer complaints for waste services</li> <li>• Seek new income streams for Vogrie Country Park and develop the Park as a tourist destination to support local businesses.</li> <li>• Continue to design and implement re-design of outdoor facilities through landscape design as part of Early Years Settings expansion programme.</li> <li>• Develop a comprehensive asset database management plan and for all Neighbourhood Services assets</li> <li>• Maintain meadowland areas to create greater diversity and continue to develop areas of bio-diversity and foster community support.</li> <li>• Deliver an allotments and food growing strategy to comply with the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and review implications for Core Paths plan in line with the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016</li> <li>• Deliver the Open Space strategy</li> <li>• Continue to target key locations within Midlothian for landscape improvements by the design of new parks and other open space sports facilities and play areas, subject to available funding, with an emphasis on inclusive play equipment.</li> <li>• Continue to invest in the workforce across all Neighbourhood Services teams to develop sustainable career pathways and generic working models to grow talent and foster leadership opportunities</li> </ul>
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<b>Strategic framework</b>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing inequalities in the health of our population</li> <li>Reducing the impact of climate change</li> </ul>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan thematic outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce health inequalities</li> <li>Develop and implement a programme of continuous improvement and efficiency to develop additional capacity</li> <li>Increase active travel</li> <li>Implement the local biodiversity plan</li> <li>Accelerate growth through infrastructure upgrades</li> <li>Implement climate change strategy</li> <li>Improve health and wellbeing for people living and working in Midlothian and safeguard our communities</li> </ul>	<b>Drivers for change:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holistic</li> <li>Hub and Spoke</li> <li>Modern</li> <li>Sustainable</li> <li>Preventative</li> <li>Asset Based</li> <li>One Size Fits One</li> <li>Continually Improve</li> </ul>	<b>Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate Change Strategy</li> <li>Flood Risk Management Plan</li> <li>Waste Strategy</li> <li>Open Space Strategy</li> <li>Fleet Management Plan</li> <li>Asset Management Plan</li> </ul>

## Current service measurements

REF	INDICATOR	LEAD	TREND (where available)	ANNUAL/QUARTERLY
BS.PLACE. P.15.1c	Percentage of all street light repairs completed within 7 days (cumulative)	Roads		BALANCED SCORECARD - QUARTERLY
ENV4a	Corporate Indicator - Cost of maintenance per kilometre of roads (LGBF)	Roads		LGBF - ANNUAL
ENV4b	Percentage of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment (LGBF)	Roads		LGBF - ANNUAL
ENV4c	Percentage of B class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment (LGBF)	Roads		LGBF - ANNUAL
ENV4d	Percentage of C class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment (LGBF)	Roads		LGBF - ANNUAL



ENV4e	Percentage of unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment (LGBF)	Roads		LGBF - ANNUAL
PLACE.P.1 4.2e	% of total road network resurfaced (cumulative)	Roads		BALANCED SCORECARD - QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.1 2.1a	Percentage of car journeys to school (annual measure)	Roads		QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.1 4.2f	% of the footpath network resurfaced (cumulative)	Roads	Since 2007/08 – no trend in figures across the years - varied year to year	QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.1 5.1a	Total savings in street lighting carbon emissions (cumulative)	Roads	Since 2016/17 – figures fallen since 18/19	QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.1 5.1b	Number of lighting columns replaced (cumulative)	Roads	Since 2014/15 varied numbers over years	QUARTERLY
BS.PLACE. P.15.3a	Percentage of Council fleet which is 'Green' (cumulative)	Fleet		BALANCED SCORECARD - QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.1 5.5a	Achieve 5% reduction in transport costs (cumulative)	Fleet	Since 2016/17 – improvements first year only	QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.1 5.4a	Reduce expenditure on Travel costs (staff)	Fleet	Since 2016/17 – improvement year on year	QUARTERLY
BS.PLACE. P.15.6a	Percentage of waste going to landfill per calendar year (quarterly)	Waste		BALANCED SCORECARD - QUARTERLY
ENV1b	Corporate Indicator - Net cost of waste collection per premise (annual) (LGBF)	Waste		LGBF - ANNUAL
ENV2a	Corporate Indicator - Net cost of waste disposal per premise (annual) (LGBF)	Waste		LGBF - ANNUAL
ENV3a	Corporate Indicator - Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population (LGBF)	Waste		LGBF - ANNUAL
ENV6	Percentage of total household waste that is recycled (LGBF)	Waste		LGBF - QUARTERLY
ENV7a	Corporate Indicator - Percentage of Adults satisfied with refuse collection (LGBF)	Waste		LGBF - ANNUAL
ENV3c	Street Cleanliness Score (LGBF)	Waste		LGBF - ANNUAL
ENV7b	Corporate Indicator - Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning (LGBF)	Waste		LGBF - ANNUAL

PLACE.P.1 6.14a	Proportion of fly tipping incidents removed within 5 working days (quarterly)	Waste	Since 2017/18 – reported 100% every quarter/year since	QUARTERLY
BS.PLACE. 01	Number of environmental awards e.g. Green flags	Land & Countryside	Since 16/17 – no improvements since 16/17 figures	BALANCED SCORECARD - QUARTERLY
C&L4	Corporate Indicator - Net cost of parks and open spaces per 1000 population (LGBF)	Land & Countryside		LGBF - ANNUAL
C&L5b	Corporate Indicator - Percentage of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces (LGBF)	Land & Countryside		LGBF - ANNUAL
PLACE.P.1 3.1a	Number of volunteer hours in countryside sites	Land & Countryside	Since 16/17 – reduction in numbers since then	QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.1 3.1b	Number of individuals involved in Community Schemes	Land & Countryside	Over the last 3 years exceeded targets	BALANCED SCORECARD - QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.1 3.2a	Number of parks for which quality plans have been implemented (cumulative)	Land & Countryside	Since 16/17 – reporting “6” every quarter since	QUARTERLY

## Planning and Economy

The Planning service comprises the statutory town and country planning functions of the Council, primarily; the preparation of strategic and local development plans, planning and environmental policy and guidance, designing and implementing heritage and environmental schemes, the determination of planning applications and the handling of planning appeals, securing developer contributions towards Council infrastructure and the enforcement of planning control. It also comprises officers who provide a Council-wide service of supplying demographic/land use information, and geographic information system (GIS) mapping and graphics. In addition to the services planning function it is also currently leading on the Council's response to the declared Climate Change Emergency and in August 2020 the Council approved the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

Aims of the Planning Service are set out in the Midlothian Local Development Plan (MLDP) and a detailed policy framework to guide land use in the area which forms the basis against which Planning Officers consider development proposals. Midlothian Council is one of six partner councils which form the Strategic Development Planning Authority for South East Scotland (known as SESplan). They prepare the Strategic Development Plan (SDP), which provides the spatial strategy for development across the Edinburgh city region.

The MLDP is prepared to manage future change in Midlothian in line with the SDP's goals.

Economic Development is responsible for increasing capacity of the local area to improve economic outcomes and uplift the area's quality of life. In June 2020, the Council approved a new Economic Renewal Strategy (an addendum to the Council's Strategy for Growth 2020-25) in June 2020, in response to the pandemic. Setting out its ambitious approach to managing the transition from lockdown and planning for the longer term challenges the local economy will face, the strategy aims to mitigate the adverse economic impact on the local economy from COVID-19.

Through its strategy and associated actions, the service is focused on innovation, partnerships, inclusivity and ambition in its approach to capitalising on the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal, which will deliver £1.3 billion pounds of inclusive economic growth across the city region through housing, innovation, transport, skills and culture. For Midlothian, key investments are in Data Driven Innovation, £120m of investment to Sheriffhall roundabout, and through the Integrated Regional Employability & Skills Programme to reduce skills shortages and gaps and deliver opportunities for people across the area. The strategy will also capitalise on the Borders Railway Blueprint, and maintain a focus on key employment sectors such as tourism and life/bio/animal sciences. The strategy also supports the Council's Climate Change Action Plan by committing to creation of low carbon/energy efficient space in new Council led developments, by measuring and reducing CO2 emissions per capita and by

developing a Carbon Charter and encouraging businesses to sign it and implement it. This function also includes Business Gateway (Midlothian) which provides direct support to new and growing small and medium sized businesses. The EU funded LEADER programme also sits within the service, and focuses on developing the rural economy.

Service Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work on achieving the aims sets out in the Planning Performance Framework (PPF)</li> <li>• Continue to embed the Climate Change Strategy and deliver against the action plan</li> <li>• Determine 80% of planning applications within target (2 months for a local application and 4 months for a major application)</li> <li>• Implementation of year 3 of a 5 year Penicuik Heritage project which delivers public realm improvements and investment in heritage assets in the town centre</li> <li>• Draft and adopt supplementary guidance on the 'Quality of Place' which will be used as a tool to enhance place-making within Midlothian</li> <li>• Draft and adopt supplementary guidance on 'Developer Contributions' which will be used as a tool to secure financial contributions towards infrastructure to meet the demands arising from new development.</li> <li>• Implementing the statutory requirements of the new Planning Act 2019 which places additional burdens onto the Planning Service</li> <li>• Deliver on the objectives identified in the Strategy for Growth 2020-25</li> <li>• Maintain and grow the client reach of Business Gateway services in Midlothian and continue to develop Locate in Midlothian</li> <li>• Complete allocation and drawdown of final LEADER funding to eligible projects and lobby for continuum funding for Midlothian's rural areas</li> <li>• Complete drawdown of Town Centre Capital Funds to applicants and continue to position the government for future funding opportunities and retain a focus on town centres as identified by the Strategy for Growth 2020-25, to commence the TH and CARS scheme at Penicuik, and implement the provisions of the master plan at Newtongrange.</li> <li>• Continue to work with partners to tackle the strategic local transport issues at Easter Bush to enable further unconstrained planned development</li> </ul>
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<b>Strategic framework</b>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing the gap in economic circumstances</li> <li>Reducing the impact of climate change</li> </ul>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan thematic outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a programme of continuous improvement and efficiency to develop additional capacity</li> <li>Integrate Midlothian with the regional economy and promote the region internationally</li> <li>Increase economic participation</li> <li>Implement climate change strategy</li> </ul>	<b>Drivers for change:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holistic</li> <li>Modern</li> <li>Sustainable</li> <li>Asset Based</li> <li>One Size Fits One</li> <li>Continually Improve</li> </ul>	<b>Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate Change Strategy</li> <li>Midlothian Local Development Plan</li> <li>Strategic Development Plan</li> <li>Strategy for Growth 2020-25</li> <li>Economic Renewal Strategy</li> </ul>
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### Current service measurements

REF	INDICATOR	LEAD	TREND (where available)	ANNUAL/QUARTERLY
ECON2	Cost of Planning and Building Standards Services per planning application (LGBF)	Planning/Building Standards		LGBF - ANNUAL
ECON3	Average time for Commercial planning application (LGBF)	Planning		LGBF - ANNUAL
ECON5a	Number of New Business Start Ups (LGBF)	Economic Development		LGBF - ANNUAL
ECON6	Cost of Economic Development & Tourism per 1,000 population (LGBF)	Economic Development		LGBF - ANNUAL
ECON8	Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband (LGBF)	Economic Development		LGBF - ANNUAL
ECON9	Town Centre vacancy rates (LGBF)	Economic Development		LGBF - ANNUAL
ECON10	Immediately available employment land as a percentage of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local development plan (LGBF)	Planning		LGBF - ANNUAL

CLIM1	CO2 emissions area wide per capita (LGBF)	Planning		LGBF - ANNUAL
CLIM2	CO2 emissions are wide: emissions within scope of LA per capita (LGBF)	Planning		LGBF - ANNUAL
New SMP (code tbc)	Number of new businesses locating in Midlothian	Economic Development		HALF YEARLY
New SMP (code tbc)	"Locate in" Midlothian Traffic	Economic Development		HALF YEARLY
PLACE.P.1 7.9a	Determine 80% of planning applications within target (2 months for a local application and 4 months for a major application).	Planning	Since 2016/17 – meets target every year always above 80%	QUARTERLY

## Protective Services

Protective Services brings together Place's regulatory functions of Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Corporate Health and Safety, Contingency Planning and Risk.

Environmental Health provide a wide range of legal duties to do with looking after the health and wellbeing of people living and working in Midlothian. They also deliver public health protection through regulation and enforcement; more specifically the public health team covers housing standards as well as general public health, environmental crime, air quality, contaminated land and licensing, dog and pest control. The food and safety team delivers food safety, occupational health and safety, infectious diseases control, and licensing matters. In the last year, the demand on Environmental Health has increased dramatically, as one of the lead services in the Council's response to the pandemic. As well as the regular functions, Environmental Health has supported the implementation of the Coronavirus Scotland Act, the emergency legislation enacted in 2020 to enforce restrictions, as well as ensuring business and individual compliance with the Act. The team have also supported the establishment of the symptomatic and asymptomatic testing centres, vaccination centres and mobile testing units across Midlothian, working hard to keep our communities safe during the pandemic.

Trading Standards are responsible for enforcing fair trading legislation, and where necessary reporting cases for prosecution to the Procurator Fiscal, regarding unfair/rogue trading practices, safety of consumer goods including fireworks, counterfeit goods, internet and social media selling, under age sales of tobacco and e-cigarettes, animal health and welfare, weights and measures, second hand dealers and petroleum licensing. The team also provides advice to local businesses and residents who have complaints about businesses; often extended to intervention. We also maintain the region's local standards of weights and measures to provide a calibration service to local authorities and businesses.

Health and Safety takes all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of all its employees. The Council also acknowledges its responsibilities in respect of persons other than its own employees. A high standard of health and safety performance is one of the Council's primary objectives and is recognised as an integral part of service delivery. Contingency Planning facilitates and coordinates the Council's approach to business continuity and emergency planning, ensuring the Council identifies and assesses potential Civil Contingency exposures and develops plans to mitigate or respond to incidents, as appropriate. The team also have a role in ensuring the Council test plans through appropriate training and exercising and that statutory duties in relation to Civil Contingencies are met. The Risk service facilitates and coordinates the Council's approach to risk management, ensuring services have identified and assessed risks to delivery of Council and service objectives. The Risk Management function importantly provides regular monitoring statements to the Council Management Team and Audit Committee

to support them in decision making and reviewing internal controls accordingly. The Council's Corporate Risk Register is reviewed quarterly and reported to the Audit Committee. The Corporate Risk Management Group monitor the corporate service risk register and enable any new and emerging risks to be recorded. Mitigating actions are put in place to ensure these are managed and controlled.

During this last year, the Corporate Teams of Health and Safety, Contingency Planning and Risk have experienced increased pressure, coordinating the Council's emergency response. The pandemic is a 'once in a hundred years' episode, which has tested the robust processes that Midlothian have in place. The teams have liaised with all Council services, providing expert advice and guidance to ensure that our workforce, service users and communities have been kept safe during this time.

Service Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to support the Council's response to the pandemic and recovery programme</li> <li>• Continue to deliver the Council's regulatory functions with respect to food hygiene and standards regulations.</li> <li>• Deliver the Scottish Governments Clean Air for Scotland (CAFS) objectives including the review and assessment of air quality in Midlothian to take into account of exposure in proximity to schools located near busy roads.</li> <li>• Continue to deliver the statutory duty to identify and secure remediation of contaminated and review contaminated land strategy.</li> <li>• Continue to manage the CO2 gas ingress to properties in Gorebridge.</li> <li>• Seek to enable disabled persons to continue to live an independent life through the provision of disabled adaptation grants for private sector properties.</li> <li>• Protect and develop safe communities through risk assessment and improvement of sub-standard private water supplies.</li> <li>• Protect and contribute to the enhancement of the environment regarding dog control activities and develop a commercial dog walkers registration scheme for Midlothian.</li> <li>• Regulate Health and Safety across Midlothian through the investigation of workplace accidents</li> <li>• Restart a programme of test purchase for under-age goods</li> <li>• Continue to identify and respond to incidents of rogue trading.</li> <li>• Conduct a programme of inspections to businesses identified as of high and medium-risk including at least 20% of tobacco retailers.</li> <li>• Continue to support managers to manage health and safety as effectively and efficiently as possible</li> <li>• Further develop new commercial opportunities within the Council and external to the Council.</li> <li>• Ensure that the current management arrangements achieve the correct level of Health and Safety compliance and support services to address any shortfalls</li> <li>• Continue to develop the health and safety culture maturity within the organisation and promote the use of the Health and Safety Audits</li> <li>• Increase appropriate involvement and expertise in emergency planning and business continuity management Council wide</li> <li>• Implement a robust business continuity management system and business continuity approach</li> </ul>
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<b>Strategic framework</b>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing inequalities in the health of our population</li> </ul>	<b>Single Midlothian Plan thematic outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a programme of continuous improvement and efficiency to develop additional capacity</li> <li>Improve health and wellbeing for people living and working in Midlothian and safeguard our communities</li> <li>Implement climate change strategy</li> </ul>	<b>Drivers for change:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holistic</li> <li>Modern</li> <li>Sustainable</li> <li>Asset Based</li> <li>One Size Fits One</li> <li>Continually Improve</li> </ul>	<b>Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate Health and Safety Plan</li> <li>Risk Management Framework</li> <li>Business Continuity Plans</li> </ul>
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### Current service measurements

REF	INDICATOR	LEAD	TREND (where available)	ANNUAL/QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.16.4a	Percentage of consumer complaints completed within 14 days.	Trading Standards	Since 2016/17 – meeting target every year	QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.16.13a	Number of out of control dog investigations conducted	Environmental Health		QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.16.13b	Percentage of dog control investigations requiring statutory enforcement action (DCN)	Environmental Health		QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.16.15a	Percentage of all Public Health Service requests responded to	Environmental Health		BALANCED SCORECARD - QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.16.15b	Percentage of all Public health service requests responded to within the required timescale	Environmental Health		QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.16.2a	Number of intelligence logs made	Trading Standards	Since 2015/16 – outcome varied across years	QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.16.3a	Number of primary inspections conducted.	Trading Standards	Since 16/17 – met target every year – improvements vary year by year	QUARTERLY
PLACE.P.16.5a	Percentage of tobacco retailers visited annually.	Trading Standards	Since 2015/16 - % increase varies year by year	QUARTERLY
ENV5b	Corporate Indicator - Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population. (LGBF)	Environmental Health		LGBF - ANNUAL

ENV5a	Corporate Indicator - Cost of Trading Standards, Money Advice & Citizen Advice per 1000 population (LGBF)	Trading Standards		LGBF - ANNUAL
New	Number of reportable workplace incidents (RIDDOR)	Health and Safety		QUARTERLY
New	Number of COVID tests undertaken at asymptomatic testing sites	Environmental Health	To be confirmed	QUARTERLY

# Continuous improvement

## *Self-assessment framework/approach*

## *Best practice examples*

The Midlothian Excellence Framework (MEF) is the corporate self-evaluation tool available to support service improvement with a comprehensive review of activities and results. MEF is mapped to a number of established organisational improvement tools, including Customer Service Excellence and can be adapted for use by services across the following themes:

- Leadership
- Staff
- Service Planning
- Processes and Services
- Partnerships and Resources
- Results



In addition to the Midlothian Excellence Framework, the Council has adopted the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) standard as a corporate tool to support continuous improvement. CSE recognises customer groups and evaluating customer needs and expectations is at the heart of the Standard. The standard contains 5 criteria to be considered as follows:

- Customer Insight
- Culture of the Organisation
- Information and Access
- Delivery
- Timeliness & Quality of Service



During 2021/22 a calendar of self-evaluation/continuous improvement activities will be implemented across services within Place/Corporate Solutions which support the Council's ongoing focus to deliver Best Value.

# Further information

## Equalities

The service plans set out our commitment to promoting equality and diversity. An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has been carried out, enabling Midlothian Council to meet its legal duties to consider equality, human rights, sustainability and the environment. The assessment ensures that the planned services and policies promote equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination and harassment; and promote good relations between those with protected characteristics and those with none. They also allow broader inequalities to be addressed, ensuring that the needs of all people are met.

For further information or to view a copy of the IIA please contact: [insert link/contact details](#)

This document can be made available in different formats and in different languages. If you would like a copy in another language or format, please email [equalities@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@midlothian.gov.uk) or phone 0131 271 3658

## Key contacts

Further information about this plan is available from the contacts below:

Kevin Anderson, Executive Director Place – [Kevin.Anderson@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:Kevin.Anderson@midlothian.gov.uk)

Derek Oliver, Chief Officer Place – [Derek.Oliver@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:Derek.Oliver@midlothian.gov.uk)

Saty Kaur, Executive Business Manager – [Saty.Kaur@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:Saty.Kaur@midlothian.gov.uk)

DRAFT





# Welcome

to Midlothian Council's Annual Complaint Handling Report for 2019/20

Midlothian



We have provided compliments in this report

We upheld 4235 (78%) of complaints

We handled 5421 complaints, and closed 5280 complaints during the year 2019/20

We recorded 104,995 customer interactions through our Contact Centre

We are continuing the process of purchasing a new customer focused online platform that will enable better customer relations including improved complaint handling.

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**This year's Annual Complaint Handling Report sets out performance information about the way complaints are managed by Midlothian Council. The report provides a comprehensive analysis of complaints statistics, and evaluates the data recorded for the performance cycle between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020.**

The material in the report centres on the 8 statutory key performance indicators, and the data reflects the detail about how the council is performing when processing complaints from start through to resolution. The information is shared internally where it is measured and discussed by the council's senior management on a quarterly basis. It is then published externally on the council's website.

All of the local authorities across Scotland are required to report on the indicators, which enables benchmarking and comparisons to take place with similarly placed local authorities, as well as at a national level, and the data is collated and monitored by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).

It is hoped that when a complaint is made, the procedure is easily accessible, straightforward and timely for customers. It is encouraging to recognise that issues are captured, reviewed and where applicable, developments are implemented so that services are frequently being refined as a direct result of the information provided by the residents of Midlothian Council, complimenting the work that we already do to continually improve.

Accordingly, Midlothian takes its commitment to the duties required by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) very seriously. The report takes account of other additional, interesting feedback data that contributes towards the council's determination to value its customers in the most efficient way, also using this information to learn, to plan and to monitor change/outcomes and thereby inspiring council services to continually evolve.



Dr Grace Vickers,  
Chief Executive  
Midlothian Council



Complaints are crucial in identifying areas or processes that are not working for customers. Reporting complaints data is a national objective that is monitored by Audit Scotland in conjunction with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO), and it is in line with Best Value arrangements.

The Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP) specifies how Midlothian Council handles complaints. The 8 key indicators, developed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) along with other public sector experts, are reported on a quarterly cycle.

**The CHP has thus far:**

- introduced a uniform two stage procedure for dealing with complaints, with timescales for each stage;
- encouraged the use of early resolution methods wherever feasible;
- allocated responsibility for complaint handling in organisations;
- included requirements for recording complaints and publishing complaint data and for
- reporting on complaint performance;
- provided a definition of 'complaint'; and
- encouraged learning from complaints.

Complaint information is also used in the shared risk assessments of local authorities that

Audit Scotland conducts with other regulators such as Education Scotland. It helps to build up an overall picture of particular services within the local authority

**Midlothian Council defines a complaint per the SPSO's recommended description as follows:**

---

***“An expression of dissatisfaction  
by one or more members  
of the public about Midlothian  
Council’s action or lack of action,  
or about the standard of service  
provided by or on Midlothian  
Council’s behalf.”***

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## The 2019/20 Report

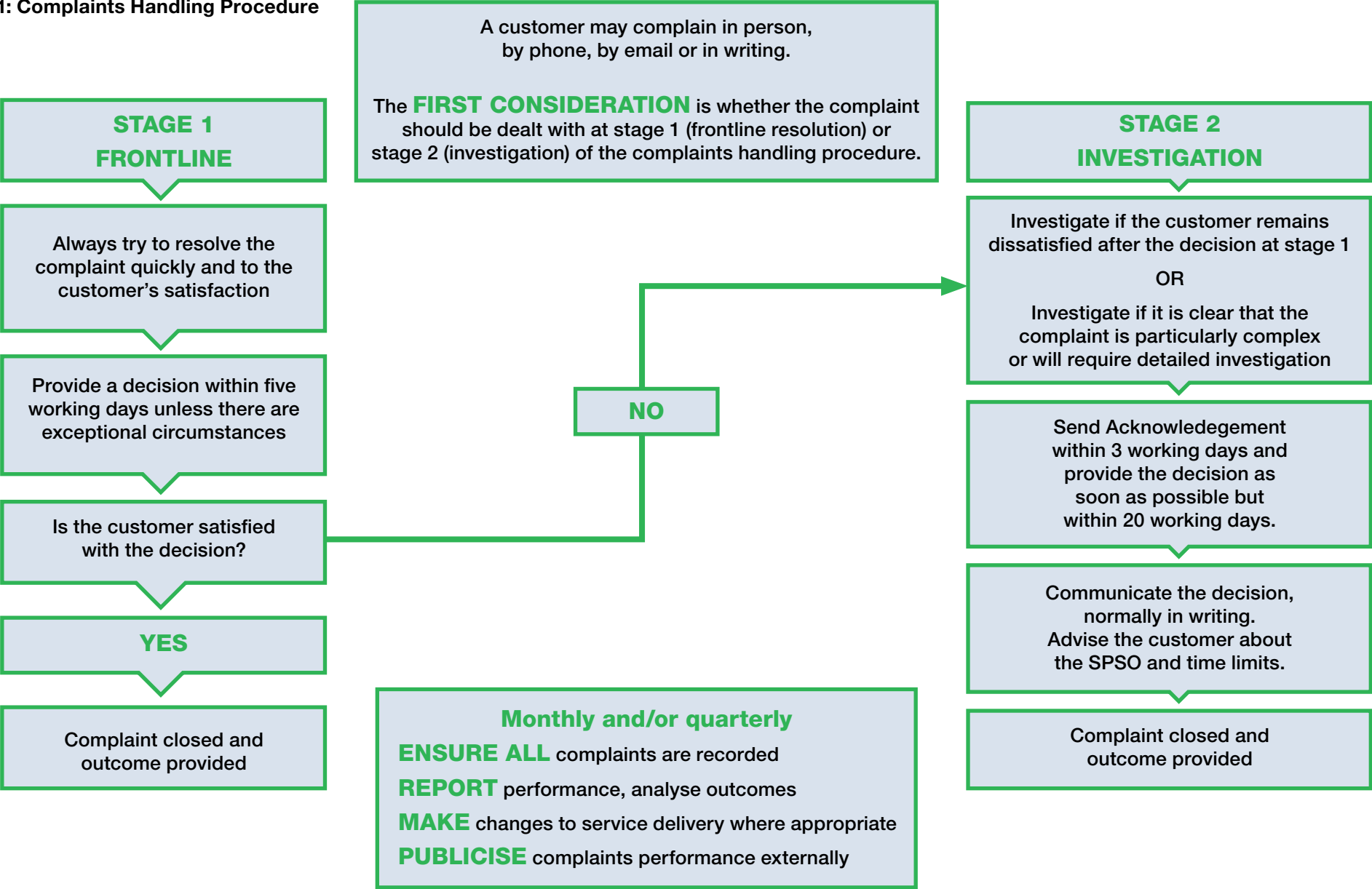
The information provided in this report is generated from the records that staff have input into the established complaints system – the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. The report is presented in a way that provides insight about what the figures may suggest.

Illustrated within the report, is comparative data to Midlothian Council's indicator figures from previous years. The external benchmarking information that is usually included in the report has been omitted this year due to the ongoing COVID pandemic, and being unable to report this information at time of writing.

# Complaints handling procedure

Figure 1 illustrates a summary flow chart of the complaints procedure, which is used for the corporate Complaints Handling Procedure.

FIGURE 1: Complaints Handling Procedure



NEXT STEPS FROM 18/19	DEVELOPMENT
Rollout the complaints dashboard using Tableau for senior staff to have regular, consistent access to complaints data.	This was completed but has recently been discontinued due to a resourcing issue. Discussions around reinstating the process are in the pipeline.
Maintain engagement with the Local Authority Complaint Handler's Network (LACHN) to ensure benchmarking is accurate to enable learning.	The team who deal with the CHP have been cross-skilling to ensure better business continuity and so attendance at the LACHN has been carried out by different MC staff. We work with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) and other Local Authorities (LA's) to improve data quality and timeliness of data collection.
As part of the installation of a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform, implement a new complaints system which will provide a more robust and efficient arrangement.	This large-scale project is still underway and is now at the contractual stage.
Use the new CRM system to relaunch the Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP) and correlate training on procedural matters with necessary system training.	When the implementation stage of the new customer platform is reached, this will take place. However, with the new MCHP being rolled out for April 2021, the training required for this may supercede the former.
Use training to work towards reducing time taken to respond to complaints.	This took place and will be progressed further when the above mentioned training takes place.
Improve online accessibility for logging a complaint, with guidance to assist customers whilst submitting a complaint so they are better able to differentiate between a service request and a complaint.	This will take place as part of the new online customer based platform project.
In driving forward a disciplined culture of continuous improvement and to help ensure that the organisation learns from feedback and complaints received and improves service delivery the Council is adopting the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) standard. The standard has particular focus on delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude. Emphasis is also placed on developing customer insight, understanding the user's experience and robust measurement of service satisfaction.	This project is underway.

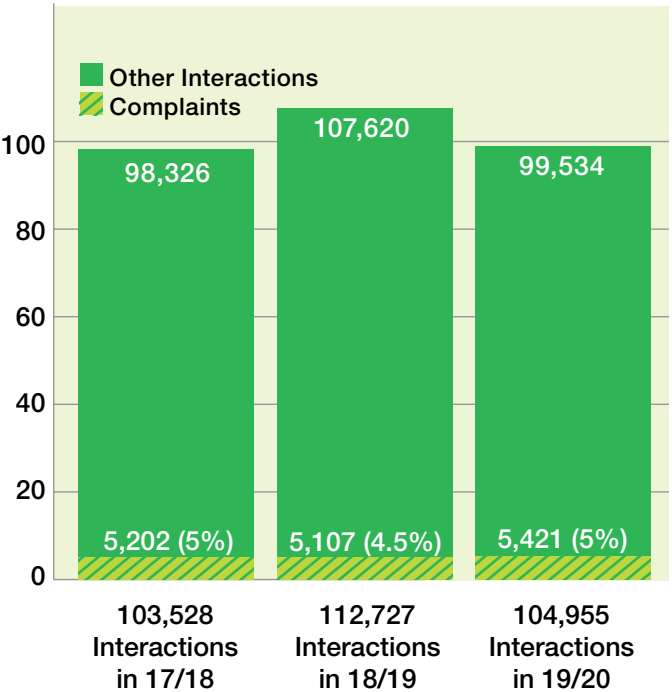
## Statutory Performance Indicators

Figure 2 illustrates the difference in complaints received in relation to the total amount of interactions received by the CRM system for the years 17/18, 18/19 and 19/20.

It can be seen in figure 2 that for the current year 19/20, there of the total of 104,995 customer interactions through CRM, only 5421 were complaints. This equates to 5% of dealings.

The number of complaints that are logged on the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system are proportionately very little when compared to the overall number of recorded dealings. This has been a consistent trend for all the years shown. However, the current year does reflect a 6% increase in complaints from last year, but it is noteworthy that the ratio of interactions to complaints is the same as the previous year (17/18) at 5%.

**FIGURE 2: Total CRM interactions relative to complaints for years 17/18, 18/19 and 19/20 with percentage figures representing total interactions to complaints ratio**



**Methods of contact used to report a complaint reflected as a percentage of the total complaints for the corresponding year**

**TABLE 1**

Complaints	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Online	17%	21%	26%	30%
In Person	1%	1%	1%	0.9%
Telephone	81%	78%	72%	69%
Letter	0.6%	0.3%	0.7%	0.4%
Feedback Form	0.8%	0.3%	0.4%	0.5%
Total	5936	5202	5130	5421

**13% increase in online complaints and 12% reduction in telephone complaints relative to total complaints between 16/17 & 19/20**

Table 1 is a reflection of the channel used by customers to make a complaint, and the percentage of the total number of complaints per year, to the corresponding channel. Each year reflects that telephone contact is the preferred method of approach, followed by online.

Looking at these preferred methods of contact, it can be seen that the amount of telephone calls relative to the total number of complaints during the course of the 4 years, have reduced by 12%, and that the amount of online contact has increased by 13%.

There is a definite noteworthy trend here that is likely the result of the continual work to improve user-friendliness of the council website. The trend is evidence that channel-shift work is moving in the desired direction. It will be interesting to see if further planned work to enhance web-form accessibility will amplify the trend.

Midlothian Council assesses complaints handling performance to provide assurance in relation to their performance, to facilitate continuous improvement and to assist in benchmarking performance between local authorities.

**Indicator 1** – Complaints received per thousand population

**Indicator 2** – Complaints closed at each stage as a percentage of all complaints closed

**Indicator 3** – The number of complaints upheld/partially upheld/not upheld at each stage as a percentage of complaints closed in full at each stage

**Indicator 4** – Average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage

**Indicator 5** – The number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the set timescale of 5 and 20 working days

**Indicator 6** – The number and percentage of complaints at each stage where an extension to the 5 or 20 working day timeline has been authorised

**Indicator 7** – Customer satisfaction statement about complaints service provided

**Indicator 8** – A statement outlining changes or improvements to services or procedures as a result of the consideration of complaints.

## INDICATOR 1: Complaints received per thousand population



**This indicator records the total number of complaints received at stage 1, or directly at stage 2. The sum is divided by the estimated population size of Midlothian Council. Population size data is a Mid-Year Population Estimate from 2018 obtained from the National Records of Scotland (NRS).**



- The population of Midlothian Council is estimated to be 91,340
- Midlothian Council handled 5421 complaints
- This equates to an average of 59 complaints received per 1000 population
- Expressed another way, 1 in every 18 people made a complaint about a service

**TABLE 2: Figures for Performance Indicator 1: Complaints received per thousand population**

	Internal Benchmarking			
	Midlothian 16/17	Midlothian 17/18	Midlothian 18/19	Midlothian 19/20
<b>Population Total</b>	88,610	88,610	90,090	91,340
<b>Total Number of Complaints</b>	5936	5202 (↓734)	5107	5421 (↑314)
<b>Complaints Per 1000 Population</b>	67	59	57	59

Although there is 314 more complaints between the years 2018/19 and 2019/20, this could be due to the population being greater since the complaints per 1000 has not changed significantly with only a difference of 2 more (57 to 59 respectively). The number of complaints per 1000 population has decreased from 67 in 2016/17 to 59 in 2019/20, with each of the past 3 year's data being mainly consistent. All sets of statistics include Social Work data. This consistency tells us that the council is interpreting and processing complaints in a streamlined way, which tells us that there is a uniform understanding of the procedure.

INDICATOR 2: Complaints closed at stage 1 and stage 2, and escalated as a percentage of all complaints closed

“Closed complaints are those that have been allocated an outcome and a response has been given to the customer. At time of reporting, no further action was required.

The number of closed complaints differs to the number of received complaints because some of the 2019/20 closed complaints were received in 2018/19, while some of the 2019/20 received complaints will be closed in 2020/21 as their target date falls into the next reporting cycle.

Customers who have undergone the complaints procedure at stage 1, but who remain dissatisfied are invited to escalate their complaint to a stage 2 investigation.

”

FIGURE 3: Data for performance indicator 2: Complaints closed at each stage as a percentage of all complaints closed, including comparative data from previous years

Stage 1	Stage 2	Escalated
<b>16/17</b> 5799 (98%)	<b>16/17</b> 86 (1.5%)	<b>16/17</b> 39 (0.7%)
<b>17/18</b> 5095 (98.5%)	<b>17/18</b> 40 (0.8%)	<b>17/18</b> 40 (0.8%)
<b>18/19</b> 4944 (97.6%)	<b>18/19</b> 45 (0.9%)	<b>18/19</b> 77 (1.5%)
<b>19/20</b> 5180 (98.1%)	<b>19/20</b> 46 (0.9%)	<b>19/20</b> 54 (1%)

The variance of the percentage of complaints closed at stage 1 remains consistent across the 4 years listed, the most recent (19/20) being 98%. The proportion of stage 2 complaints that have been closed, aside from the year 16/17, also remains consistent. However, it can be seen that the number of stage 2 complaints is on the increase and so more in depth monitoring work is required to ensure that cases are captured early before reaching this stage. When escalated complaints are viewed, the proportionate percentage also remains fairly consistent. This is an indication that there is a stable number of complainants who remain dissatisfied at stage 1. Midlothian Council's stats for this indicator supports the SPSO's aim to close complaints at as early a stage as possible to prevent the need for lengthy and costly investigations.

**INDICATOR 3: Complaints upheld/partially upheld/not upheld at each stage (as a % of complaints closed in full at each stage).**

“The procedure states that there is a requirement to record an outcome for each complaint received. The outcomes are categorised as upheld, not upheld and partially upheld.”

**FIGURE 4: 2019/20 data for performance indicator 3: The number of complaints upheld/partially upheld/not upheld at each stage as a percentage of complaints closed in full at each stage including comparative data for previous years**

	YEAR	UPHELD	NOT UPHELD	PARTIALLY UPHELD
STAGE 1	2016/17	4872 (84%)	629 (10.8%)	298 (5.1%)
	2017/18	3820 (75%)	614 (12%)	320 (6%)
	2018/19	3750 (76%)	579 (12%)	163 (3%)
	2019/20	4229 (82%)	380 (7%)	179(4%)
STAGE 2	2016/17	13 (15.1%)	38 (44.2%)	35 (40.7%)
	2017/18	8 (20%)	19 (47.5%)	11 (27.5%)
	2018/19	12 (26.7%)	19 (42.2%)	14 (31%)
	2019/20	6 (13%)	27 (59%)	11 (24%)
ESCALATED	2016/17	5 (12.8%)	24 (61.5%)	10 (25.6%)
	2017/18	4 (10%)	21 (52.5%)	12 (30%)
	2018/19	10 (13%)	35 (45.5%)	20 (26%)
	2019/20	12 (22%)	23 (43%)	12 (22%)

Figure 4 illustrates the outcome totals for each stage, as well as the relative percentage. It should be noted that there is an identified anomaly within our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system that, if incorrect practice is applied, permits staff to close off complaints without an outcome. This explains why the figures from 2017/18 onwards for each stage fall below 100%. Midlothian council is in the process of procuring a new CRM platform, and due the current, in-house developed system having reached the end of its 'lifespan', no further development work is being carried out on it. Worsening of the statistics relating to this loophole is prevented or reduced through regular system reporting and training.

The relative amount of upheld complaints for stage 1 in 19/20 is 82%, a 6% increase from the previous year. 7% of stage 1 complaints were not upheld, which is the lowest in 4 years, while 4% were partially upheld.

The proportion of stage 2 complaints that were upheld has decreased substantially from 27% in 18/19 to 13% in 19/20. Stage 2 complaints, and those that were not upheld have increased from 42% to 59%. It was a key focus of the council to decrease the number of upheld complaints at this stage, so the trend where the relative amount of not upheld complaints increases while the relative number upheld decreases, is favourable.

## INDICATOR 4:

### Average time in working days to provide a full response to complaints at each stage

This indicator takes the sum of the total number of working days for all complaints to be dealt with and closed at stage 1; at stage 2; and escalated complaints.

An average time in working days for a full response to be given is then calculated by dividing the sum by the total number of closed complaints for each stage.

**FIGURE 5: 2019/20 data for performance indicator 4: Average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage including comparative data for previous years**

Stage 1 Complaints	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>5 Working Days</b>
	16/17	0.3 Working Days
	17/18	3 Working Days
	18/19	4 Working Days
	19/20	3 Working Days
Stage 2 Complaints	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>20 Working Days</b>
	16/17	7.3 Working Days
	17/18	19.5 Working Days
	18/19	18.31 Working Days
	19/20	20 Working Days
Escalated Complaints	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>20 Working Days</b>
	16/17	26.7 Working Days
	17/18	20.2 Working Days
	18/19	21.07 Working Days
	19/20	19 Working Days

Figure 5 indicates that Midlothian Council has remained within the pre-determined target of 5 days for stage 1 complaints. Aside from the year 16/17, the average number of days is fairly consistent with 3, 4 and 3 for years 17/18, 18/19 and 19/20 respectively.

Also shown in Figure 5 is the average time for stage 2 complaints for each year. The council have kept within the 20 working day limit, although it is on the upper threshold for 19/20, therefore there is a need to focus on ensuring that this does not exceed the maximum limit.

With previous years displaying a somewhat disappointing average number of days for escalated complaints, there is a positive improvement in the current (19/20) year's data, which highlights a reduction to a 19 day average.

As mentioned previously, the SPSO's ethos is that complaints should be dealt with at as early a stage as possible, so the less time it takes to deal with complaints the better



**INDICATOR 5: The number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the set timescales of 5 and 20 working days.**

“ This indicator represents the number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the predetermined timescales of 5 and 20 working days. Cases where an extension to the timescales has been authorised are included. ”

**FIGURE 6: 2019/20 data for performance indicator 5: The number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the set timescales of 5 and 20 working days, including comparative data**

YEAR	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	ESCALATED
2016/17	5463 (94%)	55 (64%)	25 (64%)
2017/18	4475 (88%)	28 (70%)	27 (68%)
2018/19	4337 (88%)	33 (73%)	47 (61%)
2019/20	4538 (88%)	28 (61%)	40 (74%)

It can be seen in figure 6 that the relative amount of Midlothian Council’s complaints that were closed against timescales for stage 1 complaints has remained relatively stable at 88%. The proportion of stage 2 complaints is at a 4 year low with 61%. This is a fairly significant (12%) drop from the year before highlighting that there is work required here to ensure that timeframes are met. Stage 2 complaints generally require a substantial investigation since they are ordinarily complex. Prior to the council being in a position to provide a full, impartial and balanced outcome, there first needs to be a detailed assessment of all the elements made in the complaint case. At times, there are instances where responses cannot be provided with the pre-determined target due to either capacity issues, or an inability to proceed with meetings at the desired times.

Figure 6 also shows that escalated complaints that were closed within target displays an increased amount of 13% (61% in 18/19 to 74% in 19/20).

**INDICATOR 6: The number and percentage of complaints at each stage where an extension was authorised**

“ With authorisation from a senior manager such as a Chief Officer, the pre-determined 5 day limit to respond to a stage 1 complaint may be extended a further 5 days if there are extenuating circumstances in which the complaint cannot be dealt with within the 5 day limit. Similarly, an extension may be approved by management to the 20 day limit for stage 2 and escalated complaints.

This indicator looks at the number and percentage of complaints at each stage where authorisation was agreed to extend the 5 or 20 working day timeline.

It does not include complaints that were late but authorisation was not requested and/or logged accordingly.

”

**FIGURE 7: data for performance indicator 6: number and percentage of complaints at each stage where an extension to the 5 or 20 working day timeline has been authorised, including previous year’s data for comparison**

YEAR	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	ESCALATED
2016/17	3 (0.1%)	6 (7%)	3 (8%)
2017/18	0 (0%)	14 (35%)	4 (10%)
2018/19	3 (0.1%)	4 (9%)	4 (5%)
2019/20	4 (0.1%)	7 (15%)	3 (6%)

Figure 7 highlights that the relative amount of Midlothian Council’s complaints that had an agreed extension to the timescale has increased for both stage 2 and escalated complaints with 9% (2018/19) to 15% (2019/20), and 5% (2018/19) to 6% (2019/20) respectively. This is an encouraging result since some work was done to raise the awareness of this element of the CHP. It could be interpreted as improved communication with customers and enhanced use and understanding of the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. It can be seen that Stage 1 complaints have remained reasonably consistent in this statistic with only 0.1% being extended in 19/20. Further work, such as raising staff awareness to ensure that they log the detail when extensions are made could change this value.

**INDICATOR 7: Customer satisfaction about the complaint handling procedure**

“ The Local Authority Complaint Handlers Network (LACHN) are working alongside the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to finalise a generic set of survey questions to be used as a minimum set of questions. This will enable better benchmarking of complaint handling satisfaction across Scotland.

Due to a poor uptake in responses to previous questionnaire attempts, Midlothian Council decided to cease further development work in this area and await the generic survey from the LACHN network group.

It is anticipated that the new format will improve the return rate of this particular indicator so that robust, informative data can be provided about whether or not customers are pleased with the way that their complaint has been handled. This will also enable informed decisions to be made about any improvements to the procedure that might be required.

”

# Compliments throughout 2019/20

There were 172 compliments received during the year 2019/20, compared with 173 in 18/19 and 150 in 17/18. They covered a range of services and each Head of Service received the information relevant to their areas to ensure that staff were informed. Many of the compliments were broad and covered factors on a larger scale such as the good work of the general council during adverse weather conditions, whereas many were specific to staff whom our customers felt had gone above and beyond. Table 3 highlights an excerpt of some of these, and includes the service areas in which they belong

**TABLE 3: Excerpt of compliments received during 2019/20**

SERVICE AREA	COMPLIMENTS
Environmental Health	Many thanks for the prompt and efficient service from the pest control officer. He kept us well informed.
	I would like to thank the pest control officer for his prompt action during the incident that took place today.
Education	I would like to thank the new P1 teacher for being absolutely amazing. The kids love her and she goes above and beyond. I hope my son gets her in P2.
Specialist Teaching & Disabilities Team	My son is currently being supported in the Nurture and I would like the staff to be recognised for the outstanding support they provide. Can the staff be recognised in some way?
Planning	I wanted to flag to you that the notification you provided worked, and that I appreciated it. It helped me understand who had been contacted and what was going to happen so I was prepared and had all the relevant information to hand. Thank you.
Building Standards	I commend you on your candid and very helpful approach to everything, and for your previous comments on consultations.
	Just wanted to express our thanks with helping out yesterday with these outstanding Building Warrants, we know your department is really busy just now, so to take the time out of your workload to help is greatly appreciated.
	Excellent service from start to finish. The officer is knowledgeable and very helpful.
Landscape & Countryside	I cannot praise highly enough the standard of work done to the hedge and I really do wish to convey my thanks to the council. It's very evident to me that time, effort and a high standard has been applied to the work.
	Grateful thanks to the team who were very respectful and allowed some family time at the graveside of our late relative. It is appreciated.
	Customer called to pass on thanks and praise for the team that attended to the overhanging bushes and trees covering street lights. She is delighted with the work done and the leaves are also all swept up.
Waste Services	Customer called to say she thinks the bin crew in her area are fantastic, they can't do enough for her and she appreciates their hard work.
	Elderly couple want to say thank you to the staff working at the recycling centre as they are very helpful and always give them a hand with taking things out the car and things like that. They are very grateful for this.
	Thanks you so much an excellent service. Our selection of bins are always collected promptly and the guys doing this are considerate and friendly. Thanks again.
Road Services	Many thanks to @midgov roads dept for undertaking surfacing works at the approach to Newtongrange. I filled out the online form to request the work and within 3 days, lovely flat surface to cycle on. The system works.
	Thanks for sending through this written update. I passed the area again this morning and noticed that this pot hole has now been filled so thanks for acting so quickly in getting this sorted.
	Customer would like to say thank you for the new pavement surface. It looks very smart and they have done a really good job.
Travel & Fleet Services	Customer came into reception to hand in expired blue badge, whilst in customer asked if thanks could be passed for help in dealing with matters relating to blue badge renewal.

**TABLE 3: Excerpt of compliments received during 2019/20 (continued...)**

SERVICE AREA	COMPLIMENTS
Catering Services	I had dinner at the Newbattle cafe with my boys and was delighted the soup was gluten and dairy free as well as free from garlic since I am allergic to it. The soup was AMAZING, compliments to the chef and thank you for an available healthy meal.
Property Maintenance	I had a plumbing emergency. The phone operator dealt well with our somewhat agitated call, the plumber was quickly on the scene and dealt with the situation very efficiently, explaining what the problem was, the electrician followed swiftly, removed the kitchen light and was able to tell me when it would be replaced, as it duly was by another efficient worker. All who dealt with the problem were polite and reassuring. Thank you.
	Thank you for the new windows and I'd like to praise the crew of men who were in our home. They did a cracking job, and they were very thoughtful in their planning with regards to my wife, who is disabled. A great asset to the council.
	Thanks and compliments to the staff who installed new SHQS doors today. The customer is so happy. She suffers with Parkinson's and they were very helpful to her.
Healthy Living	Compliments to the staff on duty today during Aquafit. The lifeguards rescued a man who had mobility issues, and then they provided support that enabled him to remain in the class in a safe way. The instructor continued the class and between them they got the balance right, and the gentleman could also maintain his independence. Well done.
	My kids and their friends had a great time at the mini tubing party at Hillend today. The staff member was very friendly, kind and helpful. Thanks
	Thanks to the instructor who demonstrated a lot of patience and kindness with my son. He spent a lot of time with him and helped him to overcome his fear in a gentle and supportive way. My other son attends, too and all the instructors have been incredibly good. I'm very impressed. Well done and thanks again.

## CASE STUDY 1



### **Service: Waste**

#### **Complaint Analysis**

A 'spike' of complaints were made about bins not being collected on time. It transpired that parking issues had presented themselves as obstacles impeding Waste Services from fulfilling collections on the set collection day.

#### **Service Improvement Actions**

The Service have written to local residents asking them to park considerately on bin collection days given the challenges negotiating tight access points with a large bin collection vehicle. This was not totally successful so to enhance the communication there is now lamppost signs and banners reinforcing the message on problematic streets.



## CASE STUDY 2



### **Service: Landscape and countryside**

#### **Complaint Analysis**

Around 50% of enquiries are about trees but getting hold of the enquirer and getting the details to gather more information and/or provide a response was an issue that lead to a series of complaints.

#### **Service Improvement Actions**

The service created a web page with a Tree Enquiries tab which takes the user to a form which ensures the information is gathered that allows a full response and subsequent inspection. It also ensures that a response can be provided to customers since there is a field that ensures they leave details such as an email address.



**TABLE 4: Comparative figures on the number of complaints and their corresponding areas that have reached the SPSO**

SUBJECT GROUP	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
Social Work	3	8	6	7
Housing	10	3	7	10
Education	3	3	2	4
Planning	1	3	1	3
Finance	1	3	0	0
Legal & Admin	3	1	1	1
Building Control	0	1	0	0
Roads & Transport	1	0	1	1
Environmental Health & Cleansing	1	0	1	2
Recreation & Leisure	0	0	1	1
Land & Property	0	0	0	0
Personnel	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0
Economic Development	0	0	0	0
Valuation Joint Boards	0	0	0	0
National Park Authorities	0	0	0	0
Welfare Fund - Community Care Grants	0	1	0	0
Welfare Fund - Crisis Grants	0	0	0	0
Subject unknown or Out of Jurisdiction	1	2	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>29</b>

**FIGURE 8: Trend analysis of number of complaints and corresponding areas that have reached the SPSO**

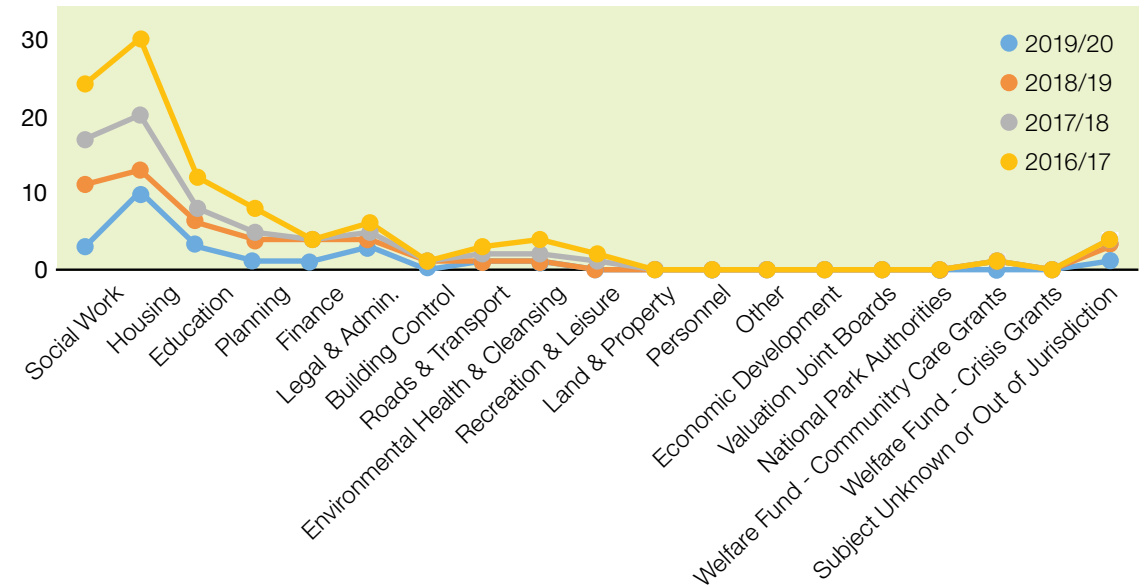


Table 4 illustrates the total number of complaints that have been received by the SPSO about a Midlothian Council service between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020. The main service areas have been given generic terminology by the SPSO since they deal with all local authorities in Scotland, and since each authority has locally named service areas/ divisions.

Looking at figure 8, it is interesting to note that although the numbers differ between the years, the trend is similarly matched in terms of the most commonly complained about services.

**TABLE 5:**  
**Comparative figures between years 16/17 through to 19/20 on the number of complaints received by the SPSO that reached the ADVICE stage**

	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
Not duly made or withdrawn	3	6	3	8
Out of jurisdiction (discretionary)		0	0	0
Out of jurisdiction (non-discretionary)		0	0	0
Premature	5	4	10	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>

Tables 5, 6 and 7 shows the outcomes of the complaints determined by the SPSO about Midlothian Council over the same period. Similarly to the council's statistics, the figures received (shown in table 5) and the figures determined don't tally because the SPSO were still working on a case after the business year had ended.

The advice stage, shown in table 5 is the initial receipt stage where the SPSO will check if they have enough information, that the complainant has first of all complained to the relevant organisation, and that the matter is one that they are allowed to look at. It can be seen that there have been 8 at this stage compared to 10 the year before. 5 were deemed premature (hadn't gone through authority's internal procedure first), and 3 were withdrawn (not taken any further).

**TABLE 6:**  
**Comparative figures between years 16/17 through to 19/20 on the number of complaints received by the SPSO that reached the EARLY RESOLUTION stage**

	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
Not duly made or withdrawn	1	0	0	1
Out of jurisdiction (discretionary)		2	1	2
Out of jurisdiction (non-discretionary)	1	0	0	2
Outcome not achievable		1	1	4
Premature		1	1	1
Proportionality	14	4	5	1
Resolved		0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>

The early resolution stage, referred to in table 6 is where the SPSO have confirmed that the complaint is mature (ie that the complaint has completed the organisation's complaint process) and is in jurisdiction. The SPSO will then begin gathering the information needed for an investigation. Some cases are closed at this stage if they are able to be resolved with the organisation, or if they consider there would be no significant benefit, or achievable outcome from a full investigation. There was 16 complaints in total that reached this stage compared with 8 the year before.

**TABLE 7:**  
**Comparative figures between years 16/17 through to 19/20 on the number of complaints received by the SPSO that reached the INVESTIGATION stage**

	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
Fully upheld		0	1	0
Some upheld	1	0	0	1
Not upheld	1	2	1	1
Resolved		0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

Table 7 illustrates the complaints that the SPSO conducted an investigation for. It can be seen that of the 21 complaints that the SPSO received, there were 2 that reached this stage. The decisions can be viewed in the table, which reflects that 1 had some aspects of the complaint upheld and 1 was not upheld. Further analysis informs that the services were insurance claims and council tax respectively.

The quantity of telephone calls relative to the total number of complaints for the years 16/17 and 19/20 have reduced at 12% but it is important to recognise it since the percentage of online complaint interactions has increased by 13%. This could be a consequence of the continual work to improve the user-friendliness of the council website, and is evidence that channel-shift work is moving in the desired direction. It will be interesting to see if further planned work to enhance web-form accessibility will amplify the trend.

Although there is 314 more complaints between the years 2018/19 and 2019/20, this could be due to the population being greater since the complaints per 1000 has not changed significantly with only a difference of 2 more (57 to 59 respectively). It could also mean that there is a wider staff understanding of the procedure that ensures that customers know that they are being signposted to it in the correct way. It could also mean that staff are identifying complaints correctly and logging them in line with the CHP.

The SPSO's aim to close complaints at as early a stage as possible to prevent the need for lengthy and costly investigations is reflected in Midlothian Council's ability to close off stage 1 complaints at the initial point of contact. This provides evidence to the theory that customers are happy with the response that they have received at stage 1.

The average time to complete stage 2 complaints is within target for 2019/20, but at the upper threshold. The trend of the past 3 years shows that this is gradually increasing and there is a need to monitor this to ensure it doesn't tip over the 20 day limit. This has been flagged accordingly. Average days to complete Escalated complaints has improved from being out of target back to target for 2019/20 at 19 days. This is the first time in 4 years that the number is within target. The trend shows a gradual improvement each year to bring the number down and a corporate effort is reflected in this respect.

For stage 2 and escalated complaints, Midlothian Council used the function to extend the time more than the previous year with 9% (2018/19) to 15% (2019/20), and 5% (2018/19) to 6% (2019/20) respectively. This is a reflection of some work carried out by Midlothian Council to promote the fact that the function to extend exists and should be used correctly instead of reporting complaints as late without the correct justification. The result is evidence that the work done to raise the awareness of this element of the CHP has been a success. It also provides assurance that communication with customers has improved and that there is better understanding of the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.

There were 172 compliments received during the year 2019/20, compared with 173 in 18/19 and 150 in 17/18. A selection of these can be viewed in table 3 above. Many of them related to the work of the council in keeping Midlothian operational during adverse weather conditions, and many were about staff whom our customers felt had gone 'above and beyond'. Compliments were shared with both officers and heads of service to ensure awareness of the good work. The practice of recording compliments as well as complaints is encouraged in all services to ensure that reports can be generated, and to enable some analysis work that will permit learning and continuous improvement.

Satisfaction is an area requiring fairly large scale effort to drive the process of administering the forms throughout the authority.



# Next steps

- Ensure response to complaints is maintained during COVID pandemic.
- Analyse response to complaints during COVID pandemic.
- Maintain engagement with the Local Authority Complaint Handler's Network (LACHN) to ensure benchmarking is accurate to enable learning.
- Make arrangements to update essential systems and processes, and carry out required training for implementation of the revised Complaint Handling Procedure by April 2021.
- As part of the installation of a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform, implement a new complaints module that will provide a more robust and efficient arrangement.



## Your feedback counts

Whether you want to know more about our performance, have something to say about this report, or want to suggest an alternative way of receiving this kind of information in the future.

Please contact the Continuous Improvement Team: 0131 270 8926 or [Continuous.Improvement@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:Continuous.Improvement@midlothian.gov.uk)

Visit: [www.midlothian.gov.uk](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk)

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## COMMUNICATING CLEARLY

We are happy to translate on request and provide information and publications in other formats, including braille, tape or large print.

如有需要我們樂意提供翻譯本，和其他版本的資訊與刊物，包括盲人點字、錄音帶或大字體。

Zapewnimy tłumaczenie na żądanie oraz dostarczymy informacje i publikacje w innych formatach, w tym Braillem, na kasecie magnetofonowej lub dużym drukiem.

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Körler için kabartma yazılar, kaset ve büyük nüshalar da dahil olmak üzere, istenilen bilgileri sağlamak ve tercüme etmekten memnuniyet duyuyoruz.

اگر آپ چاہیں تو ہم خوشی سے آپ کو ترجمہ فراہم کر سکتے ہیں اور معلومات اور دستاویزات دیگر شکلوں میں مثلاً بریل (ناہیا افراد کے لیے) بھرے ہوئے حروف کی لکھائی) میں، ٹیپ پر یا بڑے حروف کی لکھائی میں فراہم کر سکتے ہیں۔

Contact 0131 270 7500 or email: [enquiries@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@midlothian.gov.uk)



# **Midlothian Council Complaints Handling Procedure**

## **Part 1:**

### **Introduction and overview**

## Document Control Information

<i>Version</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	Midlothian Council CHP implemented	April 2013
1	Midlothian Council Social Work CHP implemented	April 2017
1	Midlothian Council CHP and SW CHP updated to reflect new Chief Exec and remove/edit Social Work information to reflect new policy.	September 2018
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2	Combined and revised version published on SPSO website	April 2021

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## Foreword

Our Complaints Handling Procedure reflects Midlothian Council's commitment to valuing complaints. It seeks to resolve customer dissatisfaction as close as possible to the point of service delivery and to conduct thorough, impartial and fair investigations of customer complaints so that, where appropriate, we can make evidence-based decisions on the facts of the case.

The local authority procedure was first developed by local government complaints handling experts, working closely with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). A separate procedure for social work complaints was developed by social work experts and third sector organisations working with SPSO.

The Model Complaints Handling Procedures (MCHPs) were revised and reissued in 2020 by the SPSO in consultation with all sectors. As part of this, the local authority and social work procedures were combined into a single procedure. This new edition includes a core text, which is consistent across all public services in Scotland, with some additional text and examples specific to local authorities and health and social care partnerships (HSCPs) handling social work complaints. The procedural elements tie in very closely with those of the National Health Service Complaints Handling Procedure, so where complaints cut across services, they can still be handled in much the same way as other complaints.

As far as is possible the production of a standard approach that will enable quicker, simpler and more streamlined complaints handling with local, early responses by capable, well-trained staff has been developed across Scotland's public services. The procedure aims to help 'get it right first time' when dealing with complaints, and it complies with the [SPSO's guidance on a MCHP](#).

All staff across Midlothian Council must cover this procedure as part of their induction and must be given refresher training as required, to ensure they are confident in identifying complaints, empowered to resolve simple complaints on the spot, and familiar with how to apply this procedure (including recording complaints).

Complaints give us valuable information we can use to improve service provision and customer satisfaction. Our Complaints Handling Procedure will enable us to address a customer's dissatisfaction and may help us prevent the same problem from happening again. For our staff, complaints provide a first-hand account of the customers' views and experience, and can highlight problems we may otherwise miss. Handled well, complaints can give our customers a form of redress when things go wrong, and can also help us continuously improve our services.

Handling complaints early creates better customer relations. Handling complaints close to the point of service delivery means we can deal with them locally and quickly, so they are less likely to escalate to the next stage of the procedure. Complaints that we do not handle swiftly can greatly add to our workload and are more costly to administer.

The Complaints Handling Procedure will help us provide better services, improve relationships with our customers and enhance public perception of Midlothian Council. It will help us keep the user at the heart of the process, while enabling us to better understand how to improve our services by learning from complaints.

**Dr Grace Vickers**  
**Chief Executive**

## Structure of the Complaints Handling Procedure

1. This Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) explains to staff how to handle complaints. The CHP consists of:
  - Overview and structure (part 1) – this document
  - When to use the procedure ([part 2](#)) – guidance on identifying what is and what is not a complaint, handling complex or unusual complaint circumstances, the interaction of complaints and other processes, and what to do if the CHP does not apply
  - The complaints handling process ([part 3](#)) – guidance on handling a complaint through stages 1 and 2, and dealing with post-closure contact
  - Governance of the procedure ([part 4](#)) – staff roles and responsibilities and guidance on recording, reporting, publicising and learning from complaints
  - The customer-facing CHP ([part 5](#)) – information for customers on how we handle complaints
2. When using the CHP, please also refer to the 'SPSO Statement of Complaints Handling Principles' and good practice guidance on complaints handling from the SPSO. [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk)

## Overview of the CHP

3. Anyone can make a complaint, either verbally or in writing, including face-to-face, by phone, letter or email.
4. We will try to resolve complaints to the satisfaction of the customer wherever this is possible. Where this isn't possible, we will give the customer a clear response to each of their points of complaint. We will always try to respond as quickly as we can (and on the spot where possible).
5. Our complaints procedure has two stages. We expect the majority of complaints will be handled at stage 1. If the customer remains dissatisfied after stage 1, they can request that we look at it again, at stage 2. If the complaint is complex enough to require an investigation, we will put the complaint into stage 2 straight away and skip stage 1.

Stage 1: Frontline response	Stage 2: Investigation	Independent external review (SPSO or other)
<p>For issues that are straightforward and simple, requiring little or no investigation</p> <p>'On-the-spot' apology, explanation, or other action to put the matter right</p> <p>Complaint resolved or a response provided in <b>five working days</b> or less (unless there are exceptional circumstances)</p> <p>Complaints addressed by any member of staff, or alternatively referred to the appropriate point for frontline response</p> <p>Response normally face-to-face or by telephone (though sometimes we will need to put the decision in writing)</p> <p>We will tell the customer how to escalate their complaint to stage 2</p>	<p>Where the customer is not satisfied with the frontline response, or refuses to engage at the frontline, or where the complaint is complex, serious or 'high-risk'</p> <p>Complaint acknowledged within <b>three working days</b></p> <p>We will contact the customer to clarify the points of complaint and outcome sought (where these are already clear, we will confirm them in the acknowledgement)</p> <p>Complaint resolved or a definitive response provided within <b>20 working days</b> following a thorough investigation of the points raised</p>	<p>Where the customer is not satisfied with the stage 2 response from the service provider</p> <p>The SPSO will assess whether there is evidence of service failure or maladministration not identified by the service provider</p> <p>In relation to social work decisions the SPSO can also look at professional decisions</p> <p>Some complaints may also have an alternative route for independent external review</p>

6. For detailed guidance on the process, see [Part 3: The complaints handling process](#).



## Expected behaviours

7. We expect all staff to behave in a professional manner and treat customers with courtesy, respect and dignity. We also ask customers bringing a complaint to treat our staff with respect. We ask customers to engage actively with the complaint handling process by:
  - telling us their key issues of concern and organising any supporting information they want to give us (we understand that some people will require support to do this)
  - working with us to agree the key points of complaint when an investigation is required; and
  - responding to reasonable requests for information.
8. We have a policy in place for when these standards are not met which is our Unacceptable Actions Policy.
9. We recognise that people may act out of character in times of trouble or distress. Sometimes a health condition or a disability can affect how a person expresses themselves. The circumstances leading to a complaint may also result in the customer acting in an unacceptable way.
10. Customers who have a history of challenging or inappropriate actions, or have difficulty expressing themselves, may still have a legitimate grievance, and we will treat all complaints seriously. However, we also recognise that the actions of some customers may result in unreasonable demands on time and resources or unacceptable behaviour towards our staff. We will, therefore, apply our policies and procedures to protect staff from unacceptable actions such as unreasonable persistence, threats or offensive behaviour from customers. Where we decide to restrict access to a customer under the terms of our policy, we have a procedure in place to communicate that decision, notify the customer of their right of appeal, and review any decision to restrict contact with us.
11. If we decide to restrict a customer's contact, we will be careful to follow the process set out in our policy and to minimise any restrictions on the customer's access to the complaints process. We will normally continue investigating a complaint even where contact restrictions are in place (for example, limiting communication to letter or to a named staff member). In some cases, it may be possible to continue investigating the complaint without contact from the customer. Our policy allows us in limited circumstances to restrict access to the complaint process entirely. This would be as a last resort, should be as limited as possible (for a limited time, or about a limited set of subjects) and requires manager approval. Where access to the complaint process is restricted, we must signpost the customer to the SPSO (see [Part 3: Signposting to the SPSO](#)).
12. The SPSO has [guidance on promoting positive behaviour and managing unacceptable actions](#).

## Maintaining confidentiality and data protection

13. Confidentiality is important in complaints handling. This includes maintaining the customer's confidentiality and confidentiality in relation to information about staff members, contractors or any third parties involved in the complaint.
14. This should not prevent us from being open and transparent, as far as possible, in how we handle complaints. This includes sharing as much information with the complainant (and, where appropriate, any affected staff members) as we can. When sharing information, we should be clear about why the information is being shared and our expectations on how the recipient will use the information.
15. We must always bear in mind legal requirements, for example data protection legislation, as well as internal policies on confidentiality and the use of customer information.
  - It is a requirement under Articles 12, 13 and 14 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) that we inform our clients, when we collect their personal data, why it is necessary, the purpose, how long we will hold it for and who we may share it with. We can do this by providing them access to our [Corporate Privacy Notice](#)
  - The [Corporate Privacy Policy](#) sets out Midlothian Council's approach to managing personal data in accordance with the requirements of the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA2018). Further information about data sharing and information security policies and procedures can also be found using [this link](#).
  - All data protection related queries are to be sent to [dpo@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:dpo@midlothian.gov.uk), where it will be reviewed and processed by either the Data Protection Officer or the relevant service Information Governance representative.
16. There are some situations where a response to a complaint may be limited by confidentiality, such as:
  - where a complaint has been raised against a staff member and has been upheld – we will advise the customer that their complaint is upheld, but would not share specific details affecting staff members, particularly where disciplinary action is taken.
  - where someone has raised a concern about a child or an adult's safety and is unhappy about how that has been dealt with – we would look into this to check whether the safety concern had been properly dealt with, but we would not share any details of our findings in relation to the safety concern.



# **Midlothian Council Complaints Handling Procedure**

## **Part 2:**

### **When to use this procedure**

## Document Control Information

<i>Version</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	Midlothian Council CHP implemented	April 2013
1	Midlothian Council Social Work CHP implemented	April 2017
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## What is a complaint?

1. Midlothian Council's definition of a complaint is:

*'an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about Midlothian Council's action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of Midlothian Council.'*

2. For clarity, where an employee also receives a service from Midlothian Council as a member of the public, they may complain about that service.

Midlothian Council has standards in place which set out the level of service customers can expect to receive. Customers will be treated with respect, and staff of the council expect to be treated the same way in return. The Customer Service Charter details these standards.

3. A complaint may relate to the following, but is not restricted to this list:

- failure or refusal to provide a service
- inadequate quality or standard of service, or an unreasonable delay in providing a service
- dissatisfaction with one of our policies or its impact on the individual
- failure to properly apply law, procedure or guidance when delivering services
- failure to follow the appropriate administrative process
- conduct, treatment by or attitude of a member of staff or contractor (**except** where there are arrangements in place for the contractor to handle the complaint themselves: see **Complaints about contracted services**); or
- disagreement with a decision, (**except** where there is a statutory procedure for challenging that decision, or an established appeals process followed throughout the sector).

4. **Appendix 1** provides a range of examples of complaints we may receive, and how these may be handled.

5. A complaint **is not**:

- a routine first-time request for a service (see **Complaints and service requests**)
- a first-time report of a fault (for example, potholes or street lighting)
- a request for compensation only (see **Complaints and compensation claims**)
- issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or a tribunal (see **Complaints and legal action**)
- disagreement with a decision where there is a statutory procedure for challenging that decision (such as for freedom of information and subject access requests), or an established appeals process followed throughout the sector – such as council tax, planning, or a parking ticket appeal (see also **Complaints and social work appeals**)
- disagreement with decisions or conditions that are based upon social work recommendations, but determined by a court or other statutory body, for example decisions made by a children's panel, parole board or mental health tribunal
- a request for information under the Data Protection or Freedom of Information (Scotland) Acts
- a grievance by a staff member or a grievance relating to employment or staff recruitment

- a concern raised internally by a member of staff (which was not about a service they received, such as a whistleblowing concern)
  - a concern about a child or an adult's safety
  - an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision
  - abuse or unsubstantiated allegations about our organisation or staff where such actions would be covered by our Unacceptable Actions Policy; or
  - a concern about the actions or service of a different organisation, where we have no involvement in the issue (**except** where the other organisation is delivering services on our behalf: see **Complaints about contracted services**).
6. We will not treat these issues as complaints, and will instead direct customers to use the appropriate procedures. Some situations can involve a combination of issues, where some are complaints and others are not, and each situation should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
7. If a matter is not a complaint, or not suitable to be handled under the CHP, we will explain this to the customer, and tell them what (if any) action we will take, and why. See **What if the CHP does not apply**.
8. **Appendix 2** gives examples of more complex complaints, some of which are not appropriate for this CHP (**Appendix 3** gives examples specific to social work). The section on **Complaints relevant to other agencies** provides information about some of the other agencies that may be able to assist customers if their complaint is not appropriate for this CHP.



## Who can make a complaint?

9. Anyone who receives, requests, or is affected by our services can make a complaint. This is not restricted to 'service users' and their relatives or representatives, but may also include people who come into contact with or are affected by these services, for example people who live in close proximity to a social work service provision, such as a care home or day centre. In this procedure these people are termed 'customers', regardless of whether they are or were using a service.
10. We also accept complaints from the representative of a person who is dissatisfied with our service. See **Complaints by (or about) a third party**.

## Supporting the customer

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11. All members of the community have the right to equal access to our complaints procedure. It is important to recognise the barriers that some customers may face complaining. These may be physical, sensory, communication or language barriers, but can also include their anxieties and concerns. Customers may need support to overcome these barriers.
12. We have legal duties to make our complaints service accessible under equalities and mental health legislation. For example:
  - the Equality Act (Scotland) 2010 – this gives people with a protected characteristic the right to reasonable adjustments to access our services (such as large print or BSL translations of information); and
  - the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 – this gives anyone with a 'mental disorder' (including mental health issues, learning difficulties, dementia and autism) a right to access independent advocacy. This must be delivered by independent organisations that only provide advocacy. They help people to know and understand their rights, make informed decisions and have a voice.
13. Examples of how we will meet our legal duties include:
  - proactively checking whether members of the public who contact us require additional support to access our services
  - providing interpretation and/or translation services for British Sign Language users; and
  - In addition to our legal duties, we will seek to ensure that we support vulnerable groups in accessing our complaints procedure where appropriate actions may include:
    - helping vulnerable customers identify when they might wish to make a complaint (for example, by training frontline staff who provide services to vulnerable groups)
    - helping customers access independent support or advocacy to help them understand their rights and communicate their complaints (for example, through the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (whose website has information about local advocacy organisations throughout Scotland) or Citizen's Advice Scotland); and
    - providing a neutral point of contact for complaints (where the relationship between customers and frontline staff is significant and ongoing).
14. These lists are not exhaustive, and we must always take into account our commitment and responsibilities to equality and accessibility.

## How complaints may be made

15. Complaints may be made verbally or in writing, including face-to-face, by phone, letter or email.
16. Where a complaint is made **verbally**, we will make a record of the key points of complaint raised. Where it is clear that a complex complaint will be immediately considered at stage 2 (investigation), it may be helpful to complete a complaint form with the customer's input to ensure full details of the complaint are documented. However, there is no requirement for the person to complete a complaint form, and it is important that the completion of a complaint form does not present a barrier to people complaining.
17. Complaint issues may also be raised on **digital platforms** (including **social media**).
18. Where a complaint issue is raised via a digital channel managed and controlled by Midlothian Council (for example an official twitter address or facebook page), we will deal with and respond to complaints following our standard process.
19. We may also become aware that an issue has been raised via a digital channel not controlled or managed by us (for example a youtube video or post on a private facebook group). In such cases we **may** respond, where we consider it appropriate, by telling the person how they can complain.
20. We must always be mindful of our data protection obligations when responding to issues online or in a public forum. See [Part 1: Maintaining confidentiality and data protection](#).

## Time limit for making complaints

21. The customer must raise their complaint within six months of when they first knew of the problem, unless there are special circumstances for considering complaints beyond this time (for example, where a person was not able to complain due to serious illness or recent bereavement).
22. Where a customer has received a stage 1 response, and wishes to escalate to stage 2, unless there are special circumstances they must request this either:
  - within six months of when they first knew of the problem; or
  - within two months of receiving their stage 1 response (if this is later).
23. We will apply these time limits with discretion, taking into account the seriousness of the issue, the availability of relevant records and staff involved, how long ago the events occurred, and the likelihood that an investigation will lead to a practical benefit for the customer or useful learning for the organisation.
24. We will also take account of the time limit within which a member of the public can ask the SPSO to consider complaints (normally one year). The SPSO have discretion to waive this time limit in special circumstances (and may consider doing so in cases where we have waived our own time limit).

## Particular circumstances

### Complaints by (or about) a third party

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25. Sometimes a customer may be unable or reluctant to make a complaint on their own. We will accept complaints from third parties, which may include relatives, friends, advocates and advisers. Where a complaint is made on behalf of a customer, we must ensure that the customer has authorised the person to act on their behalf. It is good practice to ensure the customer understands their personal information will be shared as part of the complaints handling process (particularly where this includes sensitive personal information). This can include complaints brought by parents on behalf of their child, if the child is considered to have capacity to make decisions for themselves.
26. The provision of a signed mandate from the customer will normally be sufficient for us to investigate a complaint. If we consider it is appropriate we can take verbal consent direct from the customer to deal with a third party and would normally follow up in writing to confirm this.
27. In certain circumstances, a person may raise a complaint involving another person's personal data, without receiving consent. The complaint should still be investigated where possible, but the investigation and response may be limited by considerations of confidentiality. The person who submitted the complaint should be made aware of these limitations and the effect this will have on the scope of the response. See also [Part 1: Maintaining confidentiality and data protection](#)
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### Serious, high-risk or high-profile complaints

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28. We will take particular care to identify complaints that might be considered serious, high-risk or high-profile, as these may require particular action or raise critical issues that need senior management's direct input. Serious, high-risk or high-profile complaints should normally be handled immediately at stage 2 (see [Part 3: Stage 2: Investigation](#)).
29. We define potential high-risk or high-profile complaints as those that may:
- *involve a death or terminal illness*
  - *involve serious service failure, for example major delays in providing, or repeated failures to provide, a service*
  - *generate significant and ongoing press interest*
  - *pose a serious risk to our operations*
  - *present issues of a highly sensitive nature, for example concerning:*
    - *immediate homelessness*
    - *a particularly vulnerable person*
    - *child protection, or*
    - *adult protection.*

### Anonymous complaints

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30. We value all complaints, including anonymous complaints, and will take action to consider them further wherever this is appropriate. Generally, we will consider anonymous complaints if there

is enough information in the complaint to enable us to make further enquiries. Any decision not to pursue an anonymous complaint must be authorised by an appropriate manager

31. If we pursue an anonymous complaint further, we will record it as an anonymous complaint together with any learning from the complaint and action taken.
32. If an anonymous complainant makes serious allegations, these should be dealt with in a timely manner under relevant procedures. This may not be the complaints procedure and could instead be relevant child protection, adult protection or disciplinary procedures.

## **What if the customer does not want to complain?**

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33. If a customer has expressed dissatisfaction in line with our definition of a complaint but does not want to complain, we will explain that complaints offer us the opportunity to improve services where things have gone wrong. We will encourage the customer to submit their complaint and allow us to handle it through the CHP. This will ensure that the customer is updated on the action taken and gets a response to their complaint.
34. If the customer insists they do not wish to complain, we are not required to progress the complaint under this procedure. However, we should record the complaint as an anonymous complaint (including minimal information about the complaint, without any identifying information) to enable us to track trends and themes in complaints. Where the complaint is serious, or there is evidence of a problem with our services, we should also look into the matter to remedy this (and record any outcome).
35. Please refer to the example in **Appendix 1** for further guidance.

## **Complaints involving more than one area or organisation**

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36. If a complaint relates to the actions of two or more areas within our organisation, we will tell the customer who will take the lead in dealing with the complaint, and explain that they will get only one response covering all issues raised.
37. If a customer complains to us about the service of another organisation or public service provider, but we have no involvement in the issue, the customer should be advised to contact the appropriate organisation directly.
38. If a complaint relates to our service and the service of another organisation or public service provider, and we have a direct interest in the issue, we will handle the complaint about *Midlothian Council* through the CHP. If we need to contact an outside body about the complaint, we will be mindful of data protection. See [Part 1: Maintaining confidentiality and data protection](#).
39. Such complaints may include:
  - a complaint made to us about a claim for housing benefit where the customer's dissatisfaction relates to the service we have provided and the service the DWP has provided, or
  - a complaint made to us about anti-social behaviour where the customer's dissatisfaction relates to the service we have provided and the service the housing association has provided.

## **Complaints relating to a social work service and another service**

40. A complaint may relate to a social work service (provided by the local authority or a HSCP) and another service provided by the same organisation. Examples are:

- a social work service and a care service both provided by a HSCP
- a social work service and a housing service both provided by the local authority.

41. In such cases, a joint response must be given following the guidance above.

42. Alternatively, a complaint may involve services from different organisations. Examples are:

- a complaint about a social work service provided by a HSCP and a care service provided by the local authority
- a complaint about a social work service provided by the local authority and a housing service provided by a housing association.

43. The aim with such complaints is still to provide a joint response (particularly where the organisations are linked, eg. NHS providers), though this may not always be possible. Contact must be made with the customer to explain that their complaint partly relates to services which are delivered by another organisation, and that to respond to their complaint, we will need to share information with this organisation. Staff must check whether specific consent is needed from the customer before we can share their information with the other services, and take appropriate action where necessary, bearing in mind any data protection requirements. See [Part 1: Maintaining confidentiality and data protection](#).

44. If it is possible to give a joint response, a decision must be taken as to which service will lead the process. We must ensure that all parties are clear about this decision. The response must cover all parts of the complaint, explain the role of both services, and (for investigation stage complaints) confirm that it is the final response from both services.

45. If a joint response is not possible, you should explain to the person making the complaint the reasons why they will receive two separate responses, and who they can get in contact with about the other aspects of their complaint. You must also write to both the customer and the other services involved, setting out which parts of the complaint you will be able to respond to.

## **Complaints about contracted or commissioned services / ALEOs**

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46. We may use Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs) to deliver certain services. They are 'arm's-length' because the council retains a degree of control or influence, usually through a funding agreement, and 'external' because they have a separate identity to the council. An example might be a charitable organisation delivering leisure and culture services on our behalf.

47. Where we use an ALEO or contractor to deliver a service on our behalf we recognise that we remain responsible and accountable for ensuring that the services provided meet Midlothian Council's standard (including in relation to complaints). We will either do so by:

- ensuring the contractor complies with this procedure; or
- ensuring the contractor has their own procedure in place, which fully meets the standards in this procedure. At the end of the investigation stage of any such complaints the contractor must ensure that the customer is signposted to the SPSO.

48. We will confirm that service users are clearly informed of the process and understand how to complain. We will also ensure that there is appropriate provision for information sharing and governance oversight where required.

49. Midlothian Council has discretion to investigate complaints about organisations contracted to deliver services on its behalf even where the procedure has normally been delegated.

## Commissioned social work services

50. Where social work services are commissioned on behalf of Midlothian Council, customers can make complaints under this CHP in relation to the assessment of need, the commissioning or recommendation process, and any element of the service that has been publicly funded. Complaints about any part of service that has been privately funded cannot be considered through this CHP.
51. These services may also be registered as a care service with the Care Inspectorate to deliver a care or support service. If this is the case, customers have the right to complain directly to the Care Inspectorate or to make use of the provider's CHP and thereafter make a complaint to the Care Inspectorate: see **Complaints for the Care Inspectorate**.

## Complaints about senior staff

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52. Complaints about senior staff can be difficult to handle, as there may be a conflict of interest for the staff investigating the complaint. When serious complaints are raised against senior staff, it is particularly important that the investigation is conducted by an individual who is independent of the situation. We must ensure we have strong governance arrangements in place that set out clear procedures for handling such complaints.

## Complaints and other processes

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53. Complaints can sometimes be confused (or overlap) with other processes, such as disciplinary or whistleblowing processes. Specific examples and guidance on how to handle these are below.

### Complaints and service requests

54. If a customer asks Midlothian Council to do something (for example, provide a service or deal with a problem), and this is the first time the customer has contacted us, this would normally be a routine service request and not a complaint.
55. Service requests can lead to complaints, if the request is not handled promptly or the customer is then dissatisfied with how we provide the service.

### Complaints and disciplinary or whistleblowing processes

56. If the issues raised in a complaint overlap with issues raised under a disciplinary or whistleblowing process, we still need to respond to the complaint.
57. Our response must be careful not to share confidential information (such as anything about the whistleblowing or disciplinary procedures, or outcomes for individual staff members). It should focus on whether Midlothian Council failed to meet our service standards, where relevant, or expected standards and what we have done to improve things, in general terms.
58. Staff investigating such complaints will need to take extra care to ensure that:
- we comply with all requirements of the CHP in relation to the complaint (as well as meeting the requirements of the other processes)
  - all complaint issues are addressed (sometimes issues can get missed if they are not also relevant to the overlapping process); and
  - we keep records of the investigation that can be made available to the SPSO if required. This can be problematic when the other process is confidential, because SPSO will normally



require documentation of any correspondence and interviews to show how conclusions were reached. We will need to bear this in mind when planning any elements of the investigation that might overlap (for example, if staff are interviewed for the purposes of both the complaint and a disciplinary procedure, they should not be assured that any evidence given will be confidential, as it may be made available to the SPSO).

59. The SPSO's report [Making complaints work for everyone](#) has more information on supporting staff who are the subject of complaints.

### **Contact from MPs, MSPs or Councillors**

Where a matter brought to a MP, MSP or Councillor is being dealt with as a complaint, it must be handled in line with this CHP. Midlothian Council are very careful not to operate a 'two-tier' complaint system with preferential treatment for some customers.

Organisations may also wish to refer to special arrangements for elected members in relation to seeking third party consent (the Information Commissioner's Office has guidance on this: <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1432063/constituency-casework-of-mps-and-the-processing-of-sensitive-personal-data.pdf>).

### **Complaints and compensation claims**

60. Where a customer is seeking financial compensation only, this is not a complaint. However, in some cases the customer may want to complain about the matter leading to their financial claim, and they may seek additional outcomes, such as an apology or an explanation. Where appropriate, we may consider that matter as a complaint, but deal with the financial claim separately. It may be appropriate to extend the timeframes for responding to the complaint, to consider the financial claim first.

### **Complaints and legal action**

61. Where a customer says that legal action is being actively pursued, this is not a complaint.
62. Where a customer indicates that they are thinking about legal action, but have not yet commenced this, they should be informed that if they take such action, they should notify the complaints handler/investigator and that the complaints process, in relation to the matters that will be considered through the legal process, will be closed. Any outstanding complaints must still be addressed through the CHP.
63. If an issue has been, or is being, considered by a court, we must not consider the same issue under the CHP.

### **Social work complaints and appeals**

64. While some social work decisions may be reviewed under alternative arrangements at a local level (for example through appeal or peer review), the SPSO has the power to consider professional social work decisions. The customer should not be required to seek a reconsideration of a decision under both appeal and complaint processes, nor should they be required to make further complaint if dissatisfied with the outcome of an appeal.
65. Therefore, whilst we have discretion to operate appeals procedures, these must be regarded as a special form of complaint investigation (stage 2 of this CHP). Such appeals processes must be compliant with this procedure in terms of the rigour and documentation of the process, must be concluded within 20 working days where possible with a written response to the customer,



and must be recorded as a stage 2 complaint on the relevant complaints database (unless recorded elsewhere as an appeal). If the customer raises additional issues of dissatisfaction as well as challenging a professional decision, then the process must consider and respond to every element of the customer's dissatisfaction so that no additional complaint process is required.

66. The final response letter must provide relevant text advising the customer of their right to refer the matter to the SPSO for independent consideration. The SPSO will then investigate matters in full, in line with their standard procedures.

## **Social Work Complaints and the Duty of Candour**

67. In some cases, a complaint may be prompted by a duty of candour disclosure, or a complaint investigation may itself prompt a disclosure. In such cases, we must comply with both this CHP and our duty of candour requirements.
68. It will often be possible to conduct a single review for the purposes of both the complaint investigation and the duty of candour. We should, however, take care to ensure that all the issues raised in the complaint are dealt with (including any that are not relevant to the duty of candour disclosure).

## **Complaints for the Care Inspectorate**

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69. Local Authorities and any contractors that provide care services must be registered with the Care Inspectorate. This is the independent scrutiny and improvement body for care and social work across Scotland, which regulates, inspects and supports improvement of care services.
70. The Care Inspectorate has a procedure for receiving information, concerns and investigating complaints from members of the public, or their representatives, about the care services they use. The Care Inspectorate's complaints procedure is available even when the service provider has an alternative complaints procedure in place.
71. The Care Inspectorate encourages people to complain directly to the organisation they receive a service from. However, some people are not comfortable doing this and to support them, the Care Inspectorate may take complaints about care services directly.
72. When complaints are brought to us about registered care services, we have the right to share complaint information about the registered care provider with the Care Inspectorate, to decide who is best placed to investigate the complaint. We can also share the outcome of complaints about contracted and registered services with the Care Inspectorate.

Contact details for the Care Inspectorate can be found on their website:

<https://www.careinspectorate.com/>

## **Complaints about Personal Assistants**

73. Where an individual directly employs a Personal Assistant to provide their support, using a Direct Payment (as part of a Self-directed Support package), the Personal Assistant is not subject to registration with the Care Inspectorate under the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2011, its regulations and amendments. The individual directly employing the Personal Assistant remains responsible for the management of their employee, including their performance management. The Care Inspectorate would only be able to take complaints about such support workers if they work for a registered care agency.

## Complaints relevant to other agencies

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74. Customers may raise concerns about issues which cannot be handled through this CHP, but which other agencies may be able to provide assistance with or may have an interest in. This may include:

The Mental Welfare Commission:

Website: [www.mwcscot.org.uk](http://www.mwcscot.org.uk)

The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland:

Website: [www.cycps.org.uk](http://www.cycps.org.uk)

The Scottish Social Services Council:

Website: [www.sssc.uk.com](http://www.sssc.uk.com)

75. This list is not exhaustive, and it is important to consider the circumstances of each case, and whether another organisation may also have a role to play.

## What to do if the CHP does not apply

76. If the issue does not meet the definition of a complaint or if it is not appropriate to handle it under this procedure (for example, due to time limits), we will explain to the customer why we have made this decision. We will also tell them what action (if any) we will take (for example, if another procedure applies), and advise them of their right to contact the SPSO if they disagree with our decision not to respond to the issue as a complaint.
77. Where a customer continues to contact us about the same issue, we will explain that we have already given them our final response on the matter and signpost them to the SPSO. We may also consider whether we need to take action under our unacceptable actions policy.
78. The SPSO has issued a [template letter for explaining when the CHP does not apply](#).

## Appendix 1 – Complaints

The following tables give examples of complaints that may be considered at the frontline stage, and suggest possible actions. For ease of reference, examples of social work complaints are provided in a separate table.

Complaint	Possible actions
The customer complains that her council tax direct debit has been set up wrongly.	Apologise to the customer and update the direct debit details.
The customer has provided evidence to verify his claim for benefits, but the Benefits Service has not updated his case records with this information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apologise to the customer.</li> <li>• Update the customer's benefit record to record receipt of evidence.</li> <li>• Check that the benefit award is corrected from the appropriate date.</li> </ul>
The customer complains that a workman did not attend to carry out a housing repair as we had agreed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak to the workman, the service or the service manager to explain the customer's complaint and to agree how to address the issue, for example by arranging a new time and date to do the repair.</li> <li>• Explain the reasons for the failed appointment and apologise to the customer.</li> </ul>
The customer complains that the quality of a repair done by us or our contractor is not satisfactory.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask the service department to examine the repair to assess whether or not it is acceptable.</li> <li>• If appropriate, agree that the service department should do more work.</li> <li>• Explain and apologise to the customer.</li> <li>• Obtain a report from the service or contractor to confirm that the repair is now complete.</li> <li>• Feedback the lessons learned from the complaint into a service improvement plan.</li> </ul>
The customer complains that a road which is on our winter gritting route has not been gritted despite previous assurances that it would be.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm if the roads are on our agreed gritting routes.</li> <li>• If assurance had been provided that the road would be gritted, check to confirm if this action occurred, and when.</li> </ul>

Complaint	Possible actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where appropriate, provide an explanation and apologise to the customer.</li> <li>• Obtain confirmation from the service to confirm when the road will be gritted</li> <li>• Feedback the lessons learned from the complaint into a service improvement plan.</li> </ul>
The customer complains that his home carer turned up late and was smoking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact the care service to discuss the matter with a service manager.</li> <li>• The care service should check the timetable for visits and discuss with the home carer the complaint about smoking. The care service should let you know the outcome.</li> <li>• You in turn contact the customer to explain the policy, confirm the timing of visits (for example between 08:00 and 12 noon) and, where appropriate, apologise for the inconvenience.</li> </ul>
The customer complains that a night-working refuse collector woke her up by making excessive noise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain our policy on refuse collection, in particular the approach to night working.</li> <li>• Tell the customer that you will pass on details of the complaint to the service to highlight the noise issue and ask the service to do what they can to control noise.</li> <li>• Apologise to the customer for the inconvenience.</li> </ul>
The customer expresses dissatisfaction in line with the definition of a complaint, but says she does not want to complain – just wants to tell us about the matter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell the customer that we value complaints because they help to improve services. Encourage them to submit the complaint.</li> <li>• In terms of improving service delivery and learning from mistakes, it is important that customer feedback, such as this, is recorded, evaluated and acted upon. Therefore, if the customer still insists that</li> </ul>

Complaint	Possible actions
	they do not want to complain, record the matter as an anonymous complaint. This will avoid breaching the complaints handling procedure. Reassure the customer that they will not be contacted again about the matter.

Social work complaint	Possible actions
A service user complains that a social worker did not turn up for a planned visit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apologise to the service user</li> <li>• Explain that you will look into the matter</li> <li>• Contact the social worker/manager to find out the reason for the missed appointment, then</li> <li>• Explain the reasons and offer a new appointment.</li> </ul>
A member of the public complains that a home carer parked in a private resident's car parking place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take the customer's details and explain that you will look into the matter</li> <li>• Contact the home care service to find out if this is the case</li> <li>• If so, request that this does not happen again, and</li> <li>• Contact the customer, apologise and advise that the worker has been asked to find alternative parking.</li> </ul>
A member of public complains that his neighbours (residents of a children's house) have been playing football in the street where they live and are being abusive to passers-by.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain to the customer that you will look into the matter and call them back</li> <li>• Contact the manager of the children's house to verify the facts</li> <li>• Request that the manager meet with the neighbour to apologise and engender good relations, then</li> <li>• Call back the customer to update them.</li> </ul>
A complaint about a service provider commissioned by social work services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss with the customer the different ways for this complaint to be handled, ie by a complaint to the Care Inspectorate or through the provider's own CHP, and</li> <li>• Ensure, whatever process is agreed, that the customer is clear how they can progress their</li> </ul>

	<p>complaint to the next stage, should they remain dissatisfied. This may be within the provider's CHP, to the [<i>the organisation</i>], or to the Care Inspectorate. The customer should be advised that they can come back to Midlothian Council for further advice if they need to at any stage.</p>
<p>A service user complains that their care needs assessment does not accurately reflect their needs, or that the care package proposed would not meet the needs identified in their assessment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify with the customer whether the complaint relates to an assessment of needs or a proposed care package. Establish specifically what the customer is complaining about and what has happened so far. Ask them what they are seeking from their complaint, and explain that you will look into the matter</li> <li>• Make internal enquiries to establish what stage the assessment and care planning processes are at</li> <li>• While considering the complaint, if the team indicate that a new assessment or care planning meeting may be offered, pass this offer onto the customer, and ask the team to contact the customer to take this forward, and</li> <li>• If the team are not prepared to look at the matter again, explain why the assessment or care package decision is considered to be adequate, and signpost to the next stage of the CHP.</li> </ul>
<p>A customer complains about social work services impacting on their discharge from hospital.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check with the hospital social work team about the customer's care planning in relation to discharge from hospital, and the timing of medical decisions and social work input</li> <li>• It may become apparent at that stage that the discharge process was complicated by a range of issues, in which case it may be appropriate to escalate the complaint to investigation</li> <li>• It may also become apparent that the customer is still in hospital, and may or may not be considered ready for discharge. If they are ready, then pass the complaint onto the team directly involved to respond to as quickly as possible</li> <li>• If the situation is not current, and there were delays from social work services, find out why these happened, and</li> </ul>

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Respond to the customer by their preferred method, to inform them of the outcome of their complaint. Offer an apology if appropriate, and outline what steps have been put in place to prevent a recurrence of the situation.</li></ul> |
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## Appendix 2 – What is not a complaint?

1. A concern may not necessarily be a complaint. For example, a customer might make a routine first-time request for a service. This is not a complaint, but the issue may escalate into a complaint if it is not handled effectively and the customer has to keep on asking for service.
2. In some cases a measure of discretion or further clarification is required in determining whether something is a complaint that should be handled through this procedure or another matter which should be handled through another process. There are also some specific circumstances when complaints should be handled in a particular manner.
3. The following paragraphs provide examples of the types of issues or concerns that must not be handled through the complaints handling procedure. This is not a full list, and you should decide the best route based on the individual case.

### Planning

4. Customers may express dissatisfaction after the refusal of planning or other related permissions. An example would be dissatisfaction with a condition of consent or an enforcement action.
5. Planning applicants, or their agent, have the right to appeal to Scottish Ministers on planning or related matters determined by Committee or decided under delegated powers. Appeals are usually, but not always, decided by a Reporter from the Directorate of Planning and Environmental Appeals and can be considered on the basis of written submissions or by a hearing or public inquiry. The Reporter appointed to consider the appeal will manage the whole process and consider how to gather enough information to make a decision.
6. Customers who are dissatisfied with one of our planning decisions, and who have a right to appeal to Scottish Ministers, should be directed to this service. However, some complaints about planning matters are from third parties such as neighbours. These customers do not have the right of appeal to Scottish Ministers. These complaints should, therefore, be considered through the CHP.

### Benefits

7. A customer may be dissatisfied or disagree with a decision about their housing or council tax benefit claim. This is not a complaint. The customer may ask us to review the decision. If they remain dissatisfied at the outcome of the review or reconsideration of their claim, they may also appeal against our decision to an independent appeal tribunal. Where they want to do so, you should direct them appropriately.

### Claims for compensation

8. A customer may seek compensation from us if they consider us liable. This includes issues such as personal injury or loss of or damage to property. Claims for compensation only are not complaints, so you must not handle them through the complaints handling procedure. You should be clear, however, that where a customer wants to complain about the matter leading to their request for compensation, for example workmen damaging their home, or the condition of a public road causing damage to a motor vehicle, you may consider that matter as a complaint, but deal with the request for compensation separately. You may decide to suspend complaint action pending the outcome of the claim for compensation. If you do this, you must notify the customer and explain that the complaint will be fully considered when the compensation claim has been decided.

9. If you receive a compensation claim, you should explain to the customer the process for claiming compensation in line with our policy on these claims.

### **Licence decisions**

10. We are responsible for issuing various licences, including public entertainment, HMO (houses in multiple occupation), liquor and taxi licences. These have their own legal redress. Customers who are dissatisfied with these decisions will have to pursue this through the correct procedure for the type of licence they want.

### **School exclusions and placing requests**

11. Decisions on appeals against a pupil's exclusion from school or a refusal of a school placing request are made by Committee. Once the Committee has ruled, the customer cannot then use the complaints process to continue their case.

### **School exam results**

12. Schools have devolved authority to offer examinations on the awarding body's behalf. In most cases this will be the SQA. If a customer is dissatisfied with the result of an exam, the school should refer it to the awarding body.
13. Remember that although there may be an alternative form of redress for the customer as detailed above, you must consider carefully whether or not a customer's representations should be managed within the complaints handling procedure. Dissatisfaction with certain local authority decisions may simply require an explanation and directing to the correct route. If, however, a customer says they are dissatisfied with the administrative process we have followed in reaching a decision, you may consider that dissatisfaction through the complaints handling procedure. An example may be a complaint from a customer who is dissatisfied with a decision and alleges that we failed to follow or apply the appropriate guidance in reaching that decision.

## Appendix 3 – Complex social work scenarios

### Child or adult protection concerns

14. Customers may express concerns that a child or adult is at risk, but frame their concern in terms of dissatisfaction that 'nothing has been done about this'. The member of staff will need to consider whether the person is authorised to make complaints on behalf of the child or adult in question, whether they expect the matter to be handled as a complaint and whether the professional view is that these matters are best addressed through initiating the applicable protection procedures. Where the need to initiate protection procedures and investigate concerns within those procedures is identified, the complaint should be closed. The person making the complaint should be advised of this and signposted to the SPSO.
15. Where a complaint is received about some aspect of protection processes that have already been initiated, for example in relation to the way the processes was applied, this should be considered a complaint, and progressed within the complaints handling procedure.

### Complaints about professional social work decisions

16. A customer may wish to complain about or appeal against a social work decision. Such decisions must be considered in line with the timescales for complaints as specified in the CHP.
17. Some decisions may be considered through an internal appeal procedure. However, any such appeal route must be considered as constituting a special form of stage 2 of this procedure, in that it will result in a thorough response **to all concerns** and onward referral to the SPSO. See also **Social work complaints and appeals**.

### Legal action

18. Legal action takes several forms and each must be handled in a distinctive way:
  - (a) Judicial Review: If a person wishes to seek judicial review of a decision then they should be encouraged to seek legal advice.
  - (b) Litigation: Where a customer says that they are seeking compensation and that legal action is being actively pursued, this is not a complaint. Where a customer indicates that they intend to litigate but have not yet commenced legal action, they should be informed that if they take such action, they should notify the complaints handler and/or the Complaints Manager and that the complaints process, in relation to the matters that will be considered through the legal process, will be closed. If it becomes apparent that legal action is being pursued, the complaints handler must clarify with the customer if all the issues they have raised will be considered through legal action; any outstanding issues must still be addressed through the CHP.
  - (c) Legal tribunals, etc: Sometimes the matter complained of may be the subject of ongoing consideration by a relevant legal body, for example where a customer complains of lack of contact with their child who is being looked after by Midlothian Council, when that matter falls to be determined by the Children's Panel. In such cases the customer should be directed to raise the matter either directly or through their legal representatives within that other defined process and the matter should not be accepted as a complaint.

This is distinct from a complaint that Midlothian Council and its staff have failed to properly carry out their roles and responsibilities. In the example above, a Children's Panel may

have set contact frequency but it is not being properly facilitated by social work staff due to staffing shortages or some other factor. That is a matter of legitimate complaint under this procedure.

### **Complaints about the content of social work reports submitted to legal bodies**

19. Midlothian Council may receive complaints about the accuracy of reports by professional social work staff submitted to Courts or other bodies such as Children's Panels, Parole Boards or Mental Health Tribunals. In such circumstances, the report is provided as a service to the court or tribunal, not as a service to the customer. The customer has no right to veto such reports or insist that content is subject to their approval but they can complain about the content of the report.
20. Midlothian Council should consider each complaint and it will usually be necessary to undertake a short screening process to establish whether the issue is appropriate for the CHP. This will depend on the nature and seriousness of alleged inaccuracy, and the status of the report in relation to the progress of court or other proceedings. In particular Midlothian Council should consider whether the complaint relates to accuracy of facts, to opinion or to the standard and quality of the work carried out by the professional concerned, and should take one of three actions accordingly:
  - a. advise the customer that, due to the timescales involved, the issue should be raised when the report is presented in court/to the relevant body, as that is the appropriate forum for deciding on the matter
  - b. advise the customer that the complaint raises issues that will be considered under the CHP (such as issues of fact), and progress accordingly, or
  - c. advise the customer that the complaint raises a mixture of issues that will be considered under the CHP and other issues that should be raised within the relevant forum when the report is submitted.
21. If you refuse to consider some or all issues as per (a) or (c) above and direct the customer to raise the matter within the legal process, you must still provide clear information about the reason for this decision, and signpost the customer to the SPSO for access to a review of this decision.
22. Midlothian Council should also consider whether the complaint relates to a breach of data protection legislation, in which case it must be processed accordingly. See [Part 1: Maintaining confidentiality and data protection](#).

### **Campaigns**

23. The introduction of a new policy or changes in service, such as the closure of a facility, may lead to a high volume of complaints being received. These should be handled under this procedure on an individual basis on their merits, addressing the issue of how that particular customer is affected by the change. It may be appropriate to provide information about the process that led to the changes, or when the policy may next be reviewed.
24. Occasionally, however, such complaints are evidently part of an organised campaign. Indicators may be that all complaints have identical content or are on a 'form' letter or that all complainers are known to be members of a pressure group that has made separate representations through Midlothian Council's petitions or elected members.
25. Midlothian Council should not accept an unreasonable burden on its complaints processes produced by an organised campaign. Instead, Midlothian Council may either issue a single 'form'

response or may ask the organisers to nominate a single person to make a single complaint on behalf of the group. In such circumstances it would be important to be clear that all the complaints being brought to Midlothian Council are identical, and setting out clearly what issues are being considered under the complaint. Any other additional concerns that individuals may have would need to be handled as new complaints.

### **Persons under investigation**

26. Midlothian Council is likely to have a role in investigating the actions of individuals towards other, more vulnerable people, for example those suspected of child or adult abuse or Guardians and Powers of Attorney who are allegedly misusing their powers.
27. Those individuals are still customers as defined within this procedure and any complaint from them must be considered on its individual merits. For example, a complaint about an improper exercise of investigative procedures should be looked into as a complaint. Any response should take into account any confidentiality issues, and this should be explained to the customer.
28. However, if it is evident that the person is not complaining about the process or the actions of staff, but is complaining that they are under investigation, this should not be accepted as a complaint. Instead it should be explained to the customer that Midlothian Council has a statutory obligation to investigate such matters, and this is not conditional upon their agreement or approval. Their objection to the process is not considered to be a complaint, though they may be directed to seek appropriate legal advice to protect their rights.

### **Looked after and accommodated children/adults under local authority guardianship**

29. Midlothian Council has a special duty of care to children in its care or adults for whom it exercises decision-making powers. Special care should be taken when investigating complaints made by or on behalf of those individuals.
30. Artificial barriers of confidentiality should not be imposed to prevent people with a relevant interest in the affairs of an incapacitated adult from complaining on their behalf.
31. Children who are looked after by the Local Authority may complain. They may have little in the way of a support network and may be estranged from their family. It may also be inappropriate for the family to represent the child's interests. Particular care, therefore, should be taken to ensure that the child's complaint is understood and, particularly for younger children, that the response is understood by them.
32. In both cases, the need for personal contact with the customer, and the possible involvement of advocacy services, should be actively considered. We must also always bear in mind our obligations under data protection information. See [Part 1: Maintaining confidentiality and data protection](#).

### **Allegations of fraud/criminality/professional malpractice or incompetence**

33. Discretion is required where the complaint is so serious as to immediately merit investigation under disciplinary processes or referral to another agency.
34. If it is determined that the complaint falls into this category, you should be careful to follow the CHP and mindful of our obligations under data protection legislation. See [Part 1: Maintaining confidentiality and data protection](#).

### **Complaints brought by foster carers**

35. Complaints brought by foster carers can relate to the support services they receive from Midlothian Council, the way our staff engage with them, or services a child in their care is or was receiving or has requested from us.
36. Any complaint brought by a foster carer on behalf of a foster child in the care, or formerly in their care, should be considered under this CHP. Where possible, the views of the child should also be taken into account.
37. Foster carers who are recruited and supported by us may bring complaints about these services. However, approval and de-registration of the carer by Midlothian Council may be considered through alternative appeal mechanisms. As noted under **Social work complaints and appeals**, these appeals must be handled in line with the CHP timescales, where possible, and end with signposting to the SPSO.
38. Complaints from foster carers supported by private agencies will not be addressed within this CHP if the complaint is wholly about their own circumstances and support rather than those of the child. Such complaints should be directed to the complaints process of the relevant agency.
39. An agency foster carer may still complain about the way our staff have interacted with them or about any element of service that they might reasonably expect to be provided by Midlothian Council, for example invitations to meetings, provision of information about the child in their care or the manner and content of communications with Midlothian Council. This list is not exhaustive and such complaints should be carefully considered in terms of the role of Midlothian Council's staff, before directing them to pursue their complaint with their fostering agency.
40. Where a complaint cannot be considered in part or in whole by Midlothian Council, the customer must be given a clear explanation as to why this is, what (if any) parts of their complaint will be investigated and how they may refer the matter to the SPSO.



# **Midlothian Council Complaints Handling Procedure**

## **Part 3:**

### **The complaints handling process**

## Document Control Information

<i>Version</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	Midlothian Council CHP implemented	April 2013
1	Midlothian Council Social Work CHP implemented	April 2017
1	Midlothian Council CHP and SW CHP updated to reflect new Chief Exec and remove/edit Social Work information to reflect new policy.	September 2018
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## The complaints handling process

1. Our Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) aims to provide a quick, simple and streamlined process for responding to complaints early and locally by capable, well-trained staff. Where possible, we will **resolve** the complaint to the customer's satisfaction. Where this is not possible, we will give the customer a clear and reasoned response to their complaint.

<b>Complaint received</b> A customer may complain either verbally or in writing, including face-to-face, by phone, letter or email.		
<b>Stage 1: Frontline response</b> For issues that are straightforward and simple, requiring little or no investigation. 'On-the-spot' apology, explanation, or other action to put the matter right Complaint resolved or a response provided in <b>five working days</b> or less (unless there are exceptional circumstances) Complaints addressed by any member of staff, or alternatively referred to the appropriate point for frontline response Response normally face-to-face or by telephone (though sometimes we will need to put the decision in writing) We will tell the customer how to escalate their complaint to stage 2	<b>Stage 2: Investigation</b> Where the customer is not satisfied with the frontline response, or refuses to engage at the frontline, or where the complaint is complex, serious or 'high-risk' Complaint acknowledged within <b>three working days</b> . We will contact the customer to clarify the points of complaint and outcome sought (where these are already clear, we will confirm them in the acknowledgement) Complaint resolved or a definitive response provided within <b>20 working days</b> following a thorough investigation of the points raised	<b>Independent external review (SPSO or other)</b> Where the customer is not satisfied with the stage 2 response from the service provider The SPSO will assess whether there is evidence of service failure or maladministration not identified by the service provider In relation to social work decisions the SPSO can also look at professional decisions Some complaints may also have an alternative route for independent external review
<b>Resolution</b> The complainant and organisation agree what action will be taken to resolve the complaint. Where a complaint is resolved, it is not usually necessary to continue investigating, although an organisation may choose to do so, for example to identify learning. We must signpost the customer to stage 2 (for stage 1 complaints) or to the SPSO as usual.		
<b>Reporting, recording and learning</b> Action is taken to improve services on the basis of complaint findings, where appropriate. We record details of all complaints, the outcome and any action taken, and use this data to analyse themes and trends. Senior management have an active interest in complaints and use complaints data and analysis to improve services. Learning is shared throughout the organisation.		

## Resolving the complaint

2. A complaint is **resolved** when both Midlothian Council and the customer agree what action (if any) will be taken to provide full and final resolution for the customer, without making a decision about whether the complaint is upheld or not upheld.
3. We will try to resolve complaints wherever possible, although we accept this will not be possible in all cases.
4. A complaint may be resolved at any point in the complaint handling process, including during the investigation stage. It is particularly important to try to resolve complaints where there is an ongoing relationship with the customer or where the complaint relates to an ongoing issue that may give rise to future complaints if the matter is not fully resolved.
5. It may be helpful to use alternative complaint resolution approaches when trying to resolve a complaint. See **Alternative complaint resolution approaches**.
6. Where a complaint is resolved, we do not normally need to continue looking into it or provide a response on all points of complaint. There must be a clear record of how the complaint was resolved, what action was agreed, and the customer's agreement to this as a final outcome. In some cases it may still be appropriate to continue looking into the issue, for example where there is evidence of a wider problem or potential for useful learning. We will use our professional judgment in deciding whether it is appropriate to continue looking into a complaint that is resolved.
7. In all cases, we must record the complaint outcome (resolved) and any action taken, and signpost the customer to stage 2 (for stage 1 complaints) or to the SPSO as usual (see **Signposting to the SPSO**).
8. If the customer and Midlothian Council are not able to agree a resolution, we must follow this CHP to provide a clear and reasoned response to each of the issues raised.

## What to do when you receive a complaint

9. Members of staff receiving a complaint should consider four key questions. This will help them to either respond to the complaint quickly (at stage 1) or determine whether the complaint is more suitable for stage 2:

### What exactly is the customer's complaint (or complaints)?

10. It is important to be clear about exactly what the customer is complaining about. We may need to ask the customer for more information and probe further to get a full understanding.
11. We will need to decide whether the issue can be defined as a complaint and whether there are circumstances that may limit our ability to respond to the complaint (such as the time limit for making complaints, confidentiality, anonymity or the need for consent). We should also consider whether the complaint is serious, high-risk or high-profile.
12. If the matter is not suitable for handling as a complaint, we will explain this to the customer (and signpost them to SPSO). There is detailed guidance on this step in [Part 2: When to use this procedure](#).
13. In most cases, this step will be straightforward. If it is not, the complaint may need to be handled immediately at stage 2 (see **Stage 2: Investigation**).

### What does the customer want to achieve by complaining?

14. At the outset, we will clarify the outcome the customer wants. Of course, the customer may not be clear about this, and we may need to probe further to find out what they expect, and whether they can be satisfied.

### Can I achieve this, or explain why not?

15. If a staff member handling a complaint can achieve the expected outcome, for example by providing an on-the-spot apology or explain why they cannot achieve it, they should do so.
16. The customer may expect more than we can provide. If so, we will tell them as soon as possible.
17. Complaints which can be resolved or responded to quickly should be managed at stage 1 (see **Stage 1: Frontline response**).

### If I cannot respond, who can help?

18. If the complaint is simple and straightforward, but the staff member receiving the complaint cannot deal with it because, for example, they are unfamiliar with the issues or area of service involved, they should pass the complaint to someone who can respond quickly.

If it is not a simple and straightforward complaint that can realistically be closed within five working days (or ten, if an extension is appropriate), it should be handled immediately at stage 2. If the customer refuses to engage at stage 1, insisting that they want their complaint investigated, it should be handled immediately at stage 2. See **Stage 2: Investigation**.

## Stage 1: Frontline response

19. Frontline response aims to respond quickly (within five working days) to straightforward complaints that require little or no investigation.
20. Any member of staff may deal with complaints at this stage (including the staff member complained about, for example with an explanation or apology). The main principle is to respond to complaints at the earliest opportunity and as close to the point of service delivery as possible.
21. We may respond to the complaint by providing an on-the-spot apology where appropriate, or explaining why the issue occurred and, where possible, what will be done to stop this happening again. We may also explain that, as an organisation that values complaints, we may use the information given when we review service standards in the future. If we consider an apology is appropriate, we may wish to follow the [SPSO guidance on apology](#).
22. [Part 2, Appendix 1](#) gives examples of the types of complaint we may consider at this stage, with suggestions on how to resolve them.
23. Complaints which are not suitable for frontline response should be identified early, and handled immediately at stage 2: investigation.

## Notifying staff members involved

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24. If the complaint is about the actions of another staff member, the complaint should be shared with them, where possible, before responding (although this should not prevent us responding to the complaint quickly, for example where it is clear that an apology is warranted).

## Timelines

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25. Frontline response must be completed within **five working days**, although in practice we would often expect to respond to the complaint much sooner. 'Day one' is always the date of receipt of the complaint (or the next working day if the complaint is received on a weekend or public holiday).

Normal business hours for Midlothian Council is between 0900 and 1700. 'Day 1' for complaints received after 1700 will be the next working day.

## Extension to the timeline

26. In exceptional circumstances, a short extension of time may be necessary due to unforeseen circumstances (such as the availability of a key staff member). Extensions must be agreed with an appropriate manager. We will tell the customer about the reasons for the extension, and when they can expect a response. The maximum extension that can be granted is five working days (that is, no more than **ten working days** in total from the date of receipt).
27. If a complaint will take more than five working days to look into, it should be handled at stage 2 immediately. The only exception to this is where the complaint is simple and could normally be handled within five working days, but it is not possible to begin immediately (for example, due to the absence of a key staff member). In such cases, the complaint may still be handled at stage 1 if it is clear that it can be handled within the extended timeframe of up to ten working days.
28. If a complaint has not been closed within ten working days, it should be escalated to stage 2 for a final response.
29. **Appendix 1** provides further information on timelines.

## Closing the complaint at the frontline response stage

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30. If we convey the decision face-to-face or on the telephone, we are not required to write to the customer as well (although we may choose to). We must:
- tell the customer the outcome of the complaint (whether it is resolved, upheld, partially upheld or not upheld)
  - explain the reasons for our decision (or the agreed action taken to resolve the complaint (see **Resolving the complaint**)); and
  - explain that the customer can escalate the complaint to stage 2 if they remain dissatisfied and how to do so (we should not signpost to the SPSO until the customer has completed stage 2).
31. We will keep a full and accurate record of the decision given to the customer. If we are not able to contact the customer by phone, or speak to them in person, we will provide a written response to the complaint where an email or postal address is provided, covering the points above.
32. If the complaint is about the actions of a particular staff member/s, we will share with them any part of the complaint response which relates to them, (unless there are compelling reasons not to).
33. The complaint should then be closed and the complaints system updated accordingly.
34. At the earliest opportunity after the closure of the complaint, the staff member handling the complaint should consider whether any learning has been identified. See [Part 4: Learning from complaints](#).

## Stage 2: Investigation

35. Not all complaints are suitable for frontline response and not all complaints will be satisfactorily addressed at that stage. Stage 2 is appropriate where:
- the customer is dissatisfied with the frontline response or refuses to engage at the frontline stage, insisting they wish their complaint to be investigated. Unless exceptional circumstances apply, the customer must escalate the complaint within six months of when they first knew of the problem or within two months of the stage 1 response, whichever is later (see [Part 2: Time limits for making a complaint](#))
  - the complaint is not simple and straightforward (for example where the customer has raised a number of issues, or where information from several sources is needed before we can establish what happened and/or what should have happened); or
  - the complaint relates to serious, high-risk or high-profile issues (see [Part 2: Serious, high-risk or high-profile complaints](#)).
36. An investigation aims to explore the complaint in more depth and establish all the relevant facts. The aim is to resolve the complaint where possible, or to give the customer a full, objective and proportionate response that represents our final position. Wherever possible, complaints should be investigated by someone not involved in the complaint (for example, a line manager or a manager from a different area).
37. Details of the complaint must be recorded on the complaints system. Where appropriate, this will be done as a continuation of frontline response. If the investigation stage follows a frontline response, the officer responsible for the investigation should have access to all case notes and associated information.
38. The beginning of stage 2 is a good time to consider whether complaint resolution approaches other than investigation may be helpful (see **Alternative complaint resolution approaches**).

## Acknowledging the complaint

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39. Complaints must be acknowledged within three working days of receipt at stage 2.
40. We must issue the acknowledgement in a format which is accessible to the customer, taking into account their preferred method of contact.
41. Where the points of complaint and expected outcomes are clear from the complaint, we must set these out in the acknowledgement and ask the customer to get in touch with us immediately if they disagree. See **Agreeing the points of complaint and outcome sought**
42. Where the points of complaint and expected outcomes are not clear, we must tell the customer we will contact them to discuss this.

## Agreeing the points of complaint and outcome sought

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43. It is important to be clear from the start of stage 2 about the points of complaint to be investigated and what outcome the customer is seeking. We may also need to manage the customer's expectations about the scope of our investigation.
44. Where the points of complaint and outcome sought are clear, we can confirm our understanding of these with the customer when acknowledging the complaint (see **Acknowledging the complaint**).

45. Where the points of complaint and outcome sought are not clear, we must contact the customer to confirm these. We will normally need to speak to the customer (by phone or face-to-face) to do this effectively. In some cases it may be possible to clarify complaints in writing. The key point is that we need to be sure we and the customer have a shared understanding of the complaint. When contacting the customer we will be respectful of their stated preferred method of contact. We should keep a clear record of any discussion with the customer.

46. In all cases, we must have a clear shared understanding of:

- **What are the points of complaint to be investigated?**

While the complaint may appear to be clear, agreeing the points of complaint at the outset ensures there is a shared understanding and avoids the complaint changing or confusion arising at a later stage. The points of complaint should be specific enough to direct the investigation, but broad enough to include any multiple and specific points of concern about the same issue.

We will make every effort to agree the points of complaint with the customer (alternative complaint resolution approaches may be helpful at this stage). In very rare cases, it may not be possible to agree the points of complaint (for example, if the customer insists on an unreasonably large number of complaints being separately investigated, or on framing their complaint in an abusive way). We will manage any such cases in accordance with our unacceptable actions policy, bearing in mind that we should continue to investigate the complaint (as we understand it) wherever possible.

- **Is there anything we can't consider under the CHP?**

We must explain if there are any points that are not suitable for handling under the CHP (see [Part 2: What to do if the CHP does not apply](#)).

- **What outcome does the customer want to achieve by complaining?**

Asking what outcome the customer is seeking helps direct the investigation and enables us to focus on resolving the complaint where possible.

- **Are the customer's expectations realistic and achievable?**

It may be that the customer expects more than we can provide, or has unrealistic expectations about the scope of the investigation. If so, we should make this clear to the customer as soon as possible.

## Notifying staff members involved

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47. If the complaint is about the actions of a particular staff member/s, we will notify the staff member/s involved (including where the staff member is not named, but can be identified from the complaint). We will:

- share the complaint information with the staff member/s (unless there are compelling reasons not to)
- advise them how the complaint will be handled, how they will be kept updated and how we will share the complaint response with them



- discuss their willingness to engage with alternative complaint resolution approaches (where applicable); and
- signpost the staff member/s to a contact person who can provide support and information on what to expect from the complaint process (this must not be the person investigating or signing off the complaint response).

48. If it is likely that internal disciplinary processes may be involved, the requirements of that process should also be met. Midlothian Council's disciplinary and other relevant processes that might be required can be found [here](#). See also [Part 2: Complaints and disciplinary or whistleblowing processes](#).

## Investigating the complaint

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49. It is important to plan the investigation before beginning. The staff member investigating the complaint should consider what information they have and what they need about:

- what happened? (this could include, for example, records of phone calls or meetings, work requests, recollections of staff members or internal emails)
- what should have happened? (this should include any relevant policies or procedures that apply); and
- is there a difference between what happened and what should have happened, and is Midlothian Council responsible?

50. In some cases, information may not be readily available. We will balance the need for the information against the resources required to obtain it, taking into account the seriousness of the issue (for example, it may be appropriate to contact a former employee, if possible, where they hold key information about a serious complaint).

51. If we need to share information within or outwith the organisation, we will be mindful of our obligations under data protection legislation. See [Part 1: Maintaining confidentiality and data protection](#).

52. The SPSO has resources for conducting investigations, including:

- [Investigation plan template](#)
- [Decision-making tool for complaint investigators](#)

## Alternative complaint resolution approaches

53. Some complex complaints, or complaints where customers and other interested parties have become entrenched in their position, may require a different approach to resolving the matter. Where we think it is appropriate, we may use alternative complaint resolution approaches such as complaint resolution discussions, mediation or conciliation to try to resolve the matter and to reduce the risk of the complaint escalating further. If mediation is attempted, a suitably trained and qualified mediator should be used. Alternative complaint resolution approaches may help both parties to understand what has caused the complaint, and so are more likely to lead to mutually satisfactory solutions.

54. Alternative complaint resolution approaches may be used to resolve the complaint entirely, or to support one part of the process, such as understanding the complaint, or exploring the customer's desired outcome.

55. The SPSO has guidance on [alternative complaint resolution approaches](#).
56. If Midlothian Council and the customer (and any staff members involved) agree to using alternative complaint resolution approaches, it is likely that an extension to the timeline will need to be agreed. This should not discourage the use of these approaches.

### Meeting with the customer during the investigation

57. To effectively investigate the complaint, it may be necessary to arrange a meeting with the customer. Where a meeting takes place, we will always be mindful of the requirement to investigate complaints (including holding any meetings) within 20 working days wherever possible. Where there are difficulties arranging a meeting, this may provide grounds for extending the timeframe.
58. As a matter of good practice, a written record of the meeting should be completed and provided to the customer. Alternatively, and by agreement with the person making the complaint, we may provide a record of the meeting in another format. We will notify the person making the complaint of the timescale within which we expect to provide the record of the meeting.

### Timelines

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59. The following deadlines are appropriate to cases at the investigation stage (counting day one as the day of receipt, or the next working day if the complaint was received on a weekend or public holiday):
- complaints must be acknowledged within **three working days**
  - a full response to the complaint should be provided as soon as possible but not later than **20 working days** from the time the complaint was received for investigation.
  - Normal business hours for Midlothian Council is between 0900 and 1700. 'Day 1' for complaints received after 1700 will be the next working day.

### Extension to the timeline

60. Not all investigations will be able to meet this deadline. For example, some complaints are so complex that they require careful consideration and detailed investigation beyond the 20 working day timeline. It is important to be realistic and clear with the customer about timeframes, and to advise them early if we think it will not be possible to meet the 20 day timeframe, and why. We should bear in mind that extended delays may have a detrimental effect on the customer.
61. Any extension must be approved by an appropriate manager. We will keep the customer and any member/s of staff complained about updated on the reason for the delay and give them a revised timescale for completion. We will contact the customer and any member/s of staff complained about at least once every 20 working days to update them on the progress of the investigation.
62. The reasons for an extension might include the following:
- essential accounts or statements, crucial to establishing the circumstances of the case, are needed from staff, customers or others but the person is not available because of long-term sickness or leave
  - we cannot obtain further essential information within normal timescales; or
  - the customer has agreed to alternative complaint resolution approaches as a potential route for resolution.

These are only a few examples, and we will judge the matter in relation to each complaint. However, an extension would be the exception.

63. **Appendix 1** provides further information on timelines.

## **Closing the complaint at the investigation stage**

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64. The response to the complaint should be in writing (or by the customer's preferred method of contact) and must be signed off by a manager or officer who is empowered to provide the final response on behalf of *Midlothian Council*.

65. We will tell the customer the outcome of the complaint (whether it is resolved, upheld, partially upheld or not upheld). The quality of the complaint response is very important and in terms of good practice should:

- be clear and easy to understand, written in a way that is person-centred and non-confrontational
- avoid technical terms, but where these must be used, an explanation of the term should be provided
- address all the issues raised and demonstrate that each element has been fully and fairly investigated
- include an apology where things have gone wrong (this is different to an expression of empathy: see [the SPSO's guidance on apology](#))
- highlight any area of disagreement and explain why no further action can be taken
- indicate that a named member of staff is available to clarify any aspect of the letter; and
- indicate that if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the local process, they may seek a review by the SPSO (see **Signposting to the SPSO**).

66. Where a complaint has been **resolved**, the response does not need to provide a decision on all points of complaint, but should instead confirm the resolution agreed. See **Resolving the complaint**.

67. If the complaint is about the actions of a particular staff member/s, we will share with them any part of the complaint response which relates to them, (unless there are compelling reasons not to).

68. We will record the decision, and details of how it was communicated to the customer, on the complaints system.

69. The SPSO has guidance on responding to a complaint:

- [Template decision letter](#)
- [Apology guidance](#)

70. At the earliest opportunity after the closure of the complaint, the staff member handling the complaint should consider whether any learning has been identified. See [Part 4: Learning from complaints](#).

## Signposting to the SPSO

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71. Once the investigation stage has been completed, the customer has the right to approach the SPSO if they remain dissatisfied. We must make clear to the customer:
- their right to ask the SPSO to consider the complaint
  - the time limit for doing so; and
  - how to contact the SPSO.
72. The SPSO considers complaints from people who remain dissatisfied at the conclusion of our complaints procedure. The SPSO looks at issues such as service failure and maladministration (administrative fault), and the way we have handled the complaint. There are some subject areas that are outwith the SPSO's jurisdiction, but it is the SPSO's role to determine whether an individual complaint is one that they can consider (and to what extent). All investigation responses must signpost to the SPSO.
73. The SPSO recommends that we use the wording below to inform customers of their right to ask the SPSO to consider the complaint. This information should only be included on *Midlothian Council's* final response to the complaint.

### Information about the SPSO

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) is the final stage for complaints about public services in Scotland. This includes complaints about *Local Authorities*. The SPSO is an independent organisation that investigates complaints. It is not an advocacy or support service (but there are other organisations who can help you with advocacy or support).

If you remain dissatisfied when you have had a final response from *Midlothian Council*, you can ask the SPSO to look at your complaint. You can ask the SPSO to look at your complaint if:

- you have gone all the way through Midlothian Council's Complaints Handling Procedure
- it is less than 12 months after you became aware of the matter you want to complain about, and
- the matter has not been (and is not being) considered in court.

The SPSO will ask you to complete a complaint form and provide a copy of this letter (our final response to your complaint). You can do this online at <https://www.spsso.org.uk/complain/form/start/> or call them on Freephone 0800 377 7330.

You may wish to get independent support or advocacy to help you progress your complaint. Organisations who may be able to assist you are:

- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance

The SPSO's contact details are:

SPSO

Bridgeside House

99 McDonald Road

Edinburgh

EH7 4NS

(if you would like to visit in person, you must make an appointment first)

Their freepost address is:

FREEPOST SPSO

Freephone: 0800 377 7330

Online contact [www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us](http://www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us)

Website: [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk)

## Factoring complaints and complaints from shared owners

74. The SPSO does not normally look at complaints about our factoring service or complaints from shared owners. These complaints can be considered by the First Tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber). Their contact details are on their website: <https://www.housingandpropertychamber.scot/>
75. Where the complaint relates to social housing, we should still signpost these complaints to the SPSO, as there may be some aspects the SPSO can consider (for example, if the customer is dissatisfied with how we have handled their complaint). However, we should also notify the customer of their right to approach the Tribunal if they are dissatisfied with our response to these kinds of complaint.

## Post-closure contact

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76. If a customer contacts us for clarification when they have received our final response, we may have further discussion with the customer to clarify our response and answer their questions. However, if the customer is dissatisfied with our response or does not accept our findings, we will explain that we have already given them our final response on the matter and signpost them to the SPSO.

## Appendix 1 - Timelines

### General

1. References to timelines throughout the CHP relate to working days. We do not count non-working days, for example weekends, public holidays and days of industrial action where our service has been interrupted.
2. We do not count school holidays as non-working days. Complaints received during school holidays should follow the same timelines as set out for frontline response and investigation, unless there are special circumstances which would extend these timelines.

### Timelines at frontline response (stage 1)

3. We will aim to achieve frontline response within five working days. The date of receipt is **day one**, and the response should be provided (or the complaint escalated) on **day five**, at the latest.
4. If we have extended the timeline at the frontline response stage in line with the CHP, the response should be provided (or the complaint escalated) on **day ten**, at the latest.

### Transferring cases from frontline response to investigation

5. If the customer wants to escalate the complaint to the investigation stage, the case must be passed for investigation without delay. In practice this will mean on the same day that the customer is told this will happen.

### Timelines at investigation (stage 2)

6. For complaints at the investigation stage, **day one** is:
  - the day the case is transferred from the frontline stage to the investigation stage
  - the day the customer asks for an investigation or expresses dissatisfaction after a decision at the frontline response stage; or
  - the date we receive the complaint, if it is handled immediately at stage 2.
7. We must acknowledge the complaint within three working days of receipt at stage 2 i.e. by **day three**.
8. We should respond in full to the complaint by **day 20**, at the latest. We have 20 working days to investigate the complaint, regardless of any time taken to consider it at the frontline response stage.
9. Exceptionally, we may need longer than the 20 working day limit for a full response. If so, we will explain the reasons to the customer, and update them (and any staff involved) at least once every 20 working days.

### Frequently asked questions

*What happens if an extension is granted at stage 1, but then the complaint is escalated?*

10. The extension at stage 1 does not affect the timeframes at stage 2. The stage 2 timeframes apply from the day the complaint was escalated (we have 20 working days from this date, unless an extension is granted).

*What happens if we cannot meet an extended timeframe?*

11. If we cannot meet the extended timeframe at stage 1, the complaint should be escalated to stage 2. The maximum timeframe allowed for a stage 1 response is ten working days.
12. If we cannot meet the extended timeframe at stage 2, a further extension may be approved by an appropriate manager if there are clear reasons for this. This should only occur in exceptional circumstances (the original extension should allow sufficient time to realistically investigate and respond to the complaint). Where a further extension is agreed, we should explain the situation to the customer and give them a revised timeframe for completion. We must update the customer and any staff involved in the investigation at least once every 20 working days.

*What happens when a customer asks for stage 2 consideration a long time after receiving a frontline response?*

13. Unless exceptional circumstances exist, customers should bring a stage 2 complaint within six months of learning about the problem, or within two months of receiving the stage 1 response (whichever is latest). See [Part 2: Time limits for making a complaint](#).

## Appendix 2 – The complaint handling process (flowchart for staff)

<p>A customer may complain verbally or in writing, including face-to-face, by phone, letter or email.</p> <p>Your first consideration is whether the complaint should be dealt with at stage 1 (frontline response) or stage 2 (investigation).</p>	
<p><b>Stage 1: Frontline response</b></p> <p>Always try to respond quickly, wherever we can</p>	<p><b>Stage 2: Investigation</b></p> <p>Investigate where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The customer is dissatisfied with the frontline response or refuses to engage with attempts to resolve the complaint at stage 1</li> <li>It is clear that the complaint requires investigation from the outset</li> </ul>
Record the complaint and notify any staff complained about	Record the complaint and notify any staff complained about
	Acknowledge the complaint within <b>three working days</b>
	Contact the complainant to agree: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Points of complaint</li> <li>Outcome sought</li> <li>Manage expectations (where required)</li> </ul> <i>(these can be confirmed in the acknowledgement where the complaint is straightforward)</i>
Respond to the complaint within <b>five working days</b> unless there are exceptional circumstances	Respond to the complaint as soon as possible, but within <b>20 working days</b> unless there is a clear reason for extending the timescale
Is the customer satisfied?	Communicate the decision, normally in writing
You must always tell the customer how to escalate to stage 2	Signpost the customer to SPSO and advise of time limits
(Yes) Record outcome and learning, and close complaint.	Record outcome and learning, and close complaint
(No) -> to Stage 2: Investigation	
Follow up on agreed actions flowing from the complaint	
Share any learning points	







# **Midlothian Council Complaints Handling Procedure**

## **Part 4:**

### **Governance**

## Document Control Information

<i>Version</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	Midlothian Council CHP implemented	April 2013
1	Midlothian Council Social Work CHP implemented	April 2017
1	Midlothian Council CHP and SW CHP updated to reflect new Chief Exec and remove/edit Social Work information to reflect new policy.	September 2018
1	Midlothian Council CHP and SW CHP Reflects change of address and contact details of the SPSO.	February 2019
2	Combined and revised version published on SPSO website	April 2021

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## Roles and responsibilities

1. All staff will be aware of:
  - the Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP)
  - how to handle and record complaints at the frontline response stage
  - who they can refer a complaint to, in case they are not able to handle the matter
  - the need to try and resolve complaints early and as close to the point of service delivery as possible; and
  - their clear authority to attempt to resolve any complaints they may be called upon to deal with.
2. Training on this procedure will be part of the induction process for all new staff. Refresher training will be provided for current staff on a regular basis.
3. Senior management will ensure that:
  - Midlothian Council's final position on a complaint investigation is signed off by an appropriate manager or officer in order to provide assurance that this is the definitive response of Midlothian Council and that the complainant's concerns have been taken seriously
  - it maintains overall responsibility and accountability for the management and governance of complaints handling (including complaints about contracted services)
  - it has an active role in, and understanding of, the CHP (although not necessarily involved in the decision-making process of complaint handling)
  - mechanisms are in place to ensure a consistent approach to the way complaints handling information is managed, monitored, reviewed and reported at all levels in *Midlothian Council*; and
  - complaints information is used to improve services, and this is evident from regular publications.
4. **Chief executive:** The chief executive provides leadership and direction in ways that guide and enable us to perform effectively across all services. This includes ensuring that there is an effective CHP, with a robust investigation process that demonstrates how we learn from the complaints we receive. The chief executive may take a personal interest in all or some complaints, or may delegate responsibility for the CHP to senior staff. Regular management reports assure the chief executive of the quality of complaints performance.
5. The chief executive is also responsible for ensuring that there are governance and accountability arrangements in place in relation to complaints about contractors/ALEOs. This includes:
  - ensuring performance monitoring for complaints is a feature of the service/management agreements between Midlothian Council and contractors/ALEOs
  - setting clear objectives in relation to this complaints procedure and putting appropriate monitoring systems in place to provide Midlothian Council with an overview of how the contractor/ALEO is meeting its objectives
6. **Chief social work officer (CSWO):** The CSWO has an important role in the consideration of social work complaints information and, on occasion, the content of individual complaints. Their

role in overseeing the effective governance of social work services and monitoring these arrangements includes complaints about social work services. The CSWO should also take appropriate account of complaints information in fulfilling their obligations to promote continuous improvement and best practice. Furthermore, the CSWO or their delegated officers may have specific interest in complaints relating to individuals for whom they have decision-making responsibilities.

7. **Directors:** On the chief executive's behalf, directors may be responsible for:
  - managing complaints and the way we learn from them
  - overseeing the implementation of actions required as a result of a complaint
  - investigating complaints; and
  - deputising for the chief executive on occasion.
8. They may also be responsible for preparing and signing off decisions for customers, so they should be satisfied that the investigation is complete and their response addresses all aspects of the complaint. However, directors may decide to delegate some elements of complaints handling (such as investigations and the drafting of response letters) to other senior staff. Where this happens, directors should retain ownership and accountability for the management and reporting of complaints.
9. **Chief Officers/Heads of service:** Chief Officers/Heads of service may be involved in the operational investigation and management of complaints handling. As senior officers they may be responsible for preparing and signing decision letters to customers, so they should be satisfied that the investigation is complete and their response addresses all aspects of the complaint.
10. **Complaints investigator:** The complaints investigator is responsible and accountable for the management of the investigation. They may work in a service delivery team or as part of a centralised customer service team, and will be involved in the investigation and in coordinating all aspects of the response to the customer. This may include preparing a comprehensive written report, including details of any procedural changes in service delivery and identifying wider opportunities for learning across the organisation.
11. **The human resources/training officer:** The HR or training officer is responsible for ensuring all new staff receive training on the CHP as part of the induction process, and that refresher training is provided for current staff on a regular basis.
12. **The organisation's SPSO liaison officer:** Our SPSO liaison officer's role may include providing complaints information in an orderly, structured way within requested timescales, providing comments on factual accuracy on our behalf in response to SPSO reports, and confirming and verifying that recommendations have been implemented.

## Recording, reporting, learning from and publicising complaints

13. Complaints provide valuable customer feedback. One of the aims of the CHP is to identify opportunities to improve services across Midlothian Council. By recording and analysing complaints data, we can identify and address the causes of complaints and, where appropriate, identify training opportunities and introduce service improvements.
14. We also have arrangements in place to ensure complaints about contractors or ALEOs are recorded, reported on and publicised in line with this CHP.

### Recording complaints

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15. It is important to record suitable data to enable us to fully investigate and respond to the complaint, as well as using our complaint information to track themes and trends. As a minimum, we should record:
- the customer's name and contact details
  - the date the complaint was received
  - the nature of the complaint
  - the service the complaint refers to
  - staff member responsible for handling the complaint
  - action taken and outcome at frontline response stage
  - date the complaint was closed at the frontline response stage
  - date the investigation stage was initiated (if applicable)
  - action taken and outcome at investigation stage (if applicable)
  - date the complaint was closed at the investigation stage (if applicable); and
  - the underlying cause of the complaint and any remedial action taken.
  - the outcome of the SPSO's investigation (where applicable)
16. If the customer does not want to provide any of this information, we will reassure them that it will be managed appropriately, and record what we can.

### Individual complaint files will be stored in line with our document retention policy. Learning from complaints

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17. We must have clear systems in place to act on issues identified in complaints. As a minimum, we must:
- seek to identify the root cause of complaints
  - take action to reduce the risk of recurrence; and
  - systematically review complaints performance reports to improve service delivery.
18. Learning may be identified from individual complaints (regardless of whether the complaint is upheld or not) and from analysis of complaints data.
19. Where we have identified the need for service improvement in response to an individual complaint, we will take the following appropriate action:

- the action needed to improve services must be authorised by an appropriate manager
- an officer (or team) should be designated the 'owner' of the issue, with responsibility for ensuring the action is taken
- a target date must be set for the action to be taken
- the designated individual must follow up to ensure that the action is taken within the agreed timescale
- where appropriate, performance in the service area should be monitored to ensure that the issue has been resolved; and
- any learning points should be shared with relevant staff.]

20. SPSO has guidance on **Learning from complaints**.

21. Senior management will review the information reported on complaints regularly to ensure that any trends or wider issues which may not be obvious from individual complaints are quickly identified and addressed. Where we identify the need for service improvement, we will take appropriate action (as set out above). Where appropriate, performance in the service area should be monitored to ensure that the issue has been resolved.

## Reporting of complaints

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22. We have a process for the internal reporting of complaints information, including analysis of complaints trends. Regularly reporting the analysis of complaints information helps to inform management of where services need to improve.

23. We will report at least **quarterly** to senior management on:

- performance statistics, in line with the complaints performance indicators published by SPSO
- analysis of the trends and outcomes of complaints (this should include highlighting where there are areas where few or no complaints are received, which may indicate either good practice or that there are barriers to complaining in that area).

## Publicising complaints information

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24. We publish on a **quarterly** basis information on complaints outcomes and actions taken to improve services.

*NB:* Publication of complaints performance data or trends analysis is not required to be published on a quarterly basis. At time of writing, Midlothian Council chooses to do this and will update this document accordingly should this process change. The focus is on improving positive communication with customers on the value of complaining. Alternative methods could take the form of case studies, examples of how complaints have helped improve services, or 'you said, we did' leaflets. Publication may be through newsletters, websites or other forums used to communicate with customers.

25. This demonstrates the improvements resulting from complaints and shows that complaints can help to improve our services. It also helps ensure transparency in our complaints handling service and will help to show our customers that we value their complaints.



26. We will publish an **annual** complaints performance report on our website in line with SPSO requirements, and provide this to the SPSO on request. This summarises and builds on the quarterly reports we have produced about our services. It includes:
- performance statistics, in line with the complaints performance indicators published by the SPSO; and
  - complaint trends and the actions that have been or will be taken to improve services as a result.
27. These reports must be easily accessible to members of the public and available in alternative formats as requested.



# **Midlothian Council Model Complaints Handling Procedure**

## Contents

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Midlothian Council is committed to providing high-quality customer services.

**We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services.**

1. If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. This document describes our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint. It also tells you about how we will handle your complaint and what you can expect from us.

**What is a complaint?**

2. We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

**What can I complain about?**

3. You can complain about things like:
  - failure or refusal to provide a service
  - inadequate quality or standard of service, or an unreasonable delay in providing a service
  - dissatisfaction with one of our policies or its impact on the individual
  - failure to properly apply law, procedure or guidance when delivering services
  - failure to follow the appropriate administrative process
  - conduct, treatment by or attitude of a member of staff or contractor (**except** where there are arrangements in place for the contractor to handle the complaint themselves); or
  - disagreement with a decision, (**except** where there is a statutory procedure for challenging that decision, or an established appeals process followed throughout the sector).
4. Your complaint may involve more than one Midlothian Council service or be about someone working on our behalf.

**What can't I complain about?**

5. There are some things we can't deal with through our complaints handling procedure. These include:
  - a routine first-time request for a service
  - a first-time report of a fault (for example, potholes or street lighting)
  - a request for compensation only
  - issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or a tribunal (if you decide to take legal action, you should let us know as the complaint cannot then be considered under this process)

- disagreement with a decision where there is a statutory procedure for challenging that decision (such as for freedom of information and subject access requests), or an established appeals process followed throughout the sector – such as council tax, planning, or a parking ticket appeal
  - disagreement with decisions or conditions that are based upon social work recommendations, but determined by a court or other statutory body, for example decisions made by a children's panel, parole board or mental health tribunal
  - a request for information under the Data Protection or Freedom of Information (Scotland) Acts
  - a grievance by a staff member or a grievance relating to employment or staff recruitment
  - a concern raised internally by a member of staff (which was not about a service they received, such as a whistleblowing concern)
  - a concern about a child or an adult's safety
  - an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision
  - abuse or unsubstantiated allegations about our organisation or staff where such actions would be covered by our Unacceptable Actions Policy; or
  - a concern about the actions or service of a different organisation, where we have no involvement in the issue (**except** where the other organisation is delivering services on our behalf).
6. If other procedures or rights of appeal can help you resolve your concerns, we will give information and advice to help you.

### **Who can complain?**

7. Anyone who receives, requests or is directly affected by our services can make a complaint to us. This includes the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service (for example, a relative, friend, advocate or adviser). If you are making a complaint on someone else's behalf, you will normally need their written consent. Please also read the section on **Getting help to make your complaint** below.

### **How do I complain?**

8. You can complain in person at any Council Office, by phone, in writing to Midlothian Council Feedback, Freepost SCO5613, Dalkeith, EH22 0BR, email at [feedback@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:feedback@midlothian.gov.uk) or on line at [www.midlothian.gov.uk/feedback](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/feedback). More information is available at Council Offices, Libraries and Leisure Centres and on line. For full contact details please use the following [link](#) or visit [www.midlothian.gov.uk](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk)

9. It is easier for us to address complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. Please talk to a member of our staff at the service you are complaining about. Then they can try to resolve the issue.

10. When complaining, please tell us:

- your full name and contact details
- as much as you can about the complaint
- what has gone wrong; and
- what outcome you are seeking.

### **Our contact details**

Midlothian House  
40 - 46 Buccleuch Street  
Dalkeith  
EH22 1DN

Buccleuch House (below opening hours with exception of Wednesday 1000 - 1700)  
1 - 7 White Hart Street  
Dalkeith  
Midlothian  
EH22 1AE

Fairfield House  
8 Lothian Road  
Dalkeith  
Midlothian  
EH22 3AA

### **Opening hours**

09:00 - 17:00 Monday to Thursday

09:00 - 15:30 Friday

Closed on [Public Holidays](#)

### **Telephone**

0131 270 7500

### **Website**

[www.midlothian.gov.uk](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk)

## **How long do I have to make a complaint?**

11. Normally, you must make your complaint within six months of:

- the event you want to complain about; or
- finding out that you have a reason to complain.

12. In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

## **What happens when I have complained?**

13. We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our complaints procedure has two stages.

### **Stage 1: Frontline response**

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14. We aim to respond to complaints quickly (where possible, when you first tell us about the issue). This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, or immediate action to resolve the problem.

15. We will give you our decision at stage 1 in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

16. If you are not satisfied with the response we give at this stage, we will tell you what you can do next. If you choose to, you can take your complaint to stage 2. You must normally ask us to consider your complaint at stage 2 either:

- within six months of the event you want to complain about or finding out that you have a reason to complain; or
- within two months of receiving your stage 1 response (if this is later).

17. In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a stage 2 complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

### **Stage 2: Investigation**

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18. Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at stage 1 and those that clearly require investigation, and so are handled directly at this stage. If you do not wish your complaint to be handled at stage 1, you can ask us to handle it at stage 2 instead.

19. When using stage 2:

- we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days

- we will confirm our understanding of the complaint we will investigate and what outcome you are looking for
- we will try to resolve your complaint where we can (in some cases we may suggest using an alternative complaint resolution approach, such as mediation); and
- where we cannot resolve your complaint, we will give you a full response as soon as possible, normally within 20 working days.

20. If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you. We will tell you our revised time limits and keep you updated on progress.

## What if I'm still dissatisfied?

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21. After we have given you our final decision, if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at it.

The SPSO are an independent organisation that investigates complaints. They are not an advocacy or support service (but there are other organisations who can help you with advocacy or support).

You can ask the SPSO to look at your complaint if:

- you have gone all the way through Midlothian Council's complaints handling procedure
- it is less than 12 months after you became aware of the matter you want to complain about; and
- the matter has not been (and is not being) considered in court.

The SPSO will ask you to complete a complaint form and provide a copy of our final response to your complaint. You can do this online at [www.spsso.org.uk/complain/form](http://www.spsso.org.uk/complain/form) or call them on Freephone 0800 377 7330.

You may wish to get independent support or advocacy to help you progress your complaint. See the section on **Getting help to make your complaint** below.

The SPSO's contact details are:

*SPSO  
Bridgeside House  
99 McDonald Road  
Edinburgh  
EH7 4NS  
(if you would like to visit in person, you must make an appointment first)*

*Their freepost address is:  
FREEPOST SPSO*



Freephone: 0800 377 7330  
Online contact [www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us](http://www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us)  
Website: [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk)

22. There are some complaints that have an alternative route for independent review. We will tell you how to seek independent review when we give you our final response on your complaint.

## Care complaints

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23. If your complaint relates to a care service we provide, you can choose whether to complain to us or the Care Inspectorate. You can find out more about their complaints procedure, or make a complaint, by contacting them.

The Care Inspectorate has several offices around Scotland. Please refer to: <http://www.scswis.com/>

## Getting help to make your complaint

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24. We understand that you may be unable or reluctant to make a complaint yourself. We accept complaints from the representative of a person who is dissatisfied with our service. We can take complaints from a friend, relative, or an advocate, if you have given them your consent to complain for you.
25. You can find out about advocates in your area by contacting the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance:

### Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance

Tel: 0131 510 9410 Website: <http://www.siaa.org.uk>

•

26. You can find out about advisers in your area through Citizens Advice Scotland:

### Citizens Advice Scotland

Website: <http://www.cas.org.uk> or check your phone book for your local citizens advice bureau.

We are committed to making our service easy to use for all members of the community. In line with our statutory equalities duties, we will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help you access and use our services. If you have trouble putting your complaint in writing, or want this information in another language or format,

such as large font, or Braille, please tell us in person, contact us on 0131 270 7500 or by email to [enquiries@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@midlothian.gov.uk)

We can also give you this information in other languages and formats (such as large print, audio and Braille).

## Quick guide to our complaints procedure

### Complaints procedure

You can make your complaint in person, by phone, by email or in writing.

We have a **two-stage complaints procedure**. We will always try to deal with your complaint quickly. But if it is clear that the matter will need investigation, we will tell you and keep you updated on our progress. If your complaint relates to a care service you can choose to complain to us or to the Care Inspectorate.



### Stage 1: Frontline response

We will always try to respond to your complaint quickly, within **five working days** if we can.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can ask us to consider your complaint at stage 2.



### Stage 2: Investigation

We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at stage 1. We also look at some complaints immediately at this stage, if it is clear that they need investigation.

We will acknowledge your complaint within **three working days**.

We will confirm the points of complaint to be investigated and what you want to achieve.

We will investigate the complaint and give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be after no more than **20 working days** unless there is clearly a good reason for needing more time.



### Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

If, after receiving our final decision on your complaint, you remain dissatisfied with our decision or the way we have handled your complaint, you can ask the SPSO to consider it.

There are some complaints that have an alternative route for independent review. We will tell you how to seek independent review when we give you our final response on your complaint.

We will tell you how to do this when we send you our final decision.



# Unacceptable Actions Policy

Version Number: 1.0

Unacceptable Actions Policy

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

<b>Author</b>	Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Team
<b>Owner</b>	Customer Service Improvement Officer
<b>Approved by</b>	
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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Midlothian Council's Customer Service Charter sets out the standards that determines the level of service that customers can expect to receive. The Charter explains that customers can expect to be treated with respect, and it makes clear that staff can expect to be treated the same way in return. This helps to ensure that contact with the Council is a positive experience.
- 1.2 The procedure for dealing with complaints and complainants is defined in the Council's Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP), and supporting guidance. This policy complements the Complaints Handling Procedure and ensures that the Council's principles are consistent with those of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).
- 1.3 A key component of how responsive the Council is in ensuring that we have a positive approach to dealing effectively with complaints is the use of management information derived from complaints handling to monitor performance and improve services.
- 1.4 This policy is Midlothian Council's approach for dealing with customers whose actions or behaviours are considered to be unacceptable. This can include:
  - Threats;
  - Personal verbal abuse;
  - Derogatory remarks and rudeness;
  - Inflammatory statements;
  - Racial or discriminatory remarks;
  - Unsubstantiated allegations;
  - Making unreasonable demands;
  - Unreasonable levels of contact. For example, repeated lengthy numbers of telephone calls or e-mails in one day from the same person;
  - Causing fear, alarm or distress in the mind of the employee.

There are a limited number of customers whose actions the Council would consider unacceptable. It is therefore intended that procedures that underpin the policy will only be implemented in exceptional circumstances.

## **2.0 POLICY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- 2.1 To deal fairly, honestly, consistently and appropriately with all customers, including those whose actions the Council considers unacceptable. The aim of the Council is to provide a service that is accessible to all and will make reasonable adjustments to

accommodate complainants. The Council believes that all customers have the right to be heard, understood and respected. The Council also considers that employees and elected members have the same rights.

- 2.2 To ensure that the actions or behaviours of customers who behave in an unacceptable manner do not disadvantage Council employees, elected members and other customers.
- 2.3 To define the types of actions or behaviours that the Council considers inappropriate and explain how the Council might manage unacceptable behaviours whilst ensuring that customers who engage with the Council are aware of the types of actions or behaviours that will not be tolerated.
- 2.4 To deliver accessible services to all customers and others who engage with the Council, however where the Council considers any customer actions or behaviours to be unacceptable, the Council retains the right to change and/or restrict access to services.
- 2.5 To ensure that employees and elected members are supported during such times when unacceptable actions or behaviours are directed at them whether it be verbal, written, through social media or other online channel.
- 2.6 Please note that the health and safety 'Management Arrangements for Work-related Violence' addresses the requirements should there be an incident or work related violence.

### **3.0 SCOPE**

- 3.1 The policy is required to address a limited number of cases where actions have become unacceptable due to such circumstances as abuse of staff, or the prevention of staff from continuing their duties or providing the service in which they are positioned.
- 3.2 The policy affects all customers, staff and elected members. It explains how the Council might restrict or change access to a service when a customer's actions are considered to be unacceptable. This is to ensure that staff and the services provided to our customers are protected.

### **4.0 DEFINING UNACCEPTABLE ACTIONS**

- 4.1 At times, people act out of character when distressed and it is accepted that there might have been upsetting circumstances leading up to contact being made with the Council. Behaviour that is forceful or tenacious is not viewed as unacceptable by the Council, and it is recognised that being persistent can sometimes have a positive outcome when trying to resolve an issue. Resisting to make any swift value judgements about individuals in such situations is encouraged by the Council.



- 4.2 On occasion, behaviour is difficult for an individual member of staff to deal with because it doesn't conform to the standards they expect or the values they hold. An action is not necessarily unacceptable because a member of staff finds it personally difficult. The actions of individuals who are angry, demanding or persistent may result in unreasonable demands on Council staff and resources. It is these actions that the Council considers unacceptable and in need of considerate yet effective management using this policy.
- 4.3 Behaviours and actions may be considered vexatious where previous or current contact with a customer meets one or more of the following criteria: -

### **Aggressive or abusive behavior**

- 4.4 An act of violence is not limited to aggression which causes physical harm. Aggression can also include behavior or language that is written or verbal. Either approach will likely cause feelings of fear, abuse, offense and/or threat. Although each case will be assessed individually, infliction of these feelings to a member of staff by a customer is considered sufficient to determine that the actions or behaviour that causes those feelings is unacceptable.
- 4.5 Language that is insulting, degrading, has racial intent, is sexist or homophobic or which alleges that an individual has committed criminal, corrupt or perverse conduct without any evidence is unacceptable.
- 4.6 At times, such comments or actions not aimed directly to a member of Council staff, but at a third party might be considered unacceptable due to the effect that listening or reading the information might have on a member of staff.
- 4.7 Councilors and employees should be treated courteously and with respect. Violence or abuse towards them is unacceptable. The anger felt by complainants involves the subject matter of the complaint. However, it is not acceptable when anger escalates into aggression directed towards councilors and employees.

### **Unreasonable demands**

- 4.8 Demands are considered unreasonable when a customer:
- Demands responses within unrealistic timescales.
  - Insists on speaking with a particular member of staff.
  - Repeatedly changes the substance of the complaint, or raises unrelated concerns.
  - Repeatedly raises the same issue with the Council after an outcome has been provided.
  - Insists that the response to a complaint they have received is not satisfactory despite having received accurate correspondence/evidence to the contrary, and does not progress their complaint in the correct way despite the correct referral per the Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP).

- Focuses on a negligible matter that is disproportionate to its significance.
- Is unwilling to accept any evidence that has aided the conclusion to a complaint.
- Submits a complaint on behalf of someone who makes it clear that they do not wish to wish to complain.

4.9 What amounts to an unreasonable demand will always depend on the circumstances surrounding the behaviour and the seriousness of the issue that needs addressed. An example of such an impact would be that the demand takes up an excessive amount of staff time and in doing so impacts substantially on the work of the office / service and in turn disadvantages other customers.

### **Unreasonable persistence**

4.10 It is recognised that some customers find it difficult to accept that the level of service provided is final. Sometimes, customers will disagree with an action or decision taken in relation to their issue or complaint, and then contact the Council in a persistent manner about the same issue. Other examples include persistently refusing to accept explanations; repeated, long telephone calls; several short telephone calls over a short space of time; or continuing to pursue a matter without presenting new information.

4.11 The way in which these customers approach the Council may be entirely reasonable, but it is their persistent behaviour in continuing to do so that is unacceptable.

4.12 Similarly to paragraph 4.9 above, the Council considers the level of contact to be unacceptable when the amount of time spent dealing with a customer on the telephone, writing/responding to, reviewing and filing impacts on the service's ability to deal with the query and/or has an adverse impact on the service and other customers.

### **Unreasonable use of the complaints process**

4.13 Customers of any public service organisation have the right to complain about any aspect of a service through a range of channels. They can do so more than once if subsequent incidents occur.

4.14 This contact becomes unreasonable when the intention of repeated complaints is to harass, or to prevent the Council from pursuing a legitimate aim or from implementing a legitimate decision.

4.15 The Council considers access to a complaints system to be a critical element of service arrangements and it will only be in exceptional circumstances that repeated use will be regarded as unacceptable. Restricting access in those rare occasions will be applied.

## **5.0 MANAGING UNACCEPTABLE ACTIONS**

- 5.1 If an action or behaviour adversely affects the ability of staff to conduct their duties and provide a service to others, the Council may need to restrict contact with services in order to manage the unacceptable action. How the Council aims to manage unacceptable actions depends on the nature and extent of those actions.
- 5.2 If a customer displays any of the persistent actions or unreasonable demands mentioned above, such as repeated phone calls or visits to Council offices; sending irrelevant documents; or raising the same issues, the Council may decide to:
- Restrict contact in person, by telephone, fax, letter or electronically or by any combination of these. The Council will aim to maintain at least one form of contact
  - Only take telephone calls from the individual at set times on set days or put an arrangement in place for only one member of staff to deal with calls or correspondence from the individual in the future
  - Require the individual to make an appointment to see a named member of staff before visiting the office or that the complainant contacts the Council in writing
  - Return documents to the individual or, in extreme cases, advise the individual that further irrelevant documents will be destroyed or not commented on
  - Take other action that the Council considers appropriate such as blocking e-mails and requiring the individual to write in to the Council.
- 5.3 The threat or use of physical violence, verbal abuse or harassment towards Council staff will not be tolerated, and will likely result in ceasing all direct contact with an individual. If physical violence is used or threatened, incidents will be reported to the police.
- 5.4 In extreme situations, the Council will advise a customer in writing that their name is on a 'no personal contact' list. This means that they must restrict contact with Council's services to either written communication or through a third party, such as an independent advocate.
- 5.5 The Council will not deal with correspondence (letter, fax or email) that is abusive to staff or contains allegations that lack substantive evidence. When this happens, the individual will be advised that the Council considers their language offensive, unnecessary and unhelpful. A request to stop using such language will be made, and the complainant advised that the Council will not respond to their correspondence if they do not stop. The Council may require future contact to be through a third party.
- 5.6 With the exception of any immediate decisions taken at the time of an incident, decisions and actions to restrict contact with the Council will only be taken by a senior member of staff after careful consideration of the situation, and an assessment of the risk involved. Wherever possible, Council staff should always give customers the opportunity to modify their behaviour or action before a decision is taken. Individuals will be told in writing why a decision has been made to restrict future contact, the restricted contact arrangements.

- 5.7 The Council will always tell the individual in writing what action is being taken, why the action is being taken, and if relevant, the length of time that the restrictions will apply, and the timescales set for review.

## **6.0 RECORDING AND REVIEWING A DECISION TO RESTRICT CONTACT**

- 6.1 All instances where unacceptable actions have taken place against employees and elected members will be recorded on the health and safety management system SPHERA as a 'Verbal abuse' incident. Where it is decided to restrict contact, an entry noting this will be made in the relevant file and on appropriate computer records.
- 6.2 A decision to restrict customer contact will be reconsidered at set timescales or on appeal. Set timescales will be determined on an ad hoc basis dependant on the circumstance and service area involved.
- 6.3 A decision to restrict customer contact can be reconsidered informally if the customer demonstrates a more acceptable approach. The appropriate Chief Officer/Head of Service will review the status of all restricted contact arrangements on a regular basis.

## **7.0 APPEALING A DECISION**

- 7.1 A customer can appeal a decision to restrict contact. If they do this, only arguments that relate to the restriction and not to either the complaint made or the decision to close a complaint will be considered.
- 7.2 An appeal could include reasons such as:
- The customer alleging that their actions were wrongly identified as unacceptable.
  - The restrictions were disproportionate.
  - The restrictions will adversely impact on the customer because of personal circumstances.
- 7.3 Appeals will be considered by a Review Panel chaired by a senior manager. The Panel will be selected depending on circumstance and will be independent of the services involved in the original decision, and in respect of elected members, by their respective groups with appropriate officer support. The Panel will have discretion to vary or repeal the decision and the customer will be advised of the outcome in writing.

## **8.0 RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

- 8.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following supporting documents:
- Complaints handling procedure
  - Work related violence and unacceptable behaviour 2020

## **9.0 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 9.1 The Policy balances the rights of the individual to express grievances, with the freedom of staff and other service users to work or access services without discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
- 9.2 The Council aims to provide a service that is accessible to all and will make all reasonable adjustments to accommodate individuals. For example, any decision in writing can be supplemented by another form of communication if written communication is not the most appropriate medium for the complainant.
- 9.3 A full Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on the policy in consultation with the Council's Equalities Officer.



# Midlothian

## Draft Equality Plan 2021-2025



This document can be made available in different formats and in different languages. If you would like a copy in another language or format, please email [equalities@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@midlothian.gov.uk) or phone 0131 271 3658

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## Introduction

Midlothian and its communities have faced an unprecedented challenge as we have grappled with how to respond to a global pandemic with far reaching consequences for thousands of people locally. The Covid-19 crisis has created a very different way of working and rapid learning for Midlothian Council at all levels. The pandemic has cemented our vision of a greener, safer, sustainable, ambitious and thriving Midlothian underpinned by a wellbeing economy that puts its citizens and local service delivery at the heart of all decisions.

Midlothian's Route Map through and out of the crisis seeks to both support recovery and to retain the best elements of the transformation which took place in response to Covid-19 and make these permanent changes to the way the council delivers its services. This strategy is therefore, our statement of intent - designed to focus investment and drive performance within a values-based organisation to best meet the needs of the individuals and communities we serve.

Midlothian Council, Education Authority & Licensing Board believes that equality is a fundamental right that everyone should have. No one should be denied opportunities because of who they are and everyone should be able to be themselves. This principle must underpin all of the work that the Council, Education Authority & Licensing Board does. To put this into practice, we need to:

- recognise that some people are not always treated fairly and can experience discrimination and inequality;
- ensure our services meet the needs of people in our communities and that communities have choice and control over the services they use where appropriate;
- challenge ourselves to tackle the inequality that exists in our communities and work together with our partners to improve outcomes for equality groups; and
- tackle prejudice and negative attitudes towards people and celebrate the diversity within our community.

Midlothian has changed significantly in recent years. The county continues to have growing population as well as large numbers of young people and a growing elderly population. The needs of existing communities continue to become increasingly diverse. At the same time, the Council's budget is under pressure and the need to reduce costs and modernise the way we deliver our services has never been more important.

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires the Council and its partners to work communities and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in local decision making.

This plan sets out our commitment to tackling inequality and promoting inclusion. We believe that we need to lead the way in planning and delivering services which meet the needs of our diverse communities and respond to the changes ahead. We also must strive to be a good workplace for all our employees and to promote positive work experiences for our young workforce.

We look forward to supporting equality in all aspects of the Council, Education Authority & Licensing Board's work and employment practices and to reporting the progress we make to you over the coming years.

Our strategy for recovery, as we continue to respond and emerge from Covid-19, is based on the creation of a Wellbeing Economy, designed to achieve wellbeing, inclusion and fairness for our communities and to protect and enhance our environment.

Dr Grace Vickers, Chief Executive & Councillor Derek Milligan, Council Leader

## Section 1: Why we developed an Equality Plan

### The Importance of Tackling Poverty and Promoting Equality and Inclusion

*‘An equal society protects and promotes equal, real freedom and substantive opportunity to live in the ways people value and would choose, so that everyone can flourish. An equal society recognises people’s different needs, situations and goals and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and be.’* UK Equalities Review 2007

This definition of equality captures three aspects of equality:

**Opportunity** - whether everyone really has the same chance to reach their potential

**Agency** - what degree of choice and control an individual has in taking part

**Process** – whether discrimination (or the way we do things) causes or contributes to a particular inequality.

### What is the purpose of the Equality Plan?

The purpose of the Equality Plan is to clearly state the Council’s commitment to equality and diversity and to demonstrate how we are meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. It also frames this work in the context of the Council and Community Planning Partnership’s overarching commitment to make ‘Midlothian – a Great Place to Grow’, and connects all work which is aimed at reducing the impact of poverty and inequality.

Together with the Council’s key strategies and supporting action plans, the Equality Plan identifies key priorities for achieving improved equality outcomes in a targeted and consistent way across the Council and Community Planning Partnership. The Equality Plan contributes to all aspects of the Midlothian Community Planning Partnership’s Single Midlothian Plan and to the following strategic priorities outlined in the Plan:

- Reducing the gap in learning outcomes
- Reducing the gap in health outcomes
- Reducing the gap in economic circumstances
- Reducing the impact of climate change

Midlothian Council through its work on reducing inequality and promoting equality and diversity aims to:

- Continue to lead a culture where respect, choice and understanding is fostered and diversity positively valued;
- Maintain a working environment where unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying is not tolerated;

- Continue to develop our understanding of the needs of different individuals and communities in a time of rapid change;
- Continue to embed the equality agenda in all our work, and contribute to the early intervention and prevention approach adopted by the Council and its Partners;
- Improve understanding of the impact of poverty and inequality on people's lives; and
- Ensure that we plan and deliver services which meet modern standards of delivery and that are inclusive of a wide range of different needs from digital services to face to face interactions

The Council as an **Education Authority** also needs to meet the requirements of the Equality Act, including the specific duties. The Council also administers the **Licensing Board** and needs to meet the requirements of the Act when undertaking its duties in this regard. The commitments of these bodies are also contained in this Plan.

Through this work, we will meet our legal obligations to remove disadvantage, advance equality of opportunity and promote good relations with various groups. The Plan also aims to develop our work on all protected characteristics. It furthers work of previous equality schemes, reports and action plans.

## **The Equality Act 2010 and Our Responsibilities**

The purpose of the Equality Act is to ensure that everyone, whether at work or in using a service has the right to be treated fairly. It protects people from discrimination on the basis of certain characteristics. These are known as protected characteristics and they vary slightly according to whether a person is at work or using a service.

### **The protected characteristics are:**

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (the law provides protection in the area of employment and vocational training only)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Sex (formerly known as gender)

In addition to the 9 protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act, we also have a duty to take account of people's socio-economic status under the Fairer Scotland Duty.

## What is Discrimination?

Discrimination comes in different forms. It can be:

- **Direct** when someone's gender, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation, age, disability or being transgender is used as an explicit reason for treating them differently. This is the kind of discrimination that people often recognise easily.

An example might be where a community learning and development worker refuses to work with someone because they are gay.

- **Indirect** when there are rules, services or ways of doing things that have the effect of discriminating against certain groups

For example, the venue you choose for a local event or training might not be accessible to everyone with a disability.

This kind of discrimination is more subtle and can be harder to spot. It often results from simply not understanding or thinking about the needs of certain groups.

- Treating a disabled person unfavourably because of something connected with their disability when this cannot be justified (known as **discrimination arising from disability**).
- Failing to make **reasonable adjustments** for disabled people e.g. making a hearing loop available at meetings where you know people will be using hearing aids.
- **Discrimination by association** occurs when someone is discriminated against because of their association with someone protected by the Equality Act.

An example might be a Bed and Breakfast refusing a block booking for your group because one of the couples is gay. This would be direct discrimination against the gay couple. It would also be discrimination against you by association.

- **Discrimination by perception** allows someone to claim discrimination even if they do not have the protected characteristic, An example would be an atheist bullied at a football match for being catholic can claim discrimination even though he is not catholic.
- It is important to remember that some people experience discrimination on several grounds – this is sometimes called **multiple discrimination**.

The law also protects against:

- **Harassment** is when an individual is subjected to unwanted conduct which has the intent or effect of violating someone's dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

An example of this would be when a person has made inappropriate sexual comments about a colleague's clothing.

- **Victimisation** is where an individual has sought to enforce their rights, or helped another to do so, and as a result is treated less favourably than others who have not complained.

An example of this would be when a person is excluded from a social work/ work event because they have complained about the conduct of a colleague.

### **What responsibilities does Midlothian Council have under the Act?**

As a local authority, Midlothian Council is required to implement the Public Sector Equality Duty in addition to the provisions relating to employment, education and training. This is comprised of two elements, the general duty and the specific duty.

**The general duty** was developed for public bodies recognising the significant impact that the delivery of public services has on people's lives. The general duty is designed to ensure that, if followed, services are designed to meet the diverse needs of the community and also builds inclusive services. The three general duties are to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The **specific duty** is designed to help authorities to put the general duty into practice. It includes a requirement for the authority to:

- Report on mainstreaming the equality duty
- Publish equality outcomes and report progress
- Assess and review policies and practices
- Gather and use employee information
- Publish gender pay gap information
- Publish statements on equal pay
- Consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement

- Publish in a manner that is accessible

There are new legislative requirements and policy changes since the Equality Act 2010, including The Fairer Scotland Duty, introduced in 2018, Child Poverty (Scotland) Act (2017) and others directly related to human rights, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill which was introduced to the Scottish Parliament on 1 September 2020. These, where appropriate have been built into the planning and implementation of actions to deliver the equality outcomes and will continue to inform delivery moving forward.

## **Equality Evidence Review**

The Midlothian Council Area Profile for the [National Records of Scotland](#) notes that the population for Midlothian was 92,460 on 30 June 2019 and that in 2019 there were more females (51.9%) than males (48.1%). The profile also identified that 19.4% of the population were under 15 years old and 18.8% were over 65 years old.

- Midlothian Council employees: Of the total Council workforce in 2019/20, 72.18% are female, and 27.82% are male.
- There continues to be unacceptably high instance of Violence against Women in Midlothian. In 2019-20, 1,197 incidents of domestic abuse were recorded by the police with more than a third criminal incidents. This is highly under-reported as many women do not seek help or go to third sector organisation such as Women's Aid or Rape Crisis. The impact of domestic and sexual abuse (as well as other forms of violence against women such as stalking, harassment, sexual exploitation) can be devastating and long-lasting on women, children and young people. Women are mainly the victims - in four of every five incidents of domestic abuse and women and children in most sexual crimes. However, men can also be affected as victims and domestic and sexual abuse can be present in same sex situations.
- In 2019/20 the police recorded 92 incidents of hate crime. Victims of racist hate crime are often repeat victims as they work in public facing jobs in the retail and catering industries. Disability and other forms of Hate Crime remains underreported across Midlothian
- The ability to 'be you' and feel respected in the community has a big impact on an individual's mental health and wellbeing and also their sense of community. Midlothian social attitudes show that prejudice and negative attitudes towards equality groups remain a problem in our communities.
- We need to recognise that different people have different needs when accessing and using our services. All services need to take account of equality in designing, developing and implementing their services.

- Life expectancy varies between the most affluent and the most deprived areas of the county. This highlights that although we are living longer healthier lives, some groups in the community are not benefiting equally from improvements in health.

### **Building on existing work**

The Council has been working to meet the requirements of previous equalities legislation for a number of years and has developed good practice and skills arising from this work. The Council also works within a complex legislative requirements and provides a range of services for vulnerable people as required. For more information about previous equality work and examples of good practice, please read our 'Mainstreaming Equality Reports'. These are available on our website.



## **Section 2: How we developed the outcomes**

### **Developing the Outcomes**

The equalities outcomes were developed with partners with the aim of establishing a shared set of principles and outcome themes and a consistent, coherent approach to bringing tangible improvements to the lives and experiences of people in Edinburgh and the Lothians.

Partners used the Equality and Human Rights Commission's (EHRC), 'Is Scotland Fairer 2018', as the basis for developing the framework. EHRC's review spanned all areas of life: education, work, living standards, health, justice and security and participation in society. These topics provided the starting point for our framework, with the themes and outcomes shaped, refined and prioritised through discussion with stakeholders, public consultation and engagement, and taking account of EHRC's guidance to support prioritisation. The online consultation was open from 3 November to 22 December 2020 and welcomed feedback from people with a variety of life and personal experiences.

The outcomes have been developed during the Covid-19 pandemic and shaped by the challenges, experiences and learning that the crisis has brought. Covid has magnified the disadvantages faced by some groups of people, reflected in the wide variation in infection rate, health outcomes, economic and social effects of the virus. Equalities groups at higher risk of disadvantage include older people, through digital exclusion and loneliness; females, through domestic abuse and being more likely to have taken on domestic and caring responsibilities; with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) women also facing technology, language and literacy barriers.

Midlothian's strategy for recovery, as we continue to respond and emerge from this crisis, is based on the creation of a Wellbeing Economy, designed to achieve wellbeing, inclusion and fairness for our communities and to protect and enhance our environment. The Vision for Midlothian is a Great Place to Grow and the main priorities for the Community Planning Partnership are:

- Reducing inequalities in learning outcomes
- Reducing inequalities in health outcomes
- Reducing inequalities in economic circumstances
- Achieve net carbon neutral Midlothian by 2030

The Equalities Plan sets out the key areas of focus, strategies and actions that the Council will take over the next four years to meet its duties under the Equality Act.

Delivery of the plan and supporting strategies and actions plan ensures mainstreaming equalities into the day to day work of the Council, making equalities a

component of all of its activities. In doing so, we recognise that the intersection of different protected characteristics contributes to people's unique experiences, for example, of intersectional discrimination. To meet the needs of our citizens we will respect all aspects of these identities and provide a person-centred approach wherever possible.

The equality actions are structured around six themes, shown below. For each of these, a priority outcome has been agreed through the consultation and engagement process. The four-year framework will be used in a way that is iterative, responsive to priorities as they emerge through continued engagement with partners and communities. The priorities set will be subject to review for year two and beyond.

## **Midlothian Council Equality Outcomes 2021-2025**

### **Theme 1: Accessibility**

The global Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the issue of digital exclusion (groups of people who are not able to easily use or access computers or the internet) and the need to increase many people's digital skills. There is a clear overlap between groups who are digitally excluded and the most vulnerable members of our communities.

Providing services online is often seen as the main way to provide services, and while this is the preferred choice for many, there are many people for whom it is not suitable. This can make accessing public services feel like an unwelcoming experience for some people including people suffering from homelessness, asylum seekers, Gypsy/Traveller communities, older and younger people, BAME people and people with disabilities (i.e. physical, sensory and cognitive).

#### **Accessibility Outcome**

- Services will be more accessible for all with improved digital inclusion and communication and an inclusive physical environment

### **Theme 2: Housing**

The Scottish Government's Housing to 2040 consultation says that it is important that everyone has access to a home that is warm, affordable, accessible and that fits their needs. Disabled people, people with mental health conditions and people from ethnic minority groups are more likely to live in poverty which affects their ability to access housing which meets their needs.

Homelessness continues to be an issue which can seriously affect a person's health, wellbeing, confidence and life chances.

### **Housing Outcome**

- Increased supply and access to affordable housing via the Strategic Housing Investment Plan, and improved options to support independent living for those with complex needs via Housing First initiative. A reduction in homelessness as a result of a housing-led approach to provide settled housing options as quickly as possible. Approaches to prevent and address isolation are strengthened across communities.

### **Theme 3: Safer Communities and Gender Based Violence**

Community safety is about feeling safe, whether at home, in the street or at work. It relates to quality of life and being able to pursue and obtain the fullest benefits from your domestic, social and economic lives without fear or hindrance from crime and disorder.

Gender based violence (GBV) is a major public health, equality and human rights issue. It covers a spectrum of violence and abuse, committed primarily but not exclusively against women by men. This includes, but it is not limited to domestic abuse, rape and sexual assault. The physical, emotional and psychological consequences of GBV can be profound and damaging.

### **Safer Communities and Gender Based Outcome**

- Midlothian neighbourhoods are safe and welcoming and communities embrace equalities and mutual respect and reject all forms of discrimination.

### **Theme 4: Workplaces**

Some groups with protected characteristics face direct and indirect discrimination which has a negative impact on their experience in the workplace and raises barriers to promotion and progression. There is significant under-representation for some groups across the organisation as a whole but particularly in senior roles and positions, and overrepresentation at low pay grades, with subsequent impact on income levels and opportunity.

People facing discrimination who do not feel comfortable or valued in their workplace may leave, or not be promoted, with subsequent loss to the organisation of their skills and expertise, and the likelihood that entrenched patterns of employment and career progression will continue unchanged. People with a wide range of experiences and perspectives are good for the organisation and the services it delivers.

### **Workplace Outcome**

- Midlothian Council is a positive and inclusive workplace for all employees.

## **Theme 5: Education**

The health and wellbeing of children and young people thrives when education is inclusive, children and young people's rights are respected and we anticipate children's needs. Inclusive education fosters a positive climate for learning. It builds on the strengths that children and parents bring and provides equitable opportunities, resources and support, removing barriers to success for children with protected characteristics. The foundation of inclusive education is a coherent, inclusive curriculum and learning and teaching that meets learners' needs and provides appropriate challenge.

The life chances of children and young people with protected characteristics are positively affected when:

- every child benefits from an education which will enable them to realise their potential
- we are welcoming and respectful to all - every child belongs
- we respect children's rights, promote equality, prevent discrimination and challenge prejudice

### **Education Outcomes**

- All of Midlothian's children and young people are successful learners and the educational attainment gap is reduced.
- Midlothian schools are safe places where acts of discrimination, victimisation, and harassment are effectively addressed to avoid re-occurrence.

## **Theme 6: Licensing**

### **Licensing Outcomes**

- Midlothian Licensing Board works with license holders, partners and other Council services to support positive behaviour on and around license premises, and to support community safety priorities.
- Midlothian Licensing Board will work to ensure that its Board members more accurately reflect the community it serves.

## **Section 3: Delivering Equality in Midlothian**

### **How can we advance Equality of Opportunity?**

As a service provider Midlothian Council plays a significant role in people's lives. We need to ensure that our services are accessible to all those who need them and demonstrate that we have considered the diverse needs of the community when developing them. We can do this by:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people who share a relevant protected characteristic that arise from them having that characteristic;
- taking steps to meet the needs of people who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of those who do not share it; and
- encouraging individuals or groups who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which their participation is disproportionately low

Outcomes are the consequences of the actions that we undertake, things that make a difference to the lives of people. Reflecting a set of themes explored as part of a wider consultation exercise, Midlothian's Equality Plan and outcomes detailed in Appendix 1 supports the ongoing drive to mainstream equality across all areas of the Council.

### **Midlothian Council as an Employer**

The Council's vision is that 'Midlothian is a Great Place to Grow'. Delivering quality services needed by the residents of Midlothian is fundamental to the Council and its People Strategy. The five key values identified within the strategy are:

- Celebrate
- Respect
- Excellence
- Support
- Together

Key areas of work include:

- Implementing Equal Pay
- Equality in recruitment and selection
- Conditions of service
- Prevention of harassment
- Employee development

Fundamental to achieving this goal is equality of employment opportunities and the Council strives to ensure that equal opportunities underpin all aspects of employment and employment policies.

### **Equal Pay**

Midlothian Council is committed to the principle of equal pay for all our employees. This is outlined in the Council's Equal Pay Statement. The Council implemented the national Single Status Agreement at a local level , and this saw the introduction of a new pay and grade structure for all affected Local Government Employees.

### **Living wage**

Midlothian Council introduced the Scottish Government's 'Living Wage' structure. The introduction of the living wage particularly benefited women who are more highly represented in lower paid and part time jobs.

The Council supports a range of work that supports the equalities agenda including:

- A comprehensive Employee Assistance programme
- Use of the Two Ticks symbol
- Participation in the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme
- Taking the See Me campaign pledge
- Healthy Working Lives
- Equally Safe at Work (Bronze Award)

### **Our Employment Outcome:**

Our long term outcome is that 'Midlothian Council is a positive and inclusive workplace for all employees'

Key measures of success include:

- New recruits will join an increasingly diverse workforce across all levels of the organisation, which accurately reflects the population we serve and commits to providing opportunities for all new and existing staff from groups currently underrepresented such as promoting and facilitating staff forums for people in protected characteristic groups.
- Success in achieving inclusive working culture will also be measured by rates of retention/leaving, recruitment, promotion etc.

## **Midlothian Council: Education Authority**

Midlothian Council as an Education Authority is founded on inclusive values, and seeks to provide a wide range of high quality services to all, while giving priority to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals and groups in our communities.

The Education Authority continues to strive to make a positive difference to the lives of children, young people and their families. The Council/Education Authority recognises the individuality and diverse needs of all children, young people and their families.

### **Curriculum for Excellence**

The Curriculum for Excellence is a way of looking at the curriculum that builds on best existing practices in Scottish education. It is a continuing process to encourage more learning through experiences to best ensure that children and young people are prepared for the complex world they will be living in when they leave school. Children and young people are at the centre of learning provision. Our aspiration is that they should all develop the four capacities to become:

- successful learners
- confident individuals
- responsible citizens
- effective contributors

To achieve these we follow key principles to underpin the development of policies and procedures for meeting the needs of all pupils:

- all children and young people residing in Midlothian will have access to educational and social opportunities of the highest quality
- the individuality and diverse needs of all children and young people will be recognised and met where possible
- positive partnerships with parents, children and young people will be established to enable the sharing of common aims, views and aspirations
- collaborative working with other agencies and networking of services will be a requirement

Our long term outcome is that 'All of Midlothian's young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens'.

Key measures of success will include:

- Children and young people have improved health and wellbeing (including mental health) because they receive an education directed towards realising their potential, with appropriate support and reasonable adjustments when required, in progressive and inclusive learning environments.

- Children and young people's rights are respected, they enjoy an inclusive curriculum and they are confident that bullying and prejudice incidents are dealt with effectively and fairly.

### **Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)**

The Midlothian Council Education Authority will use an Integrated Impact Assessment Tool that has been developed in partnership with neighbouring authorities. All reports presented to the Council committees proposing new policies or guidelines setting out new functions, or proposing any other changes with implications for equality strands will include details of the results of the impact assessment.

### **Publication**

Information about all Education functions, including a copy of this Plan, Annual Reports and results of impact assessments will be published on the Council website and Edubuzz.

### **Midlothian Council: Licensing Board**

The Midlothian Licensing Board is constituted in terms of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Gambling Act 2005. The regimes under these Acts set out broad aims which the Board must and will support in all its functions. The pursuit of these aims is a principal feature of this Board's statement of policy. A copy of the Board's Statement of Licensing Policy can be viewed [https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/200269/licences\\_and\\_permits/404/licensing\\_board](https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/200269/licences_and_permits/404/licensing_board)

The Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005:

- Preventing crime and disorder;
- Securing public safety;
- Preventing public nuisance;
- Protecting and improving public health ; and
- Protecting children from harm

The Gambling Act 2005:

- Preventing gambling from being a source of crime and disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime
- Ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way
- Protecting children and other vulnerable young persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling



## **Our Outcomes**

In all the Licensing Boards' work we will contribute to the following outcomes:

- Midlothian Licensing Board works with license holders, partners and other Council services to support positive behaviour on and around license premises, and to support community safety priorities.
- Midlothian Licensing Board will work to ensure that its Board members more accurately reflect the community it serves.

## **Gathering Information**

The Licensing Board works with a range of partners to ensure that they have the appropriate information they need to make the right decisions about applications presented. Key partners include police, health and fire services, anti-social behaviour team, community councils, child protection teams and any other relevant stakeholders. Where relevant this can include information about equalities issues and experiences of equality groups in the community.

## **Integrated Impact Assessment**

The Midlothian Licensing Board will use the Integrated Impact Assessment Tool that has been developed in partnership with neighbouring authorities. All reports presented to the Board proposing new policies or guidelines setting out new functions, or proposing any other changes with implications for equality strands will include details of the results of the impact assessment.

## **Publication**

Information about all Licensing functions, including a copy of this Plan, Annual Reports and results of impact assessments will be published on this page [https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/200269/licences\\_and\\_permits/404/licensing\\_board](https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/200269/licences_and_permits/404/licensing_board)

## **Monitoring Progress**

The Equality Plan has been developed to provide a framework which integrates the wider Council planning and performance activities and provides a clear link to key strategies and plans. Each of the themes and outcomes set out in Appendix 1 include a brief summary of the success measures and supporting actions, to be used to monitor progress with the implementation the Equality Plan. These will continue to be developed and refined along with the Council's wider performance framework.

## **Mainstreaming Equality**

Whilst the Equality Plan integrates with the wider Council planning and performance activities in terms of key strategies and plans, 'Mainstreaming equality' also means taking equality into account in the way Midlothian Council undertakes its day to day

functions. In practice this means that we think about equality as a core part of everything that we do from our employment practices to the services we plan and provide.

Mainstreaming equality has a number of benefits including:

- Embedding equality into the culture of the Council and influencing our attitudes and behaviours;
- Allowing the Council to demonstrate how we are meeting our legal obligations to promote equality; and
- Allowing us to continually improve our performance and the services we plan and provide.

**Key ways we can help to ensure we consider equality as part of everything we plan and do:**

1. Ensuring high level commitment to Equality through all levels of the Council structures and planning procedures.
2. Understanding the impact of our work
3. Gathering information about the experiences of equality groups
4. Building organisational capacity
5. Ensuring that those who provide services on our part consider equality
6. Working in partnership with others.

Detailed information about how the Council has mainstreamed equality can be found in the Mainstreaming Equality Reports that can be accessed at [www.midlothian.gov.uk](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk) and the following provides further information for points 1 to 6 noted above:

**1. Ensuring high level commitment to Equality through all levels of the Council structures and planning procedures.**

- **Service Planning and Performance**

The service planning structure at Midlothian Council includes the Single Midlothian Plan, the local outcomes improvement plan for Midlothian and Service Plans. Each of these plans make a contribution to achieving the Council's desired outcomes. A strong commitment to equal opportunities is made at each level of the Planning process. Guidance developed for each stage of the planning process includes guidance on how to include equality.

Single Midlothian Plan (the local outcome improvement plan for Midlothian)



Business Plans (including Service Plans, Unit Plans and Teams Plans)

## **2. Understanding the Impact of our work**

- **Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)**

Midlothian Council in partnership with East Lothian Council and NHS Lothian has developed an 'Integrated Impact Assessment Tool' to allow us to examine the impact of our decisions on the community. The tool brings together key social, environmental and economic priorities to highlight whether the decisions we make or the plans we put in place will have a positive, neutral or negative impact in the community. The process also helps the Council to be more transparent and accountable for the decisions we make.

Midlothian Council requires all reports to the Council committees to include the findings of the Integrated Impact Assessment where proportionate and relevant.

Integrated Impact Assessments are published on the Council's website

- **Equalities Monitoring**

Equalities 'Monitoring', means gathering and analysing information on the personal characteristics of our service users. Gathering information about our service users helps us to understand the profile of our community, who is and who isn't using our services and what people think of them.

Equalities monitoring allows us to establish:

- The nature or extent of inequality
- The areas where action is most needed to encounter inequality
- Whether or not measures aimed at reducing inequality are succeeding

Further consideration needs to be given to establish an appropriate approach to gathering and analysing information on the personal characteristics of service users across a wider range of services. This information, when available, will be supported by clear guidance on how to monitor equalities effectively in service areas.

- **Reporting on equalities performance**

The Council has developed a series of performance indicators which relate to equalities. These comprise both statutory performance indicators and indicators gathered through the Single Midlothian Plan, the local outcomes improvement plan for Midlothian.

Key Performance Indicators (including the Statutory Performance Indicators) are published on the Council's performance website and can be accessed [here](#).

The Key Performance Indicators are reported to the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee by the Elected Members. Performance reports are also analysed by the Council Management Team. Indicators relating to equalities are reported in relation to several outcomes.

### **3. Gathering Information about the experiences of equality groups**

Midlothian Council recognises that gathering evidence about the needs and experiences of those with protected characteristics is an important way for us to plan and deliver services that meet the needs of the community. Further, having this information also helps us to assess the impact of proposed and revised policies.

We seek to:

- Identify what issues people in local communities are facing which might be stopping them from accessing our services or making it harder for them to access our services
- Learn more about the diverse experiences of people in the community
- Build trust and improve communication with harder to reach communities
- Understand which issues are within the remit of the Council to address, together with our partners where relevant.

The Council does this in a number of ways including community engagement, research and working in partnership with other specialist organisations.

- **Community Engagement**

The Council routinely engages with a range of local equality groups to gather information about their experiences. Examples include:

- Midlothian Peoples Equality Group (MPEG)
- Citizens Panel
- Midlothian Young Peoples Advice Service (MYPAS)
- Midlothian LGBT Youth Group

The Council also has a dedicated Community Engagement Officer, and active Community Councils that are encouraged to be inclusive in the ways that they work.

#### **4. Building Organisational Capacity**

- **Equality Training**

Equality and diversity training is a key way forward for all employees to understand more about the meaning and importance of equality and diversity, and the impact of prejudice and discrimination. Staff have attended or completed online equality and diversity awareness training, and this training forms part of the staff induction process. Awareness training has also been rolled out to Elected Members and the Council's Management Team.

The Council has also been developing an Equality Training Plan. The aims of this Equality Training Plan are to:

- ensure that Midlothian Council is able to meet its general and specific duties under equalities and human rights legislation;
- provide employees with opportunities for learning and awareness of their role and responsibilities under Equality and Human Rights legislation; and
- develop a skilled, motivated and culturally capable workforce that can bring about changes that will improve services and tackle inequalities

Key aspects of the training plan include:

- Training and development for Elected Members;
- Bespoke training opportunities , including inter-agency training;
- E-Learning;
- Equality Guides and Online Resources;
- Individual Support and Guidance; and
- Integrated Impact Assessment

#### **5. Ensure that those who provide services on our behalf also consider equality**

Midlothian Council strives to ensure that all duties under the Equality Act will be integral to the procurement process. The Council's current Corporate Procurement Strategy contains clauses to ensure the equality of opportunity in relation to service provision and employment. The Council also actively supports the use of Article 19 (regulation 7) and is actively working to ensure that at least some Council contracts are with supported businesses.

## **6. Work in partnership with others- The Midlothian Community Planning Partnership**

The Midlothian Community Planning Partnership's Single Midlothian Plan, which is the local outcomes improvement plan for Midlothian has equality underpinning all its outcomes and actions.

For more information on the Single Midlothian Plan and previous plans, please visit [here](#).

### **Fostering Good Relations**

The requirement of the Equality Act is to foster good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not. There are two significant components to this work:

- tackling prejudice
- promoting understanding

Midlothian has strong and active communities with high levels of satisfaction about the places people live reported through local resident's surveys. However, despite a positive picture we are aware that there are pockets within our communities where tensions exist. Midlothian's population is changing and across the country we have seen a growth in support for far right political parties, increasing concerns about immigration, incidents of hate crime and global terrorist incidents. This highlights the importance of working towards community cohesion and it challenges us to build consideration about how our work can help to foster good relations in all aspects of our work.

We have included 'promotes good relations' as a core policy theme within our new Integrated Impact Assessment process to help us ensure we maximise our awareness of this area of work.

## Section 4: Midlothian Equality in Action

You can find out more information about equalities work in Midlothian by visiting our engagement page [here](#).

### Contact us

You can get in touch with us by:

- **Email:** [equalities@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@midlothian.gov.uk)
- **Phone:** 0131 271 3658
- **Write to:** Lesley N Crozier  
Equality, Diversity & Human Rights Officer  
Midlothian Council  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Midlothian House  
Buccleuch Street  
DALKEITH  
EH22 1DN

## Section 5: Midlothian Council Equality Outcomes Plan

Outcome	Protected Characteristics Affected	Measure of success	Actions to progress outcome/Associated Strategies and Plans	Timescale for actions
<b>Theme 1: ACCESSIBILITY</b>  General Duty progressed: Eliminate discrimination, Advance equality				
Services will be more accessible for all with improved digital inclusion and communication and an inclusive physical environment	AGE - Older People and  Children and Young people  RACE – people whose first language is not English  DISABILITY  Those who share protected characteristics who are disproportionately experiencing poverty (e.g. BAME and Disabled people)	<p><b>Channel Shift</b> –greater flexibility and new ways to access services.</p> <p><b>Web Accessibility</b> – ensuring our web sites comply with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibilities Regulations (No. 2) 2018.</p> <p><b>Digital Access and Skills</b> - programme of activities to address the digital divide and ensure the benefits of the internet and digital technologies are available to all.</p> <p><b>Digital Learning</b> - improve access to digital technology for all learners though the provision of additional devices and connectivity to pupils to support home and blended learning.</p> <p><b>Libraries</b> - the volume of digital transactions will be tracked within libraries, and special arrangements will be put in place to measure digital uptake within vulnerable client groups.</p> <p>Further measures of success will be captured through customer satisfaction surveys within libraries.</p>	<p>Channel shift is embedded as a core theme within the Customer Service and Digital Services strategies and delivery programme, and progress will be reported through annual updates over 2021 to 2025</p> <p>Library Service - Provide and sign-post a wide range of digital support tools within libraries including providing access to computers, the Internet, digital content, and digital literacy programs.</p> <p>Digital Learning Strategy - Monitor the delivery of new devices e.g. iPads, chrome books, to assist educators, learners and parents to take advantage of digital technology opportunities.</p> <p>Accessibility Statement and supporting actions including, provision of adapted communication methods for specific access requirements (BSL interpreters or Text Relay services for deaf customers Language translation services for customers for whom English is not their first or preferred language - Browse Aloud).</p> <p>Adult Health and Social Care Service Plan includes a actions and performance indicators supporting a range of priorities, including the use of Digital resources to improve the experience for clients. In addition the</p>	As identified in key strategies and plans noted.



			<p>Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2019-2022, identifies a key outcome - People who use health and social care services have positive experiences of those services, and have their dignity respected.</p> <p>Joint Physical Disability Planning Group Action Plan</p>	
<b>Theme 2: HOUSING</b>				
<p>General Duty progressed: Eliminate discrimination, Advance equality and Foster good relations</p>				
<p>Increased supply and access to affordable housing via the Strategic Housing Investment Plan, and improved options to support independent living for those with complex needs via Housing First initiative. A reduction in homelessness as a result of a housing-led approach to provide settled housing options as quickly as possible. Approaches to prevent and address isolation are strengthened</p>	<p><i>DISABILITY – particularly those with physical disability or mental health issues.</i></p>	<p>People have access to a home that is warm, affordable, accessible and that meets their needs</p>	<p>Monitored via delivery of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2021-2026</li> <li>• Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2021/22 – 2025/26</li> <li>• Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2020/21 – 2023/24</li> <li>• Housing First</li> </ul> <p>Key outcomes in the LHS Action Plan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to housing and the supply of new housing has increased across all tenures in Midlothian.</li> <li>• Improve Place Making in Midlothian.</li> <li>• Homeless households and those threatened with homelessness are able to access support and advice services and all unintentionally homeless households will be able to access settled accommodation.</li> <li>• The needs of households with particular needs will be addressed and all households will have equal access to housing and housing services.</li> <li>• Housing in all tenures will be more energy efficient and fewer households will live in, or be at risk of, fuel poverty.</li> <li>• The condition of housing across all tenures is improved.</li> <li>• Integration of Housing, Health and Social Care in Midlothian is improved.</li> </ul>	<p>As identified in key strategies and plans noted.</p>

across communities.			Community Justice Service - Pathways established to support transition at point of leaving prisons and hospitals into accommodation.	
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### Theme 3: SAFER COMMUNITIES AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

General Duty progressed: Foster Good relations

Midlothian neighbourhoods are safe and welcoming and communities embrace equalities and mutual respect and reject all forms of discrimination.	All protected characteristics (with a focus on gender based violence)	Woman, girls and LGBTQ+ communities feel safer as a result of the implementation of programmes and policies to prevent and protect our citizens against domestic abuse and gender-based violence, strengthened by the direct response during and following the COVID-19 pandemic.	<p>Midlothian People's Equality Group will continue to promote equality and challenge prejudice, build relationships across Midlothian's communities of interest where people feel valued and trusted and provide a platform for people to learn, educate and communicate about local equality issues of concern and interest.</p> <p>Staff Equalities Group will continue to inform and collaborate on equalities actions and working collectively towards improving policies and practice and implementing change.</p> <p>Adult Health and Social Care Service Plan includes a range of actions and performance indicators which support a range of priorities and includes a priority specific to the Justice Service.</p> <p>Public Protection Unit and VAWG action and improvement plans.</p>	As identified in key strategies and plans noted.
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### Theme 4: WORKPLACES

General Duty progressed: Eliminate discrimination, Advance equality, Foster good relations

Midlothian Council is a positive and inclusive workplace	Race	New recruits will join an increasingly diverse workforce across all levels of the organisation, which accurately reflects the population we serve and	<p>Short term performance indicators: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvements in equalities data gathered</li> </ul>	As identified in key strategies
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for all employees.	<p>Sexual Orientation</p> <p>Sex</p> <p>Disability</p> <p>Religion or Belief</p> <p>Age</p> <p>Gender reassignment</p> <p>Pregnancy and maternity</p> <p>Marriage and civil partnership</p>	<p>commits to providing opportunities for all new and existing staff from groups currently underrepresented such as promoting and facilitating staff forums for people in protected characteristic groups.</p> <p>Success in achieving inclusive working culture might also be measured by rates of retention/leaving, recruitment, promotion etc.</p> <p>A reduction in our pay gap percentages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numbers of new recruits from identified groups</li> <li>Feedback from staff, including focused questions in all staff surveys e.g. I Matters</li> </ul> <p>Longer term performance indicators: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess numbers of people in different pay grades, roles and changes over time and implement strategies to address any identified concerns.</li> <li>Widen pay gap reporting from gender to include other protected characteristics.</li> </ul> <p>The Council has a range of policies and procedures which support a positive and inclusive workplace including: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of a draft Wellbeing Strategy currently at consultation stage.</li> <li>Supporters of the 'Happy to talk flexible working' pledge. Flexible work arrangements centred around trust that promote a healthy work-life-balance.</li> <li>Through the Healthy Working Lives Gold Award, promotion of organisational, local and national wellbeing campaigns and initiatives.</li> <li>Promotion of and educating colleagues about occupational health services, Employee Assistance Programme and other supports available to staff.</li> <li>Provision of a variety of employee benefit schemes to improve the physical, financial and mental wellbeing of our workforce.</li> <li>Planned review of recruitment and selection processes and practices by using the Scottish Government's Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit</li> <li>Continued membership of Stonewall Diversity</li> </ul>	and plans noted.
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			<p>Champions and plans to submit applications to Stonewall Workplace Equality Index</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll out refresher mandatory Equality and Diversity training for all employees</li> <li>• Creation of a staff equalities group.</li> <li>• Plans to create a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy during 2021/22</li> <li>• Continuing to review people policies to ensure they fully support an inclusive workplace.</li> </ul>	
<b>Theme 5: EDUCATION</b>  General Duty progressed: Eliminate discrimination, Advance equality and Foster good relations				
<p>1. All of Midlothian's children and young people are successful learners and the educational attainment gap is reduced.</p> <p>2. Midlothian schools are safe places where acts of discrimination, victimisation, and harassment are effectively addressed to avoid re-occurrence.</p>	<p>Disability, gender (sex), race, religion, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment</p>	<p>Children and young people have improved health and wellbeing (including mental health) because they receive an education directed towards realising their potential, with appropriate support and reasonable adjustments when required, in progressive and inclusive learning environments.</p> <p>Children and young people's rights are respected, they enjoy an inclusive curriculum and they are confident that bullying and prejudice incidents are dealt with effectively and fairly.</p>	<p>The Education Service improvement plan aligns with the key priorities in the National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education and Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education. There is also a statutory duty to report on steps taken to close the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and improve children and young people's wellbeing.</p> <p>The 2021-22 service plan includes actions being taken forward as part of the Inclusion and Equity; ASN reviews and becoming a nurturing authority, all are already underway. The review includes updating and reviewing key policies to ensure they comply with legislation, including UNCRC and statutory duties. This includes the review of Included, Engaged and Involved which is where guidance on dealing with bullying etc sits. Actions being taken forward include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A nurturing authority- 3 year plan in place to embed nurture within our schools and services</li> <li>• Policy development and review- involve all key stakeholders in the review of policies to ensure they are compliant with statutory duties, including new duties associated with UNCRC (</li> </ul>	<p>As identified in key strategies and plans noted.</p>

			<p>Included, Engaged and Involved/ Accessibility Policy and Strategy etc)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Learning Strategy – equity of access to technology to enhance learning</li> <li>• Learning Estate Strategy – equity of learning experiences and designing inclusive spaces</li> <li>• Review of the health and wellbeing curriculum delivered in schools</li> </ul>	
<b>Theme 6: LICENSING</b>  General Duty progressed: Advance equality and Foster good relations				
<p>1. Midlothian Licensing Board works with license holders, partners and other Council services to support positive behaviour on and around license premises, and to support community safety priorities.</p> <p>2. Midlothian Licensing Board will work to ensure that its Board members more accurately reflect the community it serves.</p>	Disability, gender (sex), race		<p>The Board will continue to work in partnership with agencies including Police Scotland and the local Licensing Forum, who each have a separate statutory role to play under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005, with equal regard to the interests of persons with protected characteristics.</p> <p>The Board will promote accessibility to all licensed premises in Midlothian for people with disabilities through its application of the relevant provisions of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 and its statement of licensing policy.</p> <p>Disability Access and Facilities Statements (DAFS) are required to be submitted along with all applications for premises licences.</p> <p>Midlothian Licensing Board Policy 2018 - 2023 signposts licence holders to their duties under the Equality Act 2010.</p>	As identified in key strategies and plans noted.



Midlothian Council

Draft Equality  
Mainstreaming &  
Outcomes Progress  
Report

2019 - 2021

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### Foreword by the Chief Executive, Midlothian Council

Welcome to the Midlothian Council Equality Mainstreaming & Outcomes Progress Report for the period 2019 - 2021. Over the past two years, the Council has continued to work towards developing its approach to equality and fairness. The Council has set out an ambitious programme of work through the Midlothian Community Planning Partnership to build a Midlothian, which is built on fairness and prosperity.

It is my opinion that this principle of equality must underpin all of the work the Council plans and does, and I am determined that the Council will continue to do this through:

- Recognising that some people are not always treated fairly and can experience discrimination and inequality;
- Ensuring that our services meet the needs of all people in our communities, and that communities have choice and control over the services they use where appropriate;
- Challenging ourselves to tackle the inequality that exists in our communities, and working with community planning partners to improve outcomes for equality groups; and
- Tackling prejudice and negative attitudes towards people and celebrate the diversity within our communities

On 20 March 2020 the council moved to critical service delivery in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The rapid response to this pandemic resulted in a complete transformation of how the council works, including remote working, digital transformation and rapid response. The introduction of Midlothian's Route Map through and out of the crisis set out a new strategy to both support recovery and to retain the best elements of the transformation, which took place in response to Covid-19 with the intention to make a number of permanent changes to the way the council delivers its services. The route map sets out a flexible and iterative renewal plan by Midlothian Council, in association with partners, to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

I am proud of the work that the Council has done to raise awareness of Mental Health amongst our employees, achievement of the Equally Safe at Work accreditation demonstrating good practice and leadership in addressing violence against women and a focus on gender equality, and the drive to celebrate equality and diversity with the Equal Midlothian Week & Mela. Initiatives such as these are tangible examples of equality work within our organisation and our local communities.

I look forward to continuing our work over the coming years to achieve our vision of a fairer and more equal Midlothian.

Dr Grace Vickers, Chief Executive, Midlothian Council



### 1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline how the Council has taken forward work to mainstream equality across the Council both in its role as a service provider and as an employer. The report also demonstrates current progress against equality outcomes detailed in the Midlothian Council Equality Plan 2017 – 2021.
- 1.2 This report uses the terms 'Midlothian Council/Council' as shorthand for the Council, Education Authority and Licensing Board (all three bodies).

### 2.0 Legislative Background

- 2.1 In October 2010 the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) came into force. This was a consolidating piece of legislation gathering together 40 years of previous discrimination legislation.
- 2.2 On 05 April 2011 the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) came into force. The PSED replaced the separate duties on public bodies relating to race, disability and gender equality.
- 2.3 The new PSED extended the scope of equality legislation to include not only race, disability and gender but also age, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, and sexual orientation.
- 2.4 These nine categories are now known as the protected characteristics.
- 2.5 In April 2018 the Scottish Government enacted the socio economic duty. The Equality Act requires us to actively consider how we can reduce the inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions. This is known as the Fairer Scotland Duty.
- 2.6 The PSED as set out in the Act is known as the 'general equality duty' (GED).
- 2.7 The GED requires public listed authorities in the planning and exercising of their public duties and functions to have 'due regard' to the need to:
  - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct;
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and

- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- 2.8 These three areas are sometimes known as the ‘three needs’.
- 2.9 Having ‘due regard’ in relation to advancing equality of opportunity includes:
- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
  - Taking steps to meet the needs of persons with protected characteristics that are different from persons who do not share it; and
  - Encouraging participation in public life and other areas where representation is disproportionately low
- 2.10 Having ‘due regard’ in relation to the need to foster good relations includes:
- Tackling prejudice; and
  - Promoting understanding
- 2.11 As previously noted at present there are nine protected characteristics and there is no hierarchy to those nine. In alphabetical order they are:
- Age
  - Disability (learning difficulties, mental health, physical and sensory)
  - Gender re-assignment
  - Marriage and civil partnership (restricted to elimination of unlawful discrimination in employment)
  - Pregnancy and Maternity
  - Race
  - Religion or Belief
  - Sex
  - Sexual orientation
- 2.12 On 27 May 2012 the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 came into force.
- 2.13 These Regulations imposed duties on listed public bodies for the purpose of enabling the better performance by the listed authority of the duty imposed by section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010, the PSED.
- 2.14 These duties are to:
- Report progress on mainstreaming the equality duty;

- Publish equality outcomes and report progress;
- Assess and review policies and practices;
- Gather and use employee information;
- Publish gender pay gap information;
- Publish statements on equal pay, etc;
- Consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement;
- Publish in a manner that is accessible, etc;
- Consider other matters; and
- Scottish Ministers to publish proposals to enable better performance

2.15 The 2012 Regulations dictate when reports and progress reports have to be published (outcome reports every four years, progress reports every two years starting on 30 April 2013). The Regulations also state that all new and/or revised policies must be impact assessed against the needs of the GED, and that workforce profiling, gender pay gap and equal pay statements should form part of the mainstreaming report for organisations who have more than 150 employees at prescribed times. Finally, the Regulations look for listed bodies to improve their procurement activities and to publish all materials in a manner that is accessible to all.

2.16 On 11 June 2015 the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2015 came into force.

2.17 This set of Regulations increased the number of listed bodies who are required to adhere to the Act and includes Integration Joint Boards established by order under section 9(2) of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 (3).

2.18 This means that the Midlothian Integration Joint Board (MLIJB) is also subject to the duties and responsibilities of the Equality Act 2010 and its subsequent Regulations. The MLIJB has its own Equality Reports and is therefore out with the scope of this report.

2.19 On 18 March 2016 the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2016 came into force.

2.20 This new set of Regulations:

- Introduced a new requirement on listed public authorities to publish the gender composition of their Boards, and to produce succession plans to increase the diversity (across all protected characteristics) of their Boards; and to

- Lower the threshold for listed bodies to publish information on their gender pay gap and equal pay statements, from those authorities with more than 150 employees to those with more than 20 employees
- 2.21 Local authorities, licencing boards, and education authorities are not considered ‘relevant listed authorities’ in respect of the first bullet point in 2.20 above.
- 2.22 It is important to note that the Council as an Education Authority must also meet the requirements of the Act and subsequent Regulations. Further, as the Council also administers the Licensing Board it too needs to meet the requirements of the Act and Regulations when undertaking its duties. Accordingly, at the relevant points within this report reference will be made to all three bodies.
- 2.23 New legislative requirements and policy changes have been introduced since the Equality Act 2010, including The Fairer Scotland Duty, introduced in 2018, Child Poverty (Scotland) Act (2017) and others directly related to human rights including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill which was introduced to the Scottish Parliament on 1 September 2020.

### **3.0 Mainstreaming Equality 2019 – 2021 - context**

- 3.1 In the Council’s last Equality Mainstreaming & Outcome Reports 2017 – 2019 it was said that:
- Mainstreaming equality meant making equality part of the day to day business of the Council, Education Authority & Licensing Board both as service planners, providers and employers, rather than a ‘bolt-on’ at the end of projects and other programmes of work;
  - By mainstreaming equality, the Council, Education Authority & Licensing Board could ensure that equality of opportunity was part of the culture of the organisations, and that both employees and customers could benefit from organisations where they felt valued and their interests and issues on a level par with all others’ issues and values;
  - Further, by mainstreaming equality the Council, Education Authority & Licensing Board could demonstrate its commitment to the general duty by publicly demonstrating that they would not condone unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment; and that
  - The Council, Education Authority & Licensing Board could also demonstrate that they would work to advance equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

within their own organisations and through partnership and joint working practices with neighbours and community planning partners.

The Council, Education Authority & Licensing Board remain committed to these considerations, and during the period 2019 – 2021 have worked hard to embed each of the needs of the General Equality Duty for each protected characteristic throughout all of its work.

#### **4.0 Progress made for the period of the Equality Plan 2017 – 2021 to mainstream equality throughout all three bodies (Council, Education Authority & Licensing Board)**

##### **4.1 Ensuring genuine commitment to equality through all levels of the Council structures and planning procedures**

The service planning structure of the Council includes the Single Midlothian Plan (SMP) and supporting plans including service plans.

In Midlothian, partners work together through the Midlothian Community Planning Partnership (MCP) which is the overarching partnership for this local authority area. MCP brings together public services, the third sector, the business community and community organisations that are based or working in Midlothian.

Revision of the priorities for the MCP which are to reduce inequalities in: learning outcomes; health outcomes; and economic circumstances and now includes to reduce carbon emissions in Midlothian to net zero by 2030. The strapline of the partnership is 'Midlothian - A Great Place to Grow'. Actions in relation to outcomes given in the 2017 – 2021 Equality Plan will be given in the outcomes section of this report.

Introducing Midlothian's Route Map through and out of the crisis as a strategy for recovery with a focus on the vision and priorities identified by the MCP and based on the creation of a Wellbeing Economy, designed to achieve wellbeing, inclusion and fairness for our communities and to protect and enhance our environment.

##### **4.2 Understanding the impact of our work – the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)**

Since 2016, the Council has implemented an Integrated Impact Assessment Tool to ensure that we consider equality and the impact of our decisions on those with protected characteristics. The Council considers that our decision making process needs to consider a bigger picture and therefore the IIA also considers socio-economic inequality, health inequalities, environmental and sustainability matters

thereby giving service providers the bigger picture that allows them to identify priorities now and in the future.

In early 2019 a further refresh of the IIA process was carried out, considering the need to include further focus on human rights and a greater emphasis on ensuring we consider the impact of our policies on care experienced young people. A pan-lothian approach to the development of the IIA has encouraged a number of public sector bodies to support both the approach taken and a significant staff training programme to raise awareness and understanding of the importance of IIAs.

Completed impact assessments are published on the Council website as required by the Act and can be found [here](#).

### 4.3 Equalities Monitoring

The Council continues to use equalities monitoring to gather and analyse information about service users where possible and appropriate. Plans to continue to develop our approach to equality monitoring and data collection need to ensure that we meet the requirements of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and also ensure that any information collected reflects the most up to date approach to monitoring, and gives us the information we need to develop responsive services.

To improve equalities monitoring as an employer the Council launched a Personal Data Audit towards the end of 2020. Encouraging staff to ensure that their personal data is updated to ensure appropriate and meaningful consideration and planning with regard to protected characteristics can be undertaken.

### 4.4 Building Organisational Capacity

#### Equality & Diversity Training

Training continues to be an important method of mainstreaming equality, diversity and human rights throughout the Council, Education Authority and Licensing Board. As part of the Equally Safe at Work Accreditation Process and Equality Plan 2017 – 2021, a programme of equality, diversity and human rights awareness training which focussed on:

- Ensuring that Midlothian Council is able to meet its general and specific duties under equalities and human rights legislation.
- Providing employees with opportunities for learning and awareness of their role and responsibilities under equality and human rights legislation.
- Developing a skilled, motivated and culturally capable workforce that can bring about changes that will improve services and tackle inequalities.

In addition, updates for the Council's Corporate Management Team and Elected Members on Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Awareness and the Integrated Impact Assessment focusing on the benefits that this process gives to service planning and delivery as well as staff wellbeing have been, and will continue to be delivered.

Further, staff have been encouraged to undergo refresher equality and diversity training, and those involved in developing service planning and delivery to request more detailed training in the need for and use of the Integrated Impact Assessment tool has continued.

### 4.5 Staff Equalities Group

Earlier Mainstreaming Reports noted the intention to review the structure and purpose of the previous Equality Working Group (EWG). Work on the planned review was delayed and the subsequent formation of an Equalities Forum superseded the review.

Alongside colleagues, the Equalities Engagement Officer (EEO) set up a series of drop-in sessions for staff to ascertain if there was interest in setting up a Staff Equalities Group and devising Terms of Reference for the group. A core group of ten staff members was established and began meeting monthly from November 2019 with the following purpose/aims:

- To offer the opportunity for colleagues from all areas of the organisation to inform and collaborate on equalities action.
- Working collectively towards improving policies and practices and implementing change.
- Sharing experiences and providing advice and support in a confidential safe space.

Members of the group are pro-active in raising equalities issues and sharing information. The EEO continues to facilitate the group on an ongoing basis.

### 4.6 Joint Community Planning Equality Forum (CPEF)

Work on the remit and membership of the Joint East Lothian and Midlothian Community Planning Equality Forum (JE&MCPEF) has not progressed as planned in earlier reports. A decision regarding whether this forum, or a different version of the forum, is to be progressed is required.

Whilst the intention was to have a joint forum with East Lothian Council, in practice the community level activity associate with equalities has been taken forward by Midlothian People's Equality Group (MPEG).

### 4.6 Midlothian People's Equality Group

The Midlothian People's Equality Group (MPEG) is a group of local people with diverse backgrounds who aim to:

- Promote equality and challenge prejudice
- Build relationships across Midlothian's communities of interest where people feel valued and trusted
- Provide a platform for Midlothian people to learn, educate and communicate about local equality issues of concern and interest; and have a voice in local policy and planning.

The group is supported by Midlothian Council's Equality Engagement Officer who supports the group on an ongoing basis: attending board meetings; giving guidance and support with practical tasks such as funding applications/ OSCR submissions/ volunteer development/ policy and procedures; and working in partnership with MPEG and other organisations to host events and projects.

### 4.7 Working with the Procurement Section

Work with the procurement section has resulted in the following:

- Development of equality issues within our procurement strategy such as buying with other community planning partners and increasing supplier diversity;
- A review of the current provision for equality in procurement; building equality into the business case and engaging with service users;
- Introducing equality requirements in contract specifications including;
  - Specifying positive action and reasonable adjustments as well as workforce requirements;
  - Using more inclusive advertising and selection of tenderers' processes;
  - Developing an inclusive award process as well as implementing equality contract conditions and monitoring them; and
  - Learning lessons at the end of a contract

This focus ensures that the procurement process is informed by the responsibilities and obligations within the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012, particularly to consider the use of award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement.



### 4.8 Equal Midlothian Week and Midlothian Mela

Equal Midlothian Week has been established as an annual programme of events with a range of organisations coming together to offer a variety of events which promote and celebrate equality, raise awareness and reach out to all communities. Details of the programme for 2020 and 2021 are shown in the outcomes section of this report.

The Equal Midlothian Week events culminate with the annual multi-cultural celebration, the Midlothian Mela and further details for both the 2020 and 2021 Mela are shown in the outcomes section of this report.

### 4.9 SWAN (Scottish Workplace Networking) for LGBT People

Ian Arnot and Robert Cole, who were involved with British Telecom's (BT) LGBT Networking Group, Kaleidoscope, founded SWAN in 2008. At the time, many companies and public sector employers had their own networking organisations but there was nothing that connected them. SWAN was created in order to fill this gap and provide a network in Scotland to bring people from different sectors together.

SWAN has become synonymous with networking within the LGBT professional community. As an organisation they have been hosted at many major businesses in the central belt of Scotland and attendance is consistently growing. SWAN aims to provide LGBT people with access to networking opportunities and with the help of corporate hosts they are able to do this absolutely free.

### 4.10 Stonewall Scotland

The Council is pleased to be a member of Stonewall Scotland's Diversity Champion's Programme. Stonewall Scotland works to achieve equality and justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. By working with Stonewall we can help LGBT people to become more involved in the education, service planning and delivery in our area.

### 4.11 LGBT Youth Scotland

LGBT Youth Scotland is the largest youth and community-based organisation for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Scotland. The charity's mission is to:

"Empower lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people and the wider LGBT community so that they are embraced as full members of the Scottish family at home, school and in every community."

The Council is a member of the Lothian LGBT Development

The Council's Equality Engagement Officer has also co-ordinated group attendance at Edinburgh Pride marches with LGBT Youth Scotland.

### 4.12 Participation in Equality & Rights Network (EaRN)

The Equality and Rights Network (EaRN), is a member-led network that seeks to advance equality, promote human rights and tackle inequality and poverty in Edinburgh and surrounding areas.

### 4.13 NHS Gypsy/Traveller Health Steering Group

The Equality & Diversity Officer attends this group which looks after the specific health issues relating to Gypsy/Travellers in the East & Midlothian areas. The group was refreshed during 2015/17 and Midlothian Council remains an active participant.

### 4.14 Gathering information about the experiences of equality groups

The Council continues to recognise that gathering information/ evidence about the needs and experiences of those with protected characteristics is an important way for the Council to deliver services that meet the needs of the community. The Council does this in different ways including community engagement, participation and desk based research. Since the publication of the initial Equality Plan in 2013 and update in 2017 a number of key developments have strengthened the knowledge we have about our communities:

- Continued development and growth of the Local Neighbourhood Plans which provide opportunities for local people to engage with local issues and improvements for their local communities. These Plans are focused on reducing inequality and offering opportunities for participation and good community relations.
- Development of the Community Planning Annual Planning Day event gives local communities the opportunity to hear more about and get involved in broader community planning work. Development of the plan is underpinned by the Midlothian Profile which presents information on the make up of Midlothian's communities across a range of category, including some protected characteristics.
- Continued support for Midlothian Community Councils
- Development of the Midlothian Citizen's Panel as a mechanism to gather the views of local people on key issues.
- Development of the 'The Champions' Board' whose remit is to provide a platform for looked after children to engage with their corporate parent and make their needs known.

- Successful working relationships with regional and national equality groups to provide information / evidence about particular groups that have no local representation
- Use of National Resources including 'Equality Evidence Finder' developed by the Scottish Government/ Improvement Service.

### 5.0 Other ongoing work in support of equal opportunities Council-wide

#### 5.1 2019

##### May 2019

##### *Diversity in Public Life event*

In May 2019 Midlothian Council partnered with Edinburgh and Lothian's Regional Equality Council (ELREC), Full Options, Midlothian People's Equality Group (MPEG) and the Federation of Midlothian Community Councils to hold an event promoting the Diversity in Public Life project run by ELREC.

This project runs a customised mentoring scheme to provide support to Black and Minority Ethnic individuals interested in getting involved in local organisations such as community councils. Approximately 40 people attended the event. Following a keynote speech from Professor Sir Geoff Palmer OBE, MPEG members Andrew Hiddleston and Debora Kayembe joined Daya Feldwick from Midlothian Federation of Community Councils; and Rona Duncan from Police Scotland speaking about their personal experiences of overcoming barriers, what current barriers exist and how these can be overcome. A panel discussion with audience questions posed to the panel was interesting and lively. Information stalls and refreshments provided positive networking opportunities.



### 2019

#### ***Midlothian Muslim Community Centre (MMCC) – Diabetes Prevention Project***

This is a joint project between MMCC, Midlothian Council and Midlothian Health and Social Care partnership. MMCC received funding through Midlothian Council grants to deliver a project addressing the increased risk of diabetes experienced by South Asian communities. Following a period of consultation work and support with funding, this project started in August 2019 working with a group of women and comprised of three elements: a walking group; a fitness class; and a speaker programme. The programme has gained extremely positive feedback from the women attending.



Weekly walking group:-

“We’ve got faster – we had to extend the route”

“I can walk and talk now, I couldn’t before, I would have needed to slow down”

“Having a walk leader who is external to the group motivates us to turn up”

Fitness class:-

“The instructor takes us out of our comfort zone and pushes us”

“It’s me time”

“I really like the social aspect of the class”

Speaker programme:-

“We found the dietician input most helpful”

“Visual reminders of healthy portion sizes were good (e.g. rice portion the size of a computer mouse)”

“I’ve made changes to the amount of oil I use. I now use rapeseed oil and I use a lot less”

Unfortunately this project halted temporarily in March 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions however funding is in place and there are plans to resume when restrictions are eased.

### October 2019

#### *World Mental Health Day*



For a second year, Midlothian People's Equality Group (MPEG) and Midlothian Council staff participated in a procession to highlight awareness of mental health in an event which was run by Sure Start and CAPS to celebrate World Mental Health Day!

There was recognition that we all experience poor mental health at times and it is important to eliminate stigma and increase openness and sharing around our experiences of mental health, whether that be sharing difficult experiences or positive strategies that help us have good mental health. There was a great atmosphere during the procession from Dalkeith Arts Centre to St John & Kings Park Church and once we reached the church we enjoyed networking and speaking to people about our various activities.

## 5.2 2020

### 2020

#### *Equal Midlothian Week*

Equal Midlothian Week has become an exciting annual programme of events. A range of organisations come together to offer a variety of events which promote and celebrate equality, raise awareness and reach out to all communities. Events on offer in 2020's programme were:-

- Men's Bereavement Group 65+ by the Grassy Riggs
- Don't Panic, but I'm Islamic! – talk and exhibition on Islamophobia by Ranna Ahmed and MEND
- Out2Play Sessions by Play Midlothian
- MidYouth LGBT+ groups by MYPAS
- Macular/Visual Impairment Support Group by the Grassy Riggs
- Deaf Awareness Training by Deaf Action

- Open Information Day for Kinship Carers by Grandparents Parenting Again and Kinship Carers
- Women's Walk at Vogrie Country Park – Midlothian Ranger Service and Midlothian Muslim Community Centre
- Dalkeith/ Woodburn Walk and Talk for 65+ and carers by the Grassy Riggs
- Misconceptions about Learning Disability by People First Scotland and Midlothian People's Equality Group

***Spotlight - EMW 2020 event: Misconceptions about Learning Disability by People First (Scotland) and Midlothian People's Equality Group***



This session presented by People First (Scotland) and hosted by Midlothian People's Equality Group gave some valuable insights into the experience of living with a learning disability. People First (Scotland) members shared some of the common misconceptions that they are presented with by people they encounter. They spoke about each of these, which then promoted interesting discussion with audience members. Some of the misconceptions included:-

"You can't get a paid job"  
"You can't have children"  
"Let me do that for you"  
"Wouldn't you rather...?"  
"You don't deserve that "  
"Wash your hands"

"You can't get married or have a relationship"  
"Are you sure?"  
"You can't learn from your mistakes"  
"You don't understand about money"  
"Shouldn't you ask someone first?"



Discussion at the event highlighted that people who have a learning disability are at times not respected or treated in a way that values their dignity and human rights. There were examples shared that highlighted this behaviour by both professionals and members of the public. There was lots of learning at this event - thanks to all who shared their experiences and took part in discussion.

### **2020**

#### ***Midlothian Mela***

The Equal Midlothian Week events culminated with the annual multi-cultural celebration the Midlothian Mela 2020 at The Gorebridge Beacon - which was a great success and saw more than 200 people come through the doors to enjoy music, dancing, food, family activities, workshops and alternative therapies. The Midlothian Mela 2020 was a partnership event hosted by Midlothian People's Equality Group, Midlothian Council and Health in Mind with majority funding from The Robertson Trust.



Some feedback from attendees:-

“Everyone was positive and happy!”

“Variety of entertainment, tastes of food (very good!), friendly staff and a wheelchair friendly venue – fantastic afternoon”

“Spectacular, incredible”

“It is the best place I’ve been to!”

“I enjoyed dancing, henna and the lovely food”

“Most enjoyable experience with the therapist – really helpful. Children loved face paints and science experiments”

“Extremely happy with the event”

“Everyone was really friendly”

“I liked the different experience and culture for the kids”







### 5.3 2020-2021

#### *Midlothian Pride*

A working group with representation from Midlothian Council, Pink Saltire, MYPAS LGBT+, Health in Mind LGBT+ and Citizens Advice Bureau was established earlier in 2020 in order to ascertain the possibility of holding a Midlothian Pride in 2021. Regular meetings have been held and an online consultation survey was been created and publicised with 222 responses. The group has reviewed the consultation survey results and are currently inviting community members to join the group and take the event forward. Due to Covid-19 restrictions it is looking likely that this may not take place until 2022.

#### *Midlothian People's Equality Group (MPEG)*



Midlothian People's Equality Group are a group of local people with diverse backgrounds who aim to:

- Promote equality and challenge prejudice
- Build relationships across Midlothian's communities of interest where people feel valued and trusted
- Provide a platform for Midlothian people to learn, educate and communicate about local equality issues of concern and interest; and have a voice in local policy and planning.

Midlothian Council's Equality Engagement Officer supports the group on an ongoing basis: attending board meetings; giving guidance and support with practical tasks such as funding applications/ OSCR submissions/ volunteer development/ policy and procedures; and working in partnership with MPEG and other organisations to host events and projects.

- In the period 2020-21 the group have developed a new logo (see above) and are working on a new website and online social media.
- Through Midlothian Council's Communities and Lifelong Learning team volunteers were supported to access technology and online meetings as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.
- MPEG have started organising online events (e.g. Black History bibliotherapy session and a separate art session) and held their first online Annual General Meeting.
- As the group are unable to deliver the Talking Books project due to Covid-19 restrictions, they have planned to create some video/ online resources based on their popular Talking Books (formerly Human Library) Project which has previously been delivered within schools.
- They are also in the early stages of creating a Hate Crime survey to examine experiences and attitudes within Midlothian.
- MPEG were successful in their application for funding to host the Midlothian Mela Online 2021 which is the first year it will be held online.

### ***Equal Midlothian Week and Midlothian Mela Online 2021***

As noted above, Equal Midlothian Week (EMW) has become an exciting annual programme of events with a range of organisations coming together to offer a variety of events which promote and celebrate equality, raise awareness and reach out to all communities. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, 2021's programme needed to be entirely online which posed new challenges for the planning group however a fantastic programme was offered for both EMW and the Mela, including the following:

- Build a Bird's Nest (downloadable pdf) - Midlothian Ranger Service
- "Wanderlust: Does Travel Broaden the Mind?" - Braw Blether Online - Midlothian Council
- MYPAS LGBT+ Support – Online LGBT group for 12-21 year olds in East and Midlothian.
- Spring Scavenger Hunt (downloadable pdf) - Midlothian Ranger Service
- Bite-Sized Research - Edinburgh Napier University.
- Let's look at mental health and positive wellbeing! - People First (Scotland); Local Area Co-ordinators and MPEG
- Family Wildlife Quiz - Midlothian Ranger Service
- MYPAS LGBT+ Support – Online LGBT group for 12-21 year olds in East and Midlothian.
- Equal Access Midlothian - info session - Health in Mind
- LGBT+ Online Zoom group (Health in Mind) - Health in Mind
- Celebrating International Women's Day Event - Edinburgh Women's Interfaith Group
- Midlothian Mela 2021

### ***Midlothian Mela Online 2021 Programme***

- Bookbugs – Around the World
- Lingotot Mandarin Class
- Online Origami
- Well Happy workshop
- African dance workshop for children (approx 3-7 yrs old)
- West African Dance Class (older children and adults)

- Science Ceilidh

### Ongoing activities

- Contributing towards Covid-19 response: acting in an advisory role, highlighting current supports available and the evolving needs of equalities groups.
- Continue to facilitate Midlothian Council's Staff Equality Group
- Continue to network with minority groups in Midlothian and support community equalities groups where there is evidence of need.
- Continued support to schools to address equalities issues including supporting pupil LGBT/ Equalities groups and coordinating the Talking Books programme.
- Continued support towards the establishment of LGBT representative groups within Midlothian, LGBT events and encourage commitment to the LGBT Youth Charter Mark.
- Training for staff and partners to enable them to have better understanding of the barriers to accessing services and better engagement with equalities group.

### 6.0 Areas for development moving forward

6.1 In addition to ongoing projects/work noted above, the following areas of work will be developed further moving forward:

- Further consideration of the implications of the Fairer Scotland Duty and how the Council, Education Authority and Licensing Board can ensure that we meet the requirements of this new aspect of the Equality Act;
- The Council will ensure that all training offered reflects the socio economic duty. The Council will also work to ensure we focus on key policy areas and new legal requirements including the BSL Plan, and the Gaelic Language Plan;
- Continue to develop our approach to equality monitoring and data collection to ensure we meet the requirements of GDPR and also ensure that any information collected reflects the most up to date approach to monitoring and gives us the information we need to develop responsive services;
- Build relationships with individuals and organisations who can assist us by getting involved in progressing equality outcomes;

- Meet with managers and other stakeholders within the Council who can assist the Equality & Diversity Officer in mainstreaming progress and plans for the future;
- Progress preparation for the inclusion of race and disability in our equal pay policy and occupational segregation information;
- Evaluate and improve further our approach to the duties on Procurement;
- Ensure that the Equal Pay Statement and the Gender Pay Gap information covers all the requirements of the Act.

### **7.0 Employee Information Analysis for the year 2019/2020 (See Section 14 for Data tables for the period 31/03/2017 to 31/03/20)**

#### **7.1 Key Findings:**

- There continues to be reluctance from many employees to answer equality monitoring questions, and understanding and resolving the reason/(s) for this continues to be a priority action for the Council to address and an exercise to encourage updating of personal data held to allow an employee personal data audit has been initiated for 2021.
- The Council continues to consider the data and information it gathers in relation to its standing workforce, those leaving the organisation, and those it attracts to apply for positions within the organisation. A continued focus on identifying and analysing employee data and information will provide the Council with robust knowledge about its workforce, the reasons why individuals leave, and what attracts new applicants to want to work for the authority.
- Further development opportunities offered to managers to raise their awareness and understanding across all protected characteristics will support planned activities to attract a more diverse workforce from across all protected characteristics that will better reflect those within Midlothian's communities.
- In round terms the organisation attracts and recruits on a 70% female, 30% male approx. basis which is in sync with the standing workforce. The Council needs to consider looking into ways of attracting more males into the workforce particularly into traditionally seen female roles such as teaching. Further, the Council needs to consider looking to attract women into traditional male areas such as waste, transport, amenity, and STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) professions.

#### **7.2 Workforce Profile Analysis (for period 01/04/19 – 31/03/20)**

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## Age

During the year 2019/20 the age profile of the workforce was:

Age Band	Number	Percentage
16-24	447	8.23
25-39	1528	28.12
40-55	2097	38.59
56-59	531	9.77
60-64	420	7.73
65+	411	7.56
<b>Total</b>	<b>5434</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The greatest number of employee remains as during 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 within the age band 40 – 55. Otherwise numbers in each age bracket are very similar to 2018/19, the workforce has grown by 75 over the last 12 month period.

## Disability

During the year 2019/20 the disability profile of the workforce was:

Type of Disability	Number	Percentage
Did Not Answer	2559	47.09
No disability	2664	49.02
Prefer not to answer	155	2.85
Yes - Learning Disability	7	0.13
Yes - Longstanding Illness	15	0.28
Yes - Mental Health Condition	8	0.15
Yes - Other, such as disfigurement	7	0.13
Yes - Physical Impairment	10	0.18
Yes - Sensory Impairment	9	0.17
<b>Total</b>	<b>5434</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The number of employees who 'prefer not to answer' and 'did not answer' remains too high at just below 50% of all responses, an exercise to encourage employees to update their personal data has been initiated in 2021.

In relation to the previous year (2018/19) responses, percentages have reduced slightly where employees have disclosed that they have a disability and the type of their disability. On completion of the planned personal data audit, actions should be identified to understand why some employees are prepared to provide details, and to contrast this with reasons given from those employees who do not provide any information.

## Gender Re-assignment

Answer	Number	Percentage
Did not answer	4648	85.54
No	767	14.11
Prefer not to answer	18	0.33
Yes	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>5434</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

In answer to the question ‘have you ever identified as a Transgender person or Trans person?’ in 2015/2016 no positive responses were recorded. As the table above shows in 2019/2020 as well as last year, positive responses were recorded. This would indicate that those responding feel safe and happy to do so within the organisation, and it would be a very positive step forward if they would share with the Equality Officer why this is so. (It would also be important to ascertain if they had previously recorded a ‘yes’ to this question, as there were positive responses in 2014/15, and had not felt confident to do so in 2015/16).

Notwithstanding this, it is still very disappointing that only around 14.0% employees are prepared to answer this question, (either yes or no), which supports the need for further the personal data audit being undertaken in 2021.

## Marriage and Civil Partnership

In 2019/2020 the workforce profile in this category was as follows:

Status	Number	Percentage
Did Not Answer	784	14.43
Divorced/Separated	229	4.21
Living with partner	227	4.18
Married/Civil Partnership	2570	47.29
Prefer not to answer	302	5.56
Single	1268	22.33
Widowed	54	0.99
<b>Total</b>	<b>5434</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Whilst noting a slight reduction from the previous year in the number of staff who ‘did not’ or ‘prefer not to’ answer, as with other protected characteristics the Council needs to consider why 19.99%, one fifth of its workforce, are reluctant to provide details of their marriage, civil partnership or other status. This figure may alter as a result of the planned personal data audit undertaken in 2021.



## Pregnancy & Maternity workforce profile (period 01/04/19 – 31/03/20)

Age	Number	Percentage
16-24	*	*
25-39	153	88.95
40-55	14	8.14
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

Disability Type	Number	Percentage
Did Not Answer	76	44.19
No	93	54.07
Yes – Learning Disability	*	*
Yes – Longstanding Illness	*	*
Yes – Physical Impairment	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

Gender Re-assignment	Number	Percentage
Did Not Answer	149	86.63
No	23	13.37
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Marital Status	Number	Percentage
Did Not Answer	26	15.12
Divorced/Separated	3	1.74
Living with partner	11	6.40
Married/Civil Partnership	82	47.67
Prefer not to answer	5	2.91
Single	45	26.16
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Ethnic Origin	Number	Percentage
Asian Other (incl. Scottish/British)	*	*
Asian Pakistani (incl. Scottish/British)	*	*
Did Not Answer	74	43.02
Prefer not to answer	*	*
White Irish	*	*
White Other	*	*
White Other British	9	5.23



<b>Ethnic Origin</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
White Scottish	81	47.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
British	47	27.33
Did Not Answer	48	27.91
English	*	*
Northern Irish	*	*
Other, please specify	6	3.49
Scottish	67	38.95
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

<b>Religion or Belief</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Multi denomination Christian	*	*
Church of Scotland	*	*
Did Not Answer	152	88.37
None	12	6.98
Other Christian	*	*
Roman Catholic	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Female	172	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Did Not Answer	148	86.05
Heterosexual/Straight	23	13.37
Prefer not to answer	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

Caring Responsibilities	Number	Percentage
Did Not Answer	150	87.21
No	16	9.30
Yes - Under 18	6	3.49
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100.00</b>

From 2016/17 data across all protected characteristics is available for pregnancy and maternity. What this data shows is that within the specific characteristic of pregnancy and maternity there has been a reluctance to disclose disability, gender re-assignment, race, religion and faith, sexual orientation and caring responsibility.

The reason/(s) for this reluctance to disclose needs to be better understood if the Council is to be considered an employer of choice. Further consideration of this will be carried out following completion of the planned personal data audit undertaken in 2021.

As for previous years, for those employees who are pregnant or on maternity leave their roles are risk assessed to determine any potential negative health impacts and they are, in line with statute and best practice, given special leave to attend appointments associated with their pregnancy. During maternity leave they are again, in line with statute, offered the opportunity and actively encouraged to take part in 'keep in touch days'. Employees on maternity leave are also communicated with on a regular basis in terms of keeping them up to date with any changes.

There is much emphasis on the importance to foster good relations in order that when an employee returns to work after a period of maternity leave the transition back to work is one where the employee feels fully integrated as soon as possible. Many of those returning from maternity leave apply for and are granted more part time and/or flexible working opportunities.

On 20 March 2020 the council moved to critical service delivery in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The rapid response to this pandemic has resulted in a complete transformation of how the council works, including remote working and therefore further opportunities for flexible working.

## Standing workforce

### Race

<b>Ethnic Origin</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
African (inc Scottish/British)	*	*
African Other	6	0.11
Asian British	*	*
Asian Chinese (inc Scottish/British)	*	*
Asian Indian (inc Scottish/British)	*	*
Asian Other (inc Scottish/British)	6	0.11
Asian Pakistani (inc Scottish/British)	8	0.15
Black (inc Scottish/British)	9	0.17
Caribbean or Black (other)	*	*
Did Not Answer	2473	45.51
Ethnicity, if Other please specify	*	*
Mixed - any other mixed background	11	0.20
Prefer not to answer	50	0.92
White - Eastern European (e.g. Polish)	8	0.15
White Gypsy/Traveller	*	*
White Irish	36	0.66
White Other	98	1.80
White Other British	288	5.30
White Scottish	2424	44.61
<b>Total</b>	<b>5434</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

On completion of the planned personal data audit, actions should be identified to understand why a significant number of employees do not provide this information.

### Nationality

<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
British	1498	27.57
Did Not Answer	2002	36.84
English	24	0.44
Northern Irish	18	0.33
Other, please specify	131	2.41
Prefer not to answer	36	0.66
Scottish	1723	31.71
Welsh	*	*
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>5434</b>	<b>100.00</b>

There has been a 1.53% reduction from the previous year in the number of employees who did not provide details of their nationality. This is a positive sign but further work must be undertaken to reduce this further.

## Religion or Belief

Religion or Belief	Number	Percentage
Buddhist	9	0.17
Church of Scotland	309	5.69
Did Not Answer	4386	80.71
Hindu	*	*
Muslim	*	*
None	462	8.50
Other Christian	54	0.99
Other Religion or Belief	7	0.13
Prefer not to answer	96	1.77
Roman Catholic	104	1.91
Other	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>5434</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

With over 80% of the workforce not being prepared to state their religion or belief there is again a great need to investigate the reason following completion of the planned personal data audit.

## Sex

Sex	Number	Percentage
Female	3922	72.18
Male	1512	27.82
<b>Total</b>	<b>5434</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The sex mix of the Council's workforce remains very much in line with the make-up previously reported in 2018/19 (female 71.84% and male 28.16%).

## Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation	Number	Percentage
Bisexual	*	*
Did Not Answer	4403	81.03
Gay	8	0.15
Heterosexual/Straight	835	15.37
Lesbian	*	*

<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Prefer not to answer	182	3.35
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>5434</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

With over 80% of the workforce choosing not to respond regarding their sexual orientation, this is a further area to investigate as part of the wider reluctance of staff to disclose information following completion of the personal data audit undertaken in 2021.

## Caring Responsibilities

In previous years and this employees were asked 'do you have caring responsibilities'. The table below shows data received in relation to this question.

<b>Do you have caring responsibilities?</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Did Not Answer	4616	84.95
No	451	8.30
Prefer not to answer	10	0.18
Yes - Over 18	85	1.56
Yes - Under 18	249	4.58
Yes - Under and Over 18	23	0.42
<b>Total</b>	<b>5434</b>	<b>100.00</b>

As with previous characteristics investigation needs to take place as to why over four fifths of the workforce does not wish to divulge if they have caring responsibilities.

## Disciplinary Cases

As the number of disciplinary actions taken on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

## Resolution Cases

As the number of resolution actions taken on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

## 7.3 Leavers Profile Analysis

Data/information for leavers has been collected and analysed since 2016/17.

For the period 01/04 2019 – 31/03/2020 the figures/percentages are as follows:

## Age Profile

Age Band	Number	Percentage
16-24	50	8.87
25-39	167	29.61
40-55	171	30.32
56-59	58	10.28
60-64	53	9.40
65+	65	11.52
<b>Total</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>100.00</b>

In 2019/20 as in the previous two years, around one third of leavers from the Council were in the age bracket 25 – 39.

## Disability

Type of Disability	Number	Percentage
Did Not Answer	248	43.97
No	292	51.77
Prefer not to answer	15	2.66
Yes - Longstanding Illness	*	*
Yes – Other, such as disfigurement	*	*
Yes - Physical Impairment	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

With under two percent of leavers declaring information on disability when leaving, the Council needs to understand why there is such a reluctance to acknowledge disability by the leaving workforce.

## Gender Re-assignment

Response	Number	Percentage
Did Not Answer	491	87.06
No	70	12.41
Prefer not to answer	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

As noted with other characteristics, investigation needs to take place as to why approximately 88% of the leaving workforce do not wish to answer a question regarding gender re-assignment.

## Marriage & Civil Partnership

Marital Status	Number	Percentage
Did Not Answer	92	16.31
Divorced/Separated	23	4.08
Living with partner	19	3.37
Married/Civil Partnership	256	45.39
Prefer not to answer	20	3.55
Single	149	26.42
Widowed	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Again, as with other characteristics, investigation needs to take place as to why one fifth of the leaving workforce do not wish to divulge their marital status.

## Race

Ethnic Origin	Number	Percentage
Asian Other	*	*
Black (incl. Scottish/British)	*	*
Did Not Answer	241	42.73
Mixed - any other mixed background	*	*
Prefer not to answer	*	*
White - Eastern European (e.g. Polish)	*	*
White Irish	*	*
White Other	13	2.30
White Other British	41	7.27
White Scottish	255	45.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

As in previous years well over 50% of workforce leavers answered a question about ethnic origin. This is positive and needs to be built on in future years.

## Nationality

Nationality	Number	Percentage
British	196	34.75
Did Not Answer	195	34.57

Nationality	Number	Percentage
English	*	*
Northern Irish	*	*
Other, please specify	17	3.01
Prefer not to answer	*	*
Scottish	149	26.42
<b>Total</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

The Council needs to understand why over a third of leavers either did not answer or preferred not to answer the nationality question.

## Religion, Faith or Belief

Religion or Belief	Number	Percentage
Church of Scotland	27	4.79
Did Not Answer	486	86.17
None	28	4.96
Other Christian	6	1.06
Other Religion or Belief	*	*
Prefer not to answer	*	*
Roman Catholic	12	2.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

Since last year there has been a 3.0% drop in the percentage of leavers who either did not answer or preferred not to answer the religion, faith or belief question.

## Gender

Sex (Gender)	Number	Percentage
Female	383	67.91
Male	181	32.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The leavers profile corresponds to the staying working profile at around a 70/30 female/male split.

## Sexual Orientation



Sexual Orientation	Number	Percentage
Bisexual	*	*
Did Not Answer	484	85.82
Gay	*	*
Heterosexual/Straight	65	11.52
Prefer not to answer	12	2.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

With just under 88% of leavers not answering the sexual orientation question, the Council needs to investigate any potential negative undercurrents that may be causing a reluctance to disclose.

#### Caring Responsibilities

Do you have caring responsibilities?	Number	Percentage
Did Not Answer	490	86.88
No	55	9.75
Prefer not to answer	*	*
Yes - Over 18	*	*
Yes - Under 18	9	1.60
Yes - Under and Over 18	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

With just under 88% of leavers not answering the caring responsibilities question, the Council needs to investigate why this is the case.

## 7.4 Recruitment Profile Analysis:

### Age Profile

Age Band	Number	Percentage
16-24	1432	16.24
25-39	4141	46.97
40-55	2438	27.65
56-59	330	3.74
60-64	197	2.23
65+	21	0.24
Did Not Answer	258	2.93

Age Band	Number	Percentage
<b>Total</b>	<b>8817</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Successful Candidates	Number	Percentage
16-24	68	11.13
25-39	248	40.59
40-55	216	35.35
56-59	35	5.73
60-64	18	2.95
65+	*	*
Did Not Answer	22	3.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

It is interesting to note that there are small percentages of both applicants and successful candidates who did not answer the age question.

#### Disability

Job Applicants	Number	Percentage
1. Learning disability	168	1.91
2. Longstanding illness	67	0.76
3. Mental health condition	79	0.90
4. Physical impairment	31	0.35
5. Sensory impairment - Visual	8	0.09
6. Other, such as disfigurement	*	*
6. Sensory impairment - Hearing	30	0.34
Did Not Answer	8414	95.43
Prefer not to answer	18	0.20
<b>Total</b>	<b>8817</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Successful Candidates	Number	Percentage
1. Learning disability	18	2.95
2. Longstanding illness	*	*
3. Mental health condition	*	*
6. Sensory impairment - Hearing	*	*
Did Not Answer	586	95.91
<b>Total</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

In both applicants and successful candidates the number not answering the disability question remains far too high. Investigations as to why this is needs to be undertaken following completion of the personal data audit undertaken in 2021.

## Gender Re-assignment

<b>Job Applicants</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Did Not Answer	199	2.26
No	8550	96.97
Prefer not to answer	51	0.58
Yes	17	0.19
<b>Total</b>	<b>8817</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<b>Successful Candidates</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Did Not Answer	14	2.29
No	594	97.22
Prefer not to answer	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

## Marriage & Civil Partnership

<b>Job Applicants</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Did Not Answer	209	2.37
Divorced	320	3.63
Living with partner	1442	16.35
Married/Civil Partnership	2885	32.72
Prefer not to answer	87	0.99
Separated	258	2.93
Single	3574	40.54
Widowed	42	0.48
<b>Total</b>	<b>8817</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<b>Successful Candidates</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Did not answer	16	2.62
Divorced	20	3.27
Living with partner	101	16.53
Married/Civil Partnership	270	44.19
Prefer not to answer	7	1.15
Separated	14	2.29
Single	180	29.46
Widowed	*	*

Successful Candidates	Number	Percentage
<b>Total</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Neither applicants nor successful candidates appear to have issues with reporting marriage and civil partnership status whereas around one fifth of the standing and leaving workforce do. The organisation would benefit from understanding why.

#### Pregnancy and Maternity

Data/information not available at the time of reporting

#### Race

Job Applicants	Number	Percentage
African - (Inc. Scottish/British)	23	0.26
African - Other	48	0.54
Any Mixed or Multiple	73	0.83
Asian - Bangladeshi (Inc. Scottish/British)	20	0.23
Asian - Chinese (Inc. Scottish/British)	17	0.19
Asian - Indian (Inc. Scottish/British)	67	0.76
Asian - Other (Inc. Scottish/British)	20	0.23
Asian - Pakistani (Inc. Scottish/British)	83	0.94
Black - (Inc. Scottish/British)	11	0.12
Caribbean - (Inc. Scottish/British)	*	*
Caribbean or Black (Other)	*	*
Did Not Answer	258	2.93
Other - Arab (Inc. Scottish/British)	7	0.08
Prefer not to answer	73	0.83
White - Eastern European (e.g. Polish)	78	0.88
White - Irish	75	0.85
White - Other British	757	8.59
White - Other white ethnic group	382	4.33
White - Polish	138	1.57
White - Scottish	6683	75.80
<b>Total</b>	<b>8817</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

Successful Candidates	Number	Percentage
African - (Inc.Scottish/British)	*	*
Any Mixed or Multiple	*	*
Asian - Chinese (Inc.Scottish/British)	*	*

Successful Candidates	Number	Percentage
Asian - Indian (Inc.Scottish/British)	*	*
Asian - Pakistani (Inc.Scottish/British)	*	*
Did Not Answer	16	2.62
Prefer not to answer	6	0.98
White - Eastern European (eg Polish)	6	0.98
White - Irish	*	*
White - Other British	62	10.15
White - Other white ethnic group	15	2.45
White - Polish	7	1.15
White - Scottish	483	79.05
<b>Total</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

Disclosure rates for applicants and successful candidates are on the whole better than for the standing and leaving workforce. The organisation would benefit from understanding why.

## Nationality

Job Applicants	Number	Percentage
British	1432	16.24
Did Not Answer	984	11.16
English	214	2.43
Northern Irish	57	0.65
Prefer not to answer	74	0.84
Scottish	6041	68.52
Welsh	15	0.17
<b>Total</b>	<b>8817</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Successful Candidate	Number	Percentage
British	112	18.33
Did Not Answer	45	7.36
English	12	1.96
Northern Irish	7	1.15
Prefer not to answer	8	1.31
Scottish	425	69.56
Welsh	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

Again as for some previous categories of applicants and successful candidates disclosure rates are greater here than for the standing and leaving workforce. The organisation would benefit from understanding why.

## Religion, Faith or Belief

<b>Job Applicants</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Buddhist	14	0.16
Church of Scotland	1007	11.42
Did Not Answer	383	4.34
Hindu	32	0.36
Humanist	94	1.07
Jewish	6	0.07
Muslim	136	1.54
None	5383	61.05
Other Christian	582	6.60
Other Religion or Belief	52	0.59
Pagan	9	0.10
Prefer not to answer	404	4.58
Roman Catholic	697	7.91
Sikh	18	0.20
<b>Total</b>	<b>8817</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<b>Successful Candidates</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Buddhist	*	*
Church of Scotland	94	15.38
Did Not Answer	22	3.60
Hindu	*	*
Humanist	6	0.98
Muslim	*	*
None	357	58.43
Other Christian	33	5.40
Other Religion or Belief	*	*
Pagan	*	*
Prefer not to answer	39	6.38
Roman Catholic	48	7.86
Sikh	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\*Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

Again as for previous categories of applicants and successful candidates disclosure rates are greater here than for the standing and leaving workforce. The organisation would benefit from understanding why.

## Sex

<b>Job Applicants</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Did Not Answer	188	2.13
Female	6199	70.31
Male	2407	27.30
Prefer not to answer	23	0.26
<b>Total</b>	<b>8817</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<b>Successful Candidates</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Did Not Answer	14	2.29
Female	460	75.29
Male	134	21.93
Prefer not to answer	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

Traditionally and in round terms the organisation attracts and recruits on a 70% female, 30% male basis which is in sync with the standing workforce. This year in round terms the organisation has attracted even more females, (around 75%). It would be considered good practice to look into ways of attracting more males into the workforce particularly into traditionally seen female roles such as teaching.

## Sexual Orientation

<b>Job Applicants</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Bisexual	119	1.35
Did Not Answer	269	3.05
Gay	108	1.22
Heterosexual/Straight	7910	89.71
Lesbian	64	0.73
Other	28	0.32
Prefer not to answer	319	3.62
<b>Total</b>	<b>8817</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<b>Successful Candidates</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Bisexual	*	*

Successful Candidates	Number	Percentage
Did Not Answer	14	2.29
Gay	*	*
Heterosexual/Straight	556	91.00
Lesbian	*	*
Other	*	*
Prefer not to answer	28	4.58
<b>Total</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* Where the number reported is five or less we are required to respect anonymity and the number is therefore withheld.

#### Caring Responsibilities

Do you have caring responsibilities?	Number	Percentage
Did Not Answer	220	2.50
No	4859	55.11
Prefer not to answer	57	0.65
Yes (Children under 18)	3544	40.20
Yes, other	137	1.55
<b>Total</b>	<b>8817</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Successful Candidates	Number	Percentage
Did Not Answer	14	2.29
No	314	51.39
Prefer not to answer	7	1.15
Yes (Children under 18)	268	43.86
Yes, other	8	1.31
<b>Total</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Although the percentage not answering or preferring not to answer is very small in comparison to the standing or leaving workforce, the organisation still needs to understand why there is any reluctance to answer this question.

## 7.5 Training Profile Analysis

The Council continues to use different approaches to training such as one-to-one, group coaching sessions and leadership management courses for identified learning needs. This move away from a one size fits all classroom training approach continues to facilitate inclusion for all employees irrespective of protected characteristic.



### 7.6 Conclusion

The Council remains fully committed to the ethos of the Equality Act 2010 and is determined to provide employees with a workplace of choice that is fit-plus for the 21st century.

Gathering data and information for this analysis has continued to highlight a number of areas for the Council to focus on in the years ahead. The main points of note are:

- The age profile of the Council (largest age band 40 – 55 standing workforce) continues to represent challenges to workforce planning within the organisation.
- Work needs to be done to ensure that the Council is a positive workplace for lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender (LGBT) employees and new recruits. Continuing and promoting our work with Stonewall Scotland is an important element in this work.
- Engagement with employees in relation to equal opportunities is an important means of giving the Council a more qualitative insight into the issues concerning employees, and allows the Council to take these on board when reviewing and developing new policies. The Council needs to encourage employees to feel confident about declaring their disability, sexual orientation or information about other protected characteristics.
- The Council needs to further develop its reputation as a modern, inclusive and welcoming workplace both for existing employees and for new recruits.
- The Council needs to continue to develop the data and information it gathers on existing employees, leavers, and potential new recruits in order to be a modern employer of choice.

### 7.7 Employee Data 2020/2021

Data for the period up to 31 March 2021 was not available at the time of producing this report. As in previous years, an annual update of employee data (up to 31 March 2021) will be published later in 2021.

## 8.0 Gender Pay Gap

- 8.1 The gender pay gap between average hourly rates of pay for male and female - all Council employees as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 was 2.7%.

	31/03/19	31/03/20	31/03/21
<b>Gender Pay Gap</b>	3.94%	3.06%	2.7%

### 9.0 Equal Pay Statement

#### 9.1 Equal Pay Statement

Midlothian Council believes in equal opportunities in employment and is committed to the fundamental principle that procedures to determine the pay and conditions of employment of all our employees do not discriminate unlawfully and aims to eliminate any sex bias or any form of discrimination. The Council recognises that in order to achieve equitable pay it should operate a pay system which is transparent and based on objective criteria.

The Council believes that pay is one of the key factors affecting motivation and relationships at work and therefore considers it important to develop pay arrangements that reward employees fairly. The Council will work with Trade Unions to develop fair and non-discriminatory pay and progression systems which are understood and accepted by employees and by the managers who operate the system. All aspects of the pay package will be reviewed and monitored regularly to ensure it delivers equal pay. Any pay inequalities which cannot be justified will as far as is possible be eliminated.

The Council will aim to:

- Continue to use objective, justifiable and proportionate job-related information and an analytical job evaluation scheme to determine the salaries of jobs and the Council's salary structures.
- Monitor existing and future pay practices and the impact or potential impact on men and women.
- Assess and review the findings of monitoring activities and take action where necessary.
- Provide development and guidance for managers and others directly involved in decisions about pay and benefits.
- Continue to work with the recognised Trade Unions on equal pay and equalities in employment.
- Inform employees of how our pay practices work and how their own pay is determined.
- Respond promptly and investigate where necessary grievances on equal pay.

### 10.0 Progress on Equality Outcomes set in the Midlothian Equality Plan 2017- 2021

- 10.1 In the Council's Equality Plan 2017 – 2021 it was noted that: *'An equal society protects and promotes equal, real freedom and substantive opportunity to live in the ways people value and would choose so that everyone can flourish. An equal society recognises people's different needs, situations and goals and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and be.'* UK Equalities Review 2007. During the period

2017-2021 Midlothian Council has been working to achieve this fairness of opportunity and existence through the Equality Plan.

- 10.2 The Council has been doing this throughout the timeframe of the current equality plan and notes progress over the period of the plans as shown in 10.3.

### 10.3 Progress on Equality Outcomes Table

Working Equality Outcomes	Sub Outcomes	Progress 2017-21
1. <b>Midlothian Council is a positive workplace for all employees</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Midlothian Council is a workplace free of discrimination, harassment and victimisation</li> <li>2. Midlothian Council will continue to work to eliminate any pay gap between employees on the grounds of disability, gender or race</li> <li>3. Midlothian Council will have a range of flexible working policies in line with business need</li> <li>4. Midlothian Council will have a range of opportunities for employees to develop successful career paths</li> <li>5. Midlothian Council will develop opportunities for young people</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduction of a suite of policies specifically designed to free the workplace of discrimination, harassment, and victimisation. To date the Council has introduced a Gender-based Violence Policy, a Sexual Harassment Policy, Safe Leave provision and a Transgender Equality Policy.</li> <li>2. In addition to the introduction of various policies the Council also has an Employee Assistance Programme and various support options and supports a number of campaigns/initiatives such as Two Ticks, Equally Safe, White Ribbon, See Me</li> <li>3. The Council continues to be a member of Stonewall Scotland's Diversity Champion Programme.</li> <li>4. The Council already reports gender pay gap, and work continues to be in a position to report on pay gap between employees on the grounds of disability or race.</li> <li>5. The Council has fully integrated the Living Wage into its terms and conditions, which have been redesigned. This is to ensure that as many employees benefit from the Living Wage as possible.</li> <li>6. Establishment of an employee's Equality Working Group.</li> <li>7. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic the Council has reviewed its range of flexible working policies in line with business need and is developing a Remote Working Policy to support a more flexible workforce.</li> </ol>

Working Equality Outcomes	Sub Outcomes	Progress 2017-21
		<p>8. The Council's existing Training &amp; Development policy and Learning Development &amp; Training Scheme will be subject to review following changes to working practices introduced following the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>9. Equality and diversity training is provided online and via trainer led sessions.</p> <p>10. The opportunity to re-train is embedded in the Council's Organisational Change Policy.</p> <p>11. A personal data audit is underway to encourage staff to update their personal data.</p> <p>12. The Council has continued developing opportunities for young people particularly through the Community Planning Partnership and the priority to: 'Increase the numbers of care experienced young people accessing education, employment and training'. Evidence of a focus on this priority include the various work experience and apprenticeship opportunities and the support of the Council and its partners in the 'Kickstart' scheme.</p> <p>13. Champions Board introduced for looked after children.</p>
<p>2. <b>All of Midlothian's young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens</b></p>	<p>1. Close the gap in literacy rates between boys and girls in primary school and SIMD areas</p> <p>2. Reduced incidence of identity based bullying in youth settings e.g. homophobia</p> <p>3. All children are ready to start primary school</p>	<p>1. A number of actions taken over the period include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring the proportion of children achieving expected levels by Primary 1 and 4;</li> <li>Ensuring pupils are secure at First level by end P4 in reading, writing, listening and talking, maths and numeracy;</li> <li>Identifying the current gaps in educational attainment at individual school level and</li> </ul>

Working Equality Outcomes	Sub Outcomes	Progress 2017-21
		<p>implementing a range of targeted strategies to close the gap</p> <p>Annual Education Reports to Council with a focus on attainment and achievement provide in areas such as behaviour, antibullying and diversity, including tackling prejudice and stigma around mental health are in place.</p> <p>2. Developed capacity and support structures for the Early Learning and Childcare expansion to 1140 hours with an unrelenting focus on ensuring high quality provision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opening the integrated Family Learning Centres in Gorebridge and Mayfield;</li> <li>• Established a family learning approach to early years services that promotes a positive attitude to lifelong learning, encourages socio-economic resilience and challenges educational disadvantages</li> <li>• Improved the attendance patterns of children in Early Learning and Childcare settings and take up of entitled 2s;</li> <li>• Improved reach of families accessing parenting programmes from priority areas;</li> <li>• Ensured that children in their early years receive appropriate services/timely interventions through wellbeing meetings and Team around the Child Process</li> </ul> <p>3. Education planning and reporting continue to be informed by the following outcomes:</p>

## Midlothian Council Equality Mainstreaming & Outcomes Progress Report 2019 – 2021

Working Equality Outcomes	Sub Outcomes	Progress 2017-21
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing new ways of working to improve and promote positive mental wellbeing with children and young people across Midlothian</li> <li>Establishing a baseline of level of engagement with children and young people in planning for their needs</li> <li>Closing the attainment gap affecting children and young people facing additional barriers to learning</li> <li>Delivering national improvement actions set by the Scottish government</li> <li>Closing the attainment gap for children and young people affected by additional barriers to learning</li> </ul>
<b>3. In Midlothian we live healthier, more active and independent lives</b>	<p>This outcome and associated deliverables, as noted in the Midlothian Equality Plan 2017-2021 fall within the remit of the Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership.</p> <p>The Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership brings together parts of Midlothian Council and NHS Lothian and is governed by the Integrated Joint Board (IJB). The vision of the partnership is that everyone in Midlothian will have the right advice, care and support; in the right place; at the right time to lead long and healthy lives.</p> <p>The Partnership's long term Strategic Plan and plans for specific groups are available via the following link:</p>	<p><b><i>Deliverables noted in the HSCP 2019/20 Annual Report include:</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Focus on making sure people are only in hospital when they need to be through the "Discharge to Assess" Team and the "Hospital at Home" Service.</li> <li>2. Improved services for people with mental health needs, substance misuse and offending behaviour in new Number11 in Dalkeith.</li> <li>3. Staff trained to have a 'Good Conversation' and help people identify their health outcomes, based on their strengths and assets.</li> <li>4. Good local care services (83% rated good or above by the Care Inspectorate).</li> </ol>

## Midlothian Council Equality Mainstreaming & Outcomes Progress Report 2019 – 2021

Working Equality Outcomes	Sub Outcomes	Progress 2017-21
	<p><a href="https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/1347/health_and_social_care/200/health_and_social_care_integration">https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/1347/health_and_social_care/200/health_and_social_care_integration</a></p> <p>The Midlothian Health and Social Care Delivery Plan 2018-19 and 2019-20 sets out how the Partnership provided services during these periods. Details of the delivery plan and progress against the identified outcomes is available on the Health and Social Care Integration website accessed via the link above.</p> <p>The link provided also allows access to a range of plans including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Plan 2019-2022</li> <li>• Workforce Plan 2017-2022</li> <li>• Finance Strategy 2019-2022</li> </ul> <p>As well as plans for specific groups such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning disability modernisation and redesign programme 2018</li> <li>• Two trumpets (autism strategy) 2016-2019</li> <li>• Physical disability action plan 2016-2019</li> <li>• Sensory impairment action plan 2014-17</li> <li>• Joint strategy for older people 2016-2019</li> <li>• Carer's strategy and action plan 2017-2019</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ageing Well celebrated its 20th birthday.</li> <li>Diabetes prevention - worked in partnership with Midlothian's Muslim Community Centre to set up a weekly walking group, a fitness class and a programme of with speakers which included a pharmacist, a community nurse and a dietitian.</li> <li>Frailty – The winter frailty team works with 3 GP Practices to support people with frailty.</li> <li>Housing Solutions – Frontline staff trained to help support people to live in suitable, accessible housing.</li> <li>Learning Disabilities - The Learning Disability Strategy group continued to work with Housing Department on a programme of housing developments designed with the needs of people with a Learning Disability in mind.</li> <li>A range of people now working from local GP practices including Physiotherapists, Pharmacists, Primary Care Mental Health Nurses and Wellbeing workers. This is making it easier to see the right person, at the right time, in the right place by working in multi disciplinary teams in GP surgeries.</li> <li>Hearing Aid Clinics – We ran 23 clinics to offer people advice and practical help. The clinics are co-ordinated in partnership with volunteers, Deaf Action and Audiology.</li> <li>We supported people with severe and enduring mental health conditions who want to work but experience significant barriers to accessing mainstream employment.</li> </ol>



Working Equality Outcomes	Sub Outcomes	Progress 2017-21
		<p>13. A team of nurses, social workers and occupational therapists have been supporting staff in care homes to improve support for people with dementia.</p> <p>14. Introduced a weekly, free women's only drop in supper event in partnership with Social Bite, Children 1st. It is for women who are facing challenges in their lives. Women are part of a safe space and can access free food, support and advice, clothing and toiletries.</p> <p>15. Alzheimer Scotland's Dementia Advisor held a specialist surgery at VOCAL to provide practical and emotional support for 18 carers of someone living with dementia.</p> <p>16. The Hospital at Home Team provide acute care to up to 15 patients in a virtual ward – with the average length of stay of 6 days. Patients have a range of conditions e.g. infections, musculoskeletal problems, limited functional abilities and delirium and/or dementia.</p> <p>17. We have expanded the Community Respiratory Team, working with more patients with COPD to try and prevent admissions to hospital or facilitate quicker discharge.</p> <p>18. Training in Trauma - 21 people can now deliver training to reception staff, teachers and health visitors to give them a better understanding of the needs of children and adults who have been affected by traumatic experiences.</p> <p>19. Our Homecare service continues to improve the quality of care provided to vulnerable individuals in their own home.</p>

## Midlothian Council Equality Mainstreaming & Outcomes Progress Report 2019 – 2021

Working Equality Outcomes	Sub Outcomes	Progress 2017-21
		20. Using Scottish Government funding, we worked with Midlothian Council, families and schools to deliver activities in the summer holidays to improve the health and wellbeing of families. Activities included resilience workshops for kids, healthy eating sessions, sport activities and informational sessions by Community Health Inequality nurses and Health in Mind.
<b>4. Everyone in Midlothian has access to quality sustainable housing</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In Midlothian people with particular needs are able to get and sustain their choice of housing including independent living</li> <li>2. In Midlothian there will be increased housing supply and improved access to housing including affordable housing</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed affordable housing to meet specialist needs</li> <li>• In partnership between the Council, Registered Social Landlords and private developers, delivered new affordable homes; Investigated accelerated development of affordable housing via use of innovative approaches and consequent economic benefit</li> <li>• Sites have been identified for the development of additional specialist housing consisting of extra care housing, bariatric provision, amenity housing, and wheelchair housing in locations across Midlothian.</li> <li>• Detailed plans are available on the Housing Strategy and Performance page of the Council website via the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Housing Strategy 2021-2026</li> <li>• Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2021/22 – 2025/26</li> <li>• Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2020/21 – 2023/24</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>5. Fewer people are the victim of crime, disorder and abuse in Midlothian</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improved levels of safety for women and children experiencing domestic abuse</li> <li>2. Reduced incidence of hate crime</li> <li>3. Increased confidence in reporting hate crime</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Raised awareness of Violence Against Women and Girls with services and communities and strengthened support for survivors in the “Safe and Together” model.</li> </ol>

Working Equality Outcomes	Sub Outcomes	Progress 2017-21
	<p>4. Midlothian Licensing Board will work with license holders and other Council services to support positive behaviour on and around license premises</p>	<p>2. Worked in partnership to decrease the number of victims of antisocial behaviour and hate crime in Midlothian.</p> <p>3. Worked with residents to build their resilience and help them resolve their own problems.</p> <p>4. Midlothian Licensing Board continues to work with licence holders and other Council services to support positive behaviour on and around licence premises.</p> <p>5. The Licensing Board continues to work with a range of partners and stakeholders to ensure that ‘fewer people are the victim of crime, disorder and abuse in Midlothian’. The Board continues to work with license holders and other council services to support positive behaviour on an around license premises and ensures that all reports to the Board, with implications for equality strands, are supported by an IIA.</p>
<p><b>6. Midlothian has strong, vibrant communities where residents have a sense of belonging</b></p>	<p>1. Midlothian equalities communities can meet to celebrate or raise awareness of cultural heritage or specific issues affecting them</p> <p>2. Midlothian Communities are well informed and can influence decisions that matter in their local areas</p>	<p>1. Midlothian People’s Equality Group (MPEG) are a friendly group of local people with diverse backgrounds who aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote equality and challenge prejudice;</li> <li>• Build relationships across Midlothian’s communities of interest where people feel valued and trusted;</li> <li>• Provide a platform for Midlothian people to learn, educate and communicate about local equality issues of concern and interest; and</li> <li>• Have a voice in local policy and planning.</li> <li>• MPEG are supported in the work they do by the Council’s Equality Engagement Officer.</li> </ul>

Working Equality Outcomes	Sub Outcomes	Progress 2017-21
		<p><b>Actions to date/being undertaken include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updating Neighbourhood Plans in all 16 Community Council areas;</li> <li>• Providing support to Third Sector and community groups to increase their capacity;</li> <li>• Undertake the Citizens Panel survey as a way of informing service development and delivery;</li> <li>• Testing new approaches to funding that enable more community involvement in budgeting decisions;</li> <li>• Managing clear processes for community groups to improve access the Community Planning Partnership decision making as part of the Community Empowerment Act, Including Participation Requests;</li> <li>• Managing a clear process for Asset Transfers;</li> <li>• Provide bespoke and online training via a new Learn Pro module on the Community Empowerment Act;</li> <li>• Supporting Community Organisations with applications to the Armed Force Covenant Fund;</li> <li>• Developing and providing a new online training module via Learn Pro to raise awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Fewer people experience poverty in Midlothian</b></p>	<p>1. People will be supported out of poverty and welfare dependency</p>	<p>1. <b>Actions to date/ongoing include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing high quality and localised welfare advice and support, targeted at the areas with the highest levels of poverty;</li> </ul>

## Midlothian Council Equality Mainstreaming & Outcomes Progress Report 2019 – 2021

Working Equality Outcomes	Sub Outcomes	Progress 2017-21
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing barriers to learning by poverty proofing the school day with the Child Poverty Action Group in 11 primary schools in the priority areas;</li> <li>• Extending this offer to all primary schools;</li> <li>• Research in-school child poverty measures and interventions;</li> <li>• Delivering the actions in the child poverty plan;</li> <li>• Providing short-term support to people experiencing significant hardship. This includes practical interventions including access to food banks; travel vouchers and trial energy vouchers for households experiencing fuel poverty;</li> <li>• Providing training to front line workers on the Welfare Reform Act so they can provide high quality support to people experiencing poverty;</li> <li>• Increasing the interventions and support to unemployed adults;</li> <li>• Increasing the interventions and support to workless households;</li> <li>• ESF Midlothian Pipeline Project will engage and support clients through its operation to remove the barriers they face to employment and vocational training;</li> <li>• Increasing the number of people receiving support from the Life Long Education job club</li> </ul>

Working Equality Outcomes	Sub Outcomes	Progress 2017-21
<p><b>8. Midlothian Council services will meet the needs of all those in the community</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Equality is taken into account when planning and designing services and when making decisions</li> <li>2. Midlothian Council has increased knowledge and capacity about equality, diversity and poverty</li> <li>3. Midlothian Council Procurement Practices ensure equality is a core part of the tendering process</li> <li>4. Midlothian Council is meeting its responsibilities and duties under the Equality Act 2010 and subsequent Regulations</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs) are required on any 'policy', (the term policy being used in its fullest sense), that affects people. Accordingly, when a report goes before Elected Members for decision an IIA accompanies it, the IIA having been quality-assured by the Equality and Diversity Officer.</li> <li>2. The Midlothian Community Planning Partnership's Single Midlothian Plan focuses on outcomes and actions to address equality, diversity and poverty in Midlothian. This and preceding Plans are developed annually in consultation with Midlothian communities. This process allows the Partnership to increase its data and information regarding all of Midlothian's communities.</li> <li>3. The Council's Procurement Strategy has a section on Equality &amp; Diversity and states that, 'The Council will produce updated guidance on ensuring equality in procurement will work in parallel with the Councils Equality Impact Assessment process'. That Equality Impact Assessment process is now known as the Integrated Impact Assessment process detailed under item 1 above.</li> <li>4. The Council continues to meet its responsibilities and duties under the Equality Act 2010 and subsequent Regulations in terms of legislation, impact assessment, training and development, and initiatives within its communities and employees. The Council is also aware of its Human Rights responsibilities and duties and is working to embed those into all its plans and provides.</li> </ol>



### 11.0 Next Steps

11.1 New Equality Outcomes 2021 – 2025 will be published by 30 April 2021.

11.2 The outcomes will be supported by a new Equality Plan, which will continue and develop further the commitment the Council has to equality, diversity and human rights with the aim of further:

- Embedding a culture where respect, choice and understanding is fostered and diversity positively valued;
- Creating an environment where unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying is not tolerated;
- Understanding and addressing the needs of different groups; and
- Embedding the equality agenda in all that we provide and do to ensure that all people, irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or socio economic status have the same opportunity to live and flourish within our communities

### 12.0 Contact Details

12.1 Should you wish to get in touch regarding this report, please do so by post to:

Lesley Crozier  
Equality, Diversity & Human Rights Officer  
Policy & Scrutiny Team  
Midlothian Council  
Midlothian House  
Buccleuch Street  
DALKEITH  
EH22 1DN

Email to: [Lesley.crozier@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:Lesley.crozier@midlothian.gov.uk) or [equalities@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@midlothian.gov.uk)  
Telephone to: 0131 271 3658

### 13.0 Alternative Formats

13.1 This document can be made available in different formats and in different languages. If you would like a copy in another language or format, please email [equalities@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@midlothian.gov.uk) or phone 0131 271 3658.



#### 14.0 Appendix A: Employee Data Tables 31/03/17 – 31/03/20

GENDER	@31/03/17	@31/03/18	@31/03/19	@31/03/20
Female %	71.78	70.53	71.84	72.18
Male %	28.22	29.47	28.16	27.82
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

AGE BANDS	@31/03/17	@31/03/18	@31/03/19	@31/03/20
16-24 %	9.22	9.44	8.21	8.23
25-39 %	27.86	27.16	27.39	28.12
40-55 %	40.36	40.07	39.84	38.59
56-59 %	9.07	8.97	9.40	9.77
60-64 %	6.75	7.53	7.97	7.73
65+ %	6.73	6.83	7.18	7.56
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

SEXUAL ORIENTATION	@31/03/17	@31/03/18	@31/03/19	@31/03/20
Bisexual %	0.07	0.07	0.04	0.04
Did Not Answer %	78.00	78.77	80.87	81.03
Gay %	0.14	0.16	0.17	0.15
Heterosexual/Straight %	17.32	16.83	16.22	15.37
Lesbian %	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07
Prefer not to answer %	4.39	4.10	2.63	3.35
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

DISABILITY TYPE	@31/03/17	@31/03/18	@31/03/19	@31/03/20
Did Not Answer %	53.37	49.79	48.27	47.09
No %	42.38	46.20	47.75	49.02
Prefer not to answer %	2.96	2.73	2.84	2.85
Yes - Learning Disability %	0.23	0.19	0.13	0.13
Yes - Longstanding Illness %	0.36	0.37	0.34	0.28
Yes - Mental Health Condition %	0.18	0.14	0.15	0.15
Yes - Other, such as disfigurement %	0.07	0.09	0.11	0.13
Yes - Physical Impairment %	0.30	0.35	0.24	0.18
Yes - Sensory Impairment %	0.14	0.14	0.17	0.17
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

GENDER RE-ASSIGNMENT	@31/03/17	@31/03/18	@31/03/19	@31/03/20
Did Not Answer %	83.09	83.73	84.38	85.54
No %	16.49	15.88	15.23	14.11
Prefer not to answer %	0.39	0.37	0.37	0.33

## Midlothian Council Equality Mainstreaming & Outcomes Progress Report 2019 – 2021

Yes %	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.02
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>	<b>@31/03/17</b>	<b>@31/03/18</b>	<b>@31/03/19</b>	<b>@31/03/20</b>
Did Not Answer %	16.02	15.25	14.70	14.43
Divorced/Separated %	3.59	4.19	4.11	4.21
Living with partner %	3.52	3.78	4.03	4.18
Married/Civil Partnership %	48.08	47.30	48.42	47.29
Prefer not to answer %	6.82	6.04	5.60	5.56
Single %	20.99	22.40	22.13	23.33
Widowed %	0.98	1.03	1.01	0.99
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<b>ETHNIC ORIGIN</b>	<b>@31/03/17</b>	<b>@31/03/18</b>	<b>@31/03/19</b>	<b>@31/03/20</b>
African (inc Scottish/British) %	0.05	0.04	0.06	0.07
African Other %	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.11
Any other Asian background %	-	0.02	-	-
Any other White background %	0.02	0.04	-	-
Asian Bangladeshi (inc Scottish/British) %	0.02	0.02	0.02	-
Asian British %	0.05	0.05	0.07	0.07
Asian Chinese (inc Scottish/British) %	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.07
Asian Indian (inc Scottish/British) %	0.05	0.04	0.06	0.06
Asian Other (inc Scottish/British) %	0.04	0.05	0.09	0.11
Asian Pakistani (inc Scottish/British) %	0.11	0.12	0.15	0.17
Bangladeshi %	0.02	0.02	-	-
Black (inc Scottish/British) %	0.04	0.09	0.09	0.11
Caribbean or Black (other) %	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Did Not Answer %	52.10	48.06	47.42	45.51
Ethnicity, if Other please specify %	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.04
Irish %	0.02	0.02	-	-
Mixed - any other mixed background %	0.25	0.28	0.22	0.20
Pakistani %	0.02	0.02	-	-
Prefer not to answer %	0.66	0.54	0.63	0.92
White - Eastern European (eg Polish) %	0.13	0.11	0.09	0.15
White and Asian %	-	0.02	-	-
White and Black African %	0.04	0.05	-	-
White and Black Caribbean %	0.02	0.02	-	-
White Gypsy/Traveller %	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02

## Midlothian Council Equality Mainstreaming & Outcomes Progress Report 2019 – 2021

White Irish %	0.57	0.67	0.65	0.66
White Other %	1.41	1.56	1.62	1.80
White Other British %	4.29	4.68	4.80	5.30
White Scottish %	39.97	43.38	43.87	44.61
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<b>NATIONALITY</b>	<b>@31/03/17</b>	<b>@31/03/18</b>	<b>@31/03/19</b>	<b>@31/03/20</b>
British %	23.13	25.41	27.04	27.57
Did Not Answer %	44.97	40.60	38.53	36.84
English %	0.54	0.54	0.49	0.44
Northern Irish %	0.27	0.32	0.37	0.33
Other, please specify %	1.84	2.00	2.07	2.41
Prefer not to answer %	0.55	0.47	0.50	0.66
Scottish %	28.65	30.61	30.96	31.71
Welsh %	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.04
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<b>RELIGION</b>	<b>@31/03/17</b>	<b>@31/03/18</b>	<b>@31/03/19</b>	<b>@31/03/20</b>
Buddhist %	0.13	0.14	0.15	0.17
Church of Scotland %	6.98	6.55	6.25	5.69
Did Not Answer %	79.32	79.75	81.15	80.71
Hindu %	0.02	0.02	0.04	0.04
Muslim %	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.07
None %	7.29	7.50	7.33	8.50
Other Christian %	1.13	1.14	1.10	0.99
Other Religion or Belief %	0.13	0.14	0.15	0.13
Prefer not to answer %	2.80	2.54	1.59	1.77
Roman Catholic %	2.11	2.12	2.13	1.91
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<b>CARING RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	<b>@31/03/17</b>	<b>@31/03/18</b>	<b>@31/03/19</b>	<b>@31/03/20</b>
Did Not Answer	82.62	83.19	83.80	84.95
No	10.36	9.89	9.27	8.30
Prefer not to answer	0.23	0.25	0.22	0.18
Yes - Over 18	1.55	1.63	1.60	1.56
Yes - Under 18	4.86	4.66	4.67	4.58
Yes - Under and Over 18	0.38	0.39	0.43	0.42
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>



# MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN 2021– 2026

## Plana na Gàidhlig

**This plan has been prepared under Section 3 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 and was approved by Bòrd na Gàidhlig on 02/02/21**

# FOREWORD

## **A Foreword from the Chief Executive**

This is Midlothian Council's first Gaelic Language Plan, and sets out our ambitions for Gaelic over the next five years, to 2026.

Our aim is to contribute to the Scottish Government's vision of safeguarding the future sustainability of the Gaelic language by enhancing the profile of the language and providing more opportunities for our communities to communicate in Gaelic. The plan will also support implementation of the Scottish Government's National Outcome 'We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity'.

Midlothian Council commits to an equal respect between Gaelic and English. We see this first iteration of our Gaelic Language Plan as a starting point for developing and improving our current Gaelic provision. Our commitments within the Plan set out what we will do to raise the status of Gaelic in a proportionate way. We will however encourage our services to exceed these commitments. This underlines Midlothian Council's commitment to the aspirations and objectives included in the National Gaelic Language Plan and the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005.

**Dr Grace Vickers**  
**Chief Executive**

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## Summary

Midlothian Council recognises that Gaelic is an integral part of Scotland's heritage, national identity and cultural life. Midlothian Council is committed to the objectives set out in the *National Gaelic Language Plan* and has put in place the necessary structures and initiatives to ensure that Gaelic has a sustainable future in Scotland.

Midlothian Council recognises that the position of Gaelic is extremely fragile and if Gaelic is to be revitalised as a living language in Scotland, a concerted effort on the part of government, the public and private sectors, community organisations and individual speakers is required to:

- enhance the status of Gaelic;
- promote the acquisition and learning of Gaelic;
- encourage the increased use of Gaelic

This document is Midlothian Council's Gaelic Language Plan prepared within the framework of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005. It sets out how we will use Gaelic in the operation of our functions, how we will enable the use of Gaelic when communicating with the public and key partners, and how we will promote and develop Gaelic.

This Gaelic Language Plan has been prepared in accordance with statutory criteria set out in the 2005 Act, and having regard to the *National Gaelic Language Plan* and the *Guidance on the Development of Gaelic Language Plans*.

The key components of our Gaelic Language Plan are:

### **Chapter 1 – Introduction**

This chapter provides the background and context relating to the preparation of Gaelic Language Plans under the 2005 Act and the structure of Midlothian Council's main areas of operation. It also provides a summary of the use of the Gaelic language in Midlothian. It shows how we intend promoting the use of Gaelic in service planning and delivery and how we will take account of Gaelic and our Gaelic Language Plan when drafting new policies and considering new strategies.

### **Chapter 2 – Commitments**

This chapter sets out how Midlothian Council will use, and enable the use of Gaelic in relation to our main business functions. It covers key areas of operation such as corporate identity, signage, communication with the public and the use of Gaelic on our website. This chapter sets out the level of Gaelic language provision to which we are committed to providing during the lifetime of the Plan.

### **Chapter 3 – Implementation and Monitoring**

This chapter sets out how the implementation of our Gaelic Language Plan will be taken forward, and how implementation and outcomes will be monitored.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 The Gaelic Language Plan

The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 (The Act) seeks to secure the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect to the English language.

The Act builds on and sits beside other measures to support the rights of minority languages, including: the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (1992); and, the Council of Europe's European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992).

The Act established Bòrd na Gàidhlig as an executive non-departmental public body, responsible through Ministers to the Scottish Parliament with responsibility for promoting Gaelic development and providing advice to the Scottish Ministers on Gaelic issues. The Act requires Bòrd na Gàidhlig to prepare a National Gaelic Language Plan and gives it the power to request that public authorities, including local authorities, prepare and publish Gaelic Language Plans. This provision was designed to ensure that the public sector in Scotland plays its part in creating a sustainable future for Gaelic by raising its status and profile and creating practical opportunities for its use.

Bòrd na Gàidhlig provides public authorities with official notification of when they must prepare their Plan and details of the high level aims which should be met by the Plan. Midlothian Council received official notification from Bòrd na Gàidhlig in July 2018 that it has to prepare a statutory Gaelic Language Plan under the framework of the Act. The notification set out the corporate service aims and seven high level aims the Plan should meet under three headings in line with the National Gaelic Language Plan 2018 – 2023 aims.

Using Gaelic – support existing and new Gaelic language and culture groups in Midlothian to help grow the profile and use of Gaelic.

Promoting Gaelic – undertake the duty outlined in the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 to promote, in such manner as it thinks appropriate, the potential provision for Gaelic medium and Gaelic learner education to Midlothian residents, including the opportunity that exists under this Act for parents to request the establishment of Gaelic medium education.

Once approved by Bòrd na Gàidhlig, promote the plan and its key commitments to residents of the council area.

Include aspects of Gaelic language and culture to pupils' education by Midlothian Council, with the aim of attracting more young people to learn and use Gaelic.

Learning Gaelic – Establishing a dialogue with the Gaelic Learning in the Primary School (GPS) consortium, with a view to establishing Gaelic learner education within the council area during the lifetime of the plan.

Support families and groups of families within the Council area to access opportunities for Gaelic early years and/ or primary school provision.

Support and encourage Gaelic learning opportunities for adults in Midlothian Council area, including an active and on-going dialogue with Newbattle Abbey College.



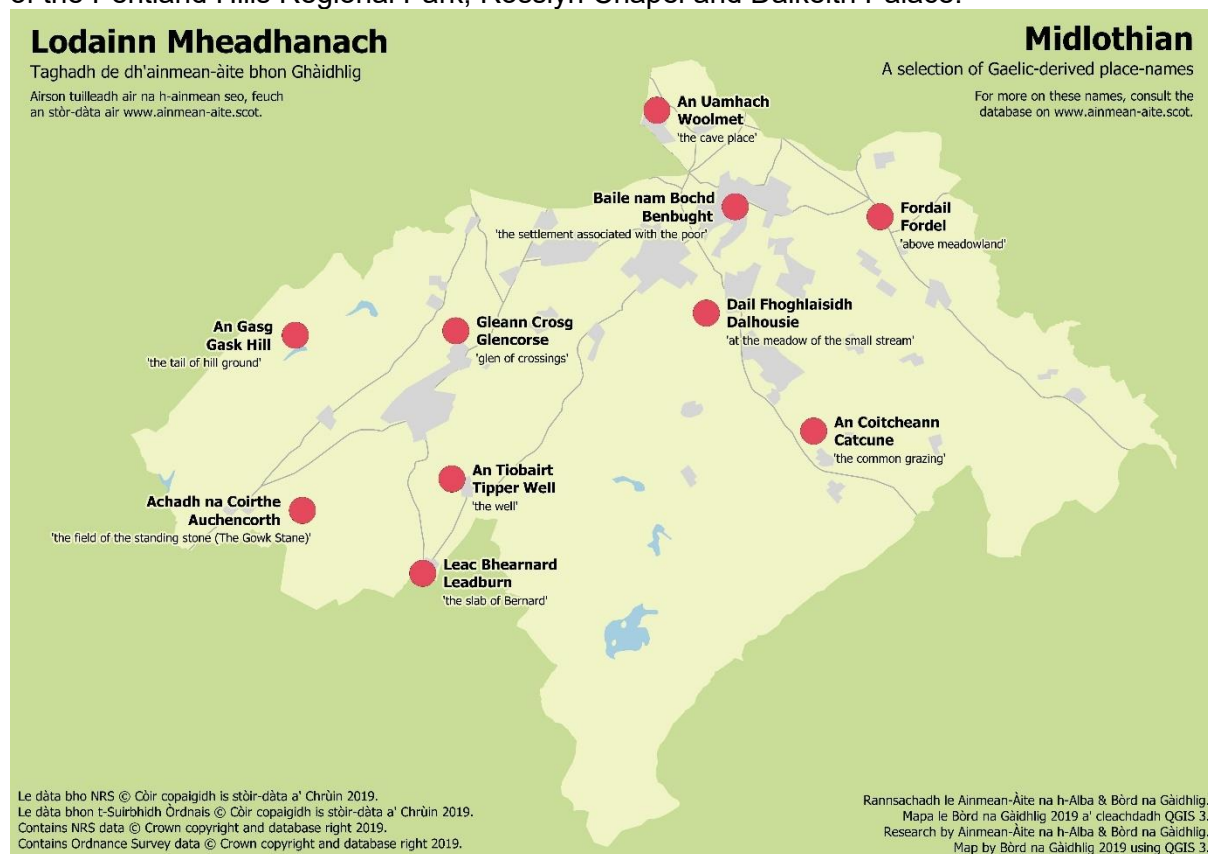
The Act requires public bodies to bring the preparation of their Gaelic Language Plan to the attention of interested parties. Midlothian Council has consulted publicly on the draft of its Gaelic Language Plan and has taken into account representations made during the consultation process.

Midlothian Council commits to demonstrating equal respect to Gaelic and English and commits to making an active offer of its Gaelic services.

Midlothian Council's Gaelic Plan will also be submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig for approval.

## 1.2 Midlothian Council

Midlothian is a historic county and although one of the smallest council areas in Scotland, it is one of the fastest growing areas in Scotland. Midlothian lies in the east-central lowlands bordering the City of Edinburgh, East Lothian and the Scottish Borders. The county extends to 353.7km<sup>2</sup>, and contains the towns of Dalkeith, Bonnyrigg and Penicuik as well as a portion of the Pentland Hills Regional Park, Rosslyn Chapel and Dalkeith Palace.



Midlothian has a population of around 90,090 (2017).

Midlothian Council is committed to working together with its partners and the people and communities of Midlothian to achieve the vision Midlothian – A Great Place to Grow.

Midlothian Council is responsible for a number of public services including education, adult social work, children's services, community housing, environmental health, leisure, planning, building control, waste management, roads maintenance, civil registrations, burial grounds, licensing services and economic development.

Midlothian Council and its Community Planning Partners have made a commitment to treat the following areas as key priorities under the Single Midlothian Plan:

- Reducing inequalities in learning outcomes
- Reducing inequalities in health outcomes
- Reducing inequalities in economic circumstance

Midlothian Council employs around 3,707 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employees (c.3,192 permanent, 514 fixed term and 1 casual). Over 1,068 fte (28.82% of the total) are employed in the education service as permanent/fixed term teachers.

Midlothian Council operates from three main offices: Midlothian House, Fairfield House and Buccleuch House all located in Dalkeith. The Council has over 100 operational properties which include: an Arts Centre, Care & Children's Homes, Community and Community Education Centres, High Schools and Primary Schools with Nursery Provision, Hostels, Hubs, Leisure Centres with and without pools, Libraries, and Social Work Centres.

### 1.3 Gaelic in Midlothian

Within Midlothian there are a number of people who understand, speak, read and write Gaelic. The 2011 census records the following:

	All people aged 3 and over	Understands but does not speak, read or write Gaelic	Speaks, reads and writes Gaelic
Midlothian			
	80,280	185	167
<b>Bonnyrigg</b>	15,545	<b>28</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Dalkeith</b>	11,297	<b>29</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Midlothian East</b>	13,684	<b>42</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Midlothian South</b>	12,771	<b>19</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Midlothian West</b>	13,582	<b>39</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Penicuik</b>	13,401	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>

#### Gaelic in an education setting

Midlothian Council recognises and values the importance of Gaelic language as part of strategic planning and development of language learning and of the rights of our young people to access education in Scotland's indigenous languages.

In terms of education, Gaelic is defined by two distinct approaches to development; Gaelic Medium Education (GME) and Gaelic Learners Education (GLE).

GME provision – the current national definition

*“Gaelic Medium Education”* is high-quality learning through immersion. Alternative models lead to the dilution of standards and as such are non-compatible with the development of strong and sustained GME.” Education Scotland Lead Inspector for GME, Joan Esson, June 2015

Nationally, GME is defined by Education Scotland as follows: GME is based on the principle of language immersion. GME provision should encompass the four contexts of the curriculum

within CfE:

- the ethos and life of the school as a community
- curriculum areas and subjects
- interdisciplinary learning
- opportunities for personal achievement

Education Scotland strongly advises that GME is not merely language learning, it is also the delivery of subjects through the medium of Gàidhlig and Gàidhlig at the heart of the life, culture and ethos of the school.

The Education Scotland Act (2016) and Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education include three key proposals regarding GME:

1. Authorities have a duty to promote and support GME . One of the Plan's action points is to develop a section of the Council's website with information promoting GME. There are also various other actions which support and promote GME.
2. Establishment of a statutory process for authorities to assess parental requests for GME
3. Development of statutory guidance arrangements for the delivery of Gaelic education in schools and by authorities

### **Gaelic Medium Education (GME) in Midlothian Council**

GME is currently provided by Midlothian Council through a partnership arrangement with City of Edinburgh Council. Partnership arrangements support developing capacity and effective resourcing across the region and high-quality Gaelic Medium learning for children and young people. This provision will be planned and assessed by Midlothian Council and local partners with local demand being assessed and monitored as part of ongoing future planning. Demand will be assessed by tracking requests and in partnership with local providers in Edinburgh. There is ongoing discussion around this with City of Edinburgh Council partners. This provision is supported by Midlothian Council and available on application by parents. Support and communications for parents wishing their children to access Gaelic Medium Education has been identified as an aim of the Midlothian Gaelic Language Plan and is included in the actions listed below.

An overview of numbers of MLC learners attended GME provision in session 2018/19 is provided below:

Primary: 10

Secondary: 2

These numbers will be tracked as part of ongoing development of GME and in line with the Gaelic Language Plan high level aims.

Parents also have access to Gaelic Medium Playgroups in City of Edinburgh through partner providers and at a range of locations across the city. More information is available via Cròileagan Dhùn Èideann's website here <http://www.gaelicplaygroup.com/>

Midlothian Council lead officers support the ongoing development of effective partnership working across the South-East region and lead support for schools in developing Gaelic learning

## **Gaelic Learners Education (GLE)**

Gaelic Learners Education (GLE) refers to Gaelic learning as an additional language in an English Medium Education (EME) context.

According to the Education Scotland advice and guidance on GLE: “In English medium education, Gaelic language learning is part of children’s and young people’s entitlement to learning a language. Gaelic Learner Education is an overarching term which spans across 3-18 provision.” ([Gaelic Education 3-18 in Language Learning in Scotland: A 1+2 Approach](#))

Gaelic Learner Education (GLE) provides young people with progressive opportunities to learn Gaelic language and experience Gaelic culture as part of the wider offer of languages across Midlothian Council schools. GLE is an area which is currently undeveloped in Midlothian schools, but is planned through the Gaelic Language Planning process. This area is being developed in collaboration with key local and national partners including Bòrd na Gàidhlig, regional local authorities, higher and further education establishments, schools and parents.

An East and Midlothian Gaelic Education Steering group has been convened to support the strategic development of Gaelic language in schools and includes key local authority officers, primary and secondary teachers, parents and local partners. Key local partners include Newbattle Abbey College, which offers professional development and engagement opportunities for schools, parents and learners. Teachers who have experience or an interest in Gaelic learning have been identified through email requests and local training opportunities are being developed and offered.

Other partners and areas of interest with links to Gaelic language are being identified including local place name mapping work and identification of local tourist attractions with a link to Gaelic language.

Midlothian Council is working with other local schools where GLE is currently being delivered (James Gillespie’s High School, City of Edinburgh) and offering opportunities through digital solutions to open up Gaelic learning to learners across the region.

## **Gaelic in a non-education setting**

Library services provide Bookbug bags in Gaelic at each of the following stages:

- Baby (gifted by the health visitor at around 6 weeks)
- Toddler (gifted by the health visitor at around 18 months)
- Explorer (gifted by nurseries at 3)
- Family Bag (gifted through schools in P1)

A small stock of Gaelic language books are available including a very limited number of items available in children’s collections mostly held at Library HQ. Requests for Gaelic items are infrequent; however this may be due to a lack of awareness and so has been identified as an area for development in the Gaelic Language Plan.

In terms of community learning, there are no current classes for adults though the Midlothian Community Learning programmes, however courses and events are currently offered by Newbattle Abbey College. Community Learning & Development in considering the plan will look to identify opportunities to offer Gaelic language in their learning programmes.

## **Gaelic within Midlothian Council**

The council currently has no data on the number of Gaelic speakers or Gaelic learners

amongst its staff. However, it is considering when and how this information can be gathered.

## 1.4 Implementing the National Gaelic Language Plan

The National Gaelic Language Plan focuses on three key aims, all of which have a vital contribution to make in increasing the numbers of people learning, speaking and using Gaelic in Scotland, and identifies key development outcomes within each:

Development Area	Key Outcomes
<b>Using Gaelic</b>	<p>An increase in the use of Gaelic will be promoted and supported. This will be done in collaboration with key partners and providers and through Bòrd na Gàidhlig initiatives and programmes. This includes speakers and learners increasing their use of the language. It involves developing more situations where Gaelic can be used. It involves using Gaelic in situations where it has not been used previously and the increased use of Gaelic in daily life.</p> <p>The increased use of Gaelic strengthens the community of speakers and contributes to its confidence. This expands opportunities for Gaelic and Gaelic users, thus increasing awareness and the profile of the language.</p>
<b>Learning Gaelic</b>	<p>An increase in the learning of Gaelic will be promoted and supported. This will be done in collaboration with key partners and providers and through Bòrd na Gàidhlig initiatives and programmes.</p> <p>This includes promoting, supporting and expanding Gaelic learning at all levels and in all sectors. The benefits from this are clear: as progress is made with this, it will increase the number of those who understand, speak, read and write Gaelic and their ability to use Gaelic with confidence.</p> <p>A positive image of Gaelic will be promoted. This will be done in collaboration with key partners and providers and through Bòrd na Gàidhlig initiatives and programmes.</p>
<b>Promoting Gaelic</b>	<p>Ensuring that a positive image of Gaelic is promoted and strengthened depends on a number of initiatives. It also includes ensuring that Gaelic is valued and that its important contribution to the social, cultural and economic life of the nation is recognised.</p> <p>The promotion of a positive image of Gaelic is critical to strengthening the appeal and status of Gaelic in Scotland and abroad. This depends on users and non-users alike.</p>

### Commitment to the Objectives of the National Gaelic Language Plan

Midlothian Council is committed to ensuring that the National Gaelic Language Plan is implemented, and in this section, we set out how we will achieve that aim.

Midlothian Council recognises that the various priority areas identified in the National Gaelic Language Plan will be primarily implemented through our Gaelic Language Plan but that opportunities will arise to promote and develop the language through existing policy measures. Midlothian Council will examine policy commitments to identify areas where Gaelic can be pro-

actively incorporated and the priorities of the National Gaelic Language Plan initiated through additional methods. We see this development as corresponding to the normalisation principle which aims to include Gaelic as an everyday part of life in Scotland.

Midlothian Council supports the aim of the National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23 that “Gaelic is used more often, by more people and in a wider range of situations.”

We are committed to the achieving this aim by focussing our work, on these three headings:-

- Increasing the use of Gaelic within our organisation and encouraging more people to use Gaelic, more often when they interact with us
- Increasing the opportunity for people to learn Gaelic as part of our day-to-day operations
- Promoting a positive image of Gaelic whenever we can as part of our day-to-day operations as an organisation

## 2. COMMITMENTS

In its statutory Guidance on the Development of Gaelic Language Plans, Bòrd na Gàidhlig notes that creating the right environment for the use of Gaelic in public life is one of the key components of language regeneration. The Bòrd has identified four core areas of service delivery that it wishes public bodies to address when preparing Gaelic Language Plans:

- **Identity and Status** including, corporate identity and signage and expanding visibility, audibility, recognition and respect for Gaelic
- **Communications** including reception, telephone, mail and e-mail, forms and complaints procedures
- **Publications** including public relations and media, printed material and websites
- **Staffing** including recruitment and training.

This Plan also identifies the actions Midlothian Council will take to meet its commitment to the objectives of the National Gaelic Language Plan for Gaelic in relation to:

- **Gaelic Language Acquisition and Usage:** enabling people to develop speaking, reading and writing skills in Gaelic and enabling the use of Gaelic in a range of social, formal and work settings. The Council will adhere to the most recent Gaelic Orthographic conventions and place-names advised by The Gaelic Place-names Scotland.

Midlothian Council recognises that action in each of these areas can help raise the visibility and profile of Gaelic and bring greater opportunity for Gaelic speakers to use the language,

The Council will include Gaelic in future surveys and research where appropriate.

Third parties working on behalf of the Council will be encouraged to adhere to the spirit and any relevant commitments of the Gaelic Language Plan.

Recognising the Council's role as a Corporate Parent, the Council will ensure that it will meet the needs of children and young people in care with Gaelic language skills and will ensure that they receive equal opportunities in learning Gaelic.

The lack of demand could be connected to lack of promotion, as identified above under library services. The current economic situation means that additional resources to deliver major initiatives is limited, however, a lot can be done for Gaelic when services are included on a renewal / replacement basis, including through recruitment processes and the identification of Gaelic skills as an essential or desirable skill.



## 2.1 Identity and Status

The presence of Gaelic in the corporate identity and signs of a public authority greatly enhances the visibility of the language, increases its status and makes an important statement about how Gaelic is valued and how it is given recognition. Developing the use of Gaelic through signage can also enrich the vocabulary of Gaelic users, raise public awareness of the language and contribute to its development. Midlothian Council recognises the importance of raising the visibility of Gaelic, increasing its status and creating a positive image of the language.

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
Corporate Identity	Midlothian Council's corporate identify does not include any Gaelic language elements	We will review the Council's corporate identity and brand guidelines to ensure the inclusion of Gaelic in the Council logo, signage in, and on, Council buildings and into email sign offs on a new or renewal basis, ensuring equal respect for Gaelic and English.	The Council's 'Brand' guidelines will incorporate guidelines for the use of Gaelic language in the Council's corporate identity	Communications Manager	April 2024
Signage	Very little bilingual signage exists in Midlothian	Current provision of signage will be audited to identify 'Welcome to Midlothian' road signs which will include Gaelic when they are renewed	Welcome signs at the main entry points into Midlothian will include Gaelic, demonstrating equal respect for Gaelic and English	Communications Manager and Road Services Manager	February 2026

## 2.2 Communications

The use of Gaelic in interactions with the authority by mail, e-mail and by telephone is important in creating practical opportunities for the use of the language, and in contributing to the sense that its use is possible and welcome. The presence of Gaelic in a wide range of bilingual forms and Gaelic only forms can also greatly enhance the visibility and prestige of the language. The preparation of Gaelic versions of forms, applications and similar documents, can also assist in expanding the range of Gaelic terminology and the awareness of the Gaelic-speaking public of such terminology, thus helping the development of the language itself.

Midlothian Council recognises the importance of creating opportunities for the practical use of Gaelic in communications with its citizens and will



increase its level of provision on an incremental basis.

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
Reception	Although the Council currently does not have any specific Gaelic provision in reception areas, the Council's Translation and Interpretation services includes provision of Gaelic	<p>A review of the Council's Translation and Interpretation services will ensure the provision of Gaelic when requested</p> <p>Training for reception staff in how to meet customer needs and ensuring that the needs of people who speak languages other than English, including Gaelic</p> <p>Customers who speak Gaelic will be able to request translation in the Gaelic language</p>	All customer services / contact centre staff will be aware of how to access support for communicating in Gaelic	<p>Equalities Officer and Customer Services</p> <p>Customer Service Manager</p>	Oct – Dec 2022
Telephone	The Council currently does not have any provision for telephone call handling in Gaelic	<p>A review of the Council's Translation and Interpretation services will ensure the provision of Gaelic</p> <p>Training for customer services/ contact centre staff in how to meet customer needs and ensuring that the needs of people who speak languages other than English, including Gaelic</p> <p>Customers who speak Gaelic will be able to request translation in the Gaelic language and this</p>	All customer services / contact centre staff will be aware of how to access support for communicating in Gaelic	<p>Equalities Officer and Customer Services</p> <p>Customer Service Manager</p>	Oct – Dec 2022

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
		service will be promoted.			
Mail and E:Mail	The Council currently does not have an agreed policy on how to respond to Gaelic mail and e:mail	<p>A review of the Council's Translation and Interpretation services will ensure the provision of Gaelic</p> <p>Any mail or e:mail received in Gaelic will be translated and responses will be provided in Gaelic in the same timescale as would be the case for an English response.</p>	All staff will be made aware of the provision to translate mail and e:mail from and into Gaelic	Communications Manager and Customer Services Manager	Oct – Dec 2022
Forms (including complaints procedure and handling of complaints)	The Council currently does not have any forms in Gaelic	<p>A review of the Council's Translation and Interpretation services will ensure the provision of Gaelic</p> <p>The Council's website includes an accessibility and translation facility that includes Gaelic</p> <p>All forms and document such as the Council's complaints procedure, that are put in the website can be translated into languages including Gaelic</p> <p>Forms or complaints submitted in languages other than English, including Gaelic, will be dealt with appropriately and if</p>	All staff will be made aware of the website facility that allows all on-line forms to be translated into Gaelic	Customer Services Manager	Oct – Dec 2022

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
		requested in the relevant language			
Public Meetings	The Council does not currently provide a Gaelic translation at public meetings.	If requested Gaelic translation will be provided at the meeting.	Gaelic translation will be provided at public meetings if requested	Customer Services Manager	February 2026

## 2.3 Publications

The use of Gaelic in a range of printed material can assist Gaelic development in a variety of ways. It helps increase the visibility of the language, it enhances Gaelic's status by being used in high profile publications, and it can help develop new and enhance existing terminology. The use of Gaelic in the media helps demonstrate a public authority's commitment to making important information available through the medium of Gaelic, as well as enhancing the visibility and status of the language. As more people access information about public authorities through their websites, making provision for the use of Gaelic can significantly enhance the status and visibility of the language.

Midlothian Council is committed to increasing the use of Gaelic in areas where the subject matter is of most interest to the general public or relates specifically to Gaelic issues.

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
Website	The Council website has an accessibility and translation facility that enables the site and all documents on the site to be translated into Gaelic.	Review the use of the translation facility  Ensure that any documents and forms that should be available in Gaelic are on the website thereby allowing them to be translated. Where the document is high profile or relating to the Gaelic Language then a professional translator will be used.	All documents and forms that should be available in Gaelic are on the website thereby allowing them to be translated. High profile documents and those relating to the Gaelic Language will be professionally translated.	Communications Manager	December 2021
Public Relations and Social Media	The Council does not have guidelines relating to the use of Gaelic in press releases and social media	Review the use of languages other than English, including Gaelic in press releases and social media	All press releases on the Council website will be translatable into Gaelic. Hard copies will be made available on request.	Communications Manager	April 2022
Printed material – Council	The Council does not have a policy relating	Review the use of languages other than English, including	All printed material that should be available in	Communications Manager	December 2021

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
documents and papers	to the use of Gaelic in printed material	Gaelic in printed material	Gaelic are on the website thereby allowing them to be translated. Hard copies will be made available on request.		
Printed material in libraries	There are few books or other printed resources in Gaelic in Council libraries	The Library service will review its book purchasing policy and practice and source relevant books and printed resources in Gaelic	The Library service will hold a stock of printed and digital resources in Gaelic	Customer Service Manager	April 2023
Public Exhibitions and Heritage	The Council has not made any provision for Gaelic in any exhibitions it holds	The Council will review their exhibitions policies and will make provision for Gaelic in exhibitions	The Council exhibitions policies will make provision for Gaelic in exhibitions	Customer Service Manager	April 2023

## 2.4 Staffing

In order to deliver services through the medium of Gaelic, it is necessary to develop the requisite job skills and language skills of staff. The provision of language learning for staff helps promote adult Gaelic learning and promotes Gaelic as a useful skill in the workplace. The identification of jobs in which Gaelic is a designated skill will contribute greatly to the status of the language and to identifying it as a positive skill to acquire.

The use of Gaelic in advertising also helps recognise that Gaelic should be used in public life and that Gaelic users have an important role to play within a public authority. Whatever the level of Gaelic skills required it is important that authorities ensure that Gaelic is a genuine occupational requirement.

Midlothian Council recognises the importance of seeing Gaelic as an important job skill and of notifying situations in which its use is essential or desirable and we recognise the importance of enabling staff to develop their Gaelic skills if they can and want to deploy them in support of the

## Council's Gaelic Language Plan.

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
Recruitment	All council jobs are advertised on the myjobscotland website which does not have a language translation function	If a job has Gaelic as a requirement, the job advertisement will be both in Gaelic and English  COSLA (the body which has responsibility for the myjobscotland website) will be approached to consider adding a language translation facility to the website and application forms	Bilingual adverts for posts requiring Gaelic will appear on myjobscotland	HR Manager	April – June 2022
Training and Language Learning	No staff training is currently available in Gaelic but training is being developed for teachers to support learning & teaching in Gaelic in schools	Explore & assess demand for Gaelic learning for staff  Identify and promote possible training models & approaches (e.g. Gaelic awareness, members' briefings, language learning etc.)  Work with local partners to promote Gaelic learning opportunities locally (e.g. Newbattle Abbey College)	Improved staff engagement in and awareness of Gaelic language	Equalities Officer	February 2026

## 2.5 Gaelic Language Acquisition and Usage

Midlothian Council recognises that a sustainable future for Gaelic requires more people to learn the language and that attention requires to be

focused on the home, education and adult learning as the key means of achieving this. We will take the following steps to help create a supportive environment for growing the number of Gaelic speakers in Midlothian.

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
Gaelic Medium Education	<p>Currently delivered through partnership agreement with City of Edinburgh Council</p> <p>Local strategic steering group has been convened to support ongoing planning and development</p> <p>GME learner data is being gathered</p> <p>Contact with parents is underway to support collaborative planning</p>	<p>Track and monitor uptake of GME</p> <p>Evaluate council information regarding GME provision</p> <p>Promote GME and the right to request GME in the Council area through communications channels &amp; networks. The right to request GME is promoted and supported with full information readily available to parents and families.</p> <p>Work in partnership with City of Edinburgh to support and sustain current arrangements and to align planning around GME.</p> <p>Promote / support pre-school and school age GME – mainly through existing partnership provision</p> <p>Families – support pack for families, review website info., share opps</p> <p>Engage with parents</p>	<p>Data on numbers of pupils attending GME</p> <p>To support and sustain current provision arrangements. Continue to work with partners (City of Edinburgh Council) to support high quality provision of GME including Gaelic language and culture.</p> <p>The right to request GME is promoted and supported with full information readily available to parents and families.</p> <p>To continue to support the ongoing development of Gaelic language and culture in partnership with City of Edinburgh</p>	MLC lead officers Gaelic Strategic group	February 2026

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
			<p>To ensure clear information is available regarding MLC GME provision</p> <p>To increase uptake of GME in line with local and national plans</p>		
GLE	<p>There is currently no GLE in MLC</p> <p>Teachers interested in or with language skills in Gaelic have been identified through school networks and liaison.</p> <p>A teacher's introduction to Gaelic course took place in May 2019</p> <p>Partnership development of language resources in Gaelic is being planned with Newbattle Abbey College</p> <p>A Gaelic education steering group has</p>	<p>Support schools with planning and development of GLE through provision of learning and teaching resources and professional development for teachers</p> <p>Promote uptake of regional SQA accredited courses</p> <p>Develop Gaelic learner opportunities as part of 1+2 and via partners (e.g. Newbattle, the E-Sgoil or schools in Edinburgh</p> <p>Continue to develop and promote Gaelic learning as an L3 in schools across Midlothian through resource developing, CLPL opportunities and promotion of Gaelic language and culture.</p>	<p>Increased numbers of schools and pupils engaging with GLE</p> <p>Increased numbers of teachers taking up opportunities for development in Gaelic language</p> <p>Locally developed Gaelic teaching resources available for teachers and schools. A developed network of teachers with an interest in developing Gaelic as an L3.</p>	<p>MLC lead officers (education)</p> <p>Gaelic Steering Group</p>	February 2026



Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
	been convened and key actions and areas for development have been identified.				
Adult learning	<p>An adult Beginners Gaelic Language Class has been offered at Beeslack High School as part of Lifelong Learning.</p> <p>Partnership opportunities are available and starting to be promoted locally</p>	<p>Identify and assess opportunities for adult learning</p> <p>Work with local partners to provide and promote adult / community learning of Gaelic</p> <p>Identify Gaelic speaking members of the community interested in the promotion and development of Gaelic language</p>	<p>Increased offer of local community Gaelic language learning opportunities</p> <p>Engagement with the Gaelic speaking local community</p>	<p>MLC lead officers</p> <p>Gaelic language strategic implementation group</p>	February 2026
Partnerships and networks	<p>Engagement and partnership working underway with local Gaelic language partners e.g. Newbattle Abbey College</p> <p>Partnership representation on the MLC Gaelic steering group</p> <p>MLC is represented by lead officers on national Gaelic</p>	<p>Continue to engage with local and national partners to support the development of local Gaelic learning opportunities and GME provision</p> <p>Engage with the GLE consortia to evaluate opportunities for Gaelic language staff development.</p> <p>Identify key local partners (business, tourism etc.)</p> <p>Continue to attend national network events, communicate opportunities and information relating to Gaelic language and</p>	<p>Enhanced provision of Gaelic learning and development</p> <p>Increased engagement with and awareness of Gaelic language</p>	<p>MLC lead officers</p> <p>Gaelic language strategic implementation group</p>	February 2026

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
	networks e.g. Gaelic Language Network (GLAN)	promote staff development			

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Midlothian Council's Gaelic Language Plan will be published bilingually on our website and copies will be made available on request. In addition, we shall make the plan known to employees via our Intranet.

This plan is the policy of Midlothian Council and has been endorsed both by our Council Management Team and Council members.

The Chief Executive will be responsible ultimately for ensuring that the Council delivers on the commitments set out in this Plan.

Individual responsibility for various actions set out in Chapter 2 of the Plan has been assigned to relevant staff members and we have set out the individual target dates for when we expect to implement specific commitments.

The council will monitor the implementation of the Gaelic Language Plan through a bi-annual update on progress in implementing the actions set out on Chapter 2. These monitoring reports will be submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

A news release will be published on our website when the final Plan is approved.

### Contact details

**The senior officer with operational responsibility for overseeing preparation, delivery and monitoring of Midlothian Council's Gaelic Language Plan is:**

Myra Forsyth  
Policy & Scrutiny Manager  
Midlothian Council, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, DALKEITH, EH22 1DN  
Tel: 0131 271 3445 Email: [myra.forsyth@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:myra.forsyth@midlothian.gov.uk)

Queries about the day-to-day operation of the plan should be addressed to:

Lesley Crozier  
Corporate Equality, Diversity & Human Rights Officer  
Midlothian Council, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, DALKEITH, EH22 1DN  
Tel: 0131 271 3658 Email: [lesley.crozier@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:lesley.crozier@midlothian.gov.uk)



# Digital Midlothian

**2021 - 2023**

Empowering people,  
enabling growth



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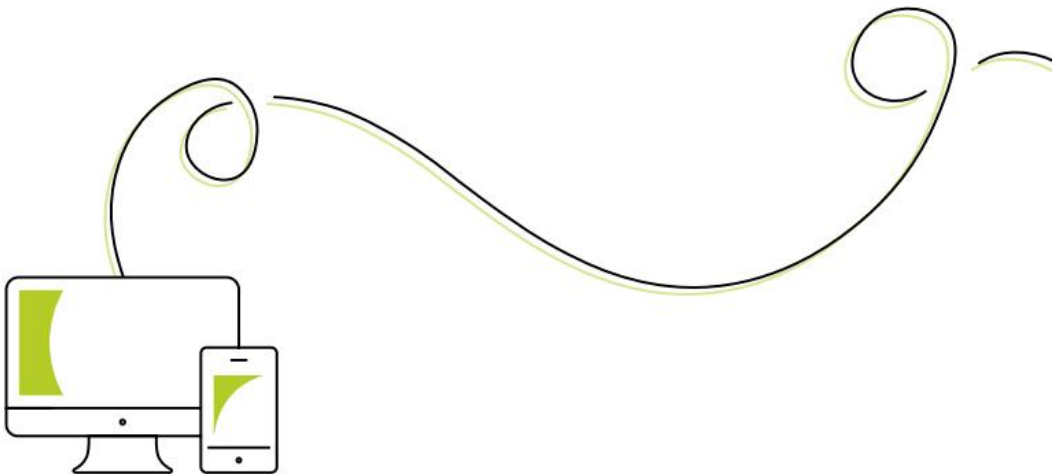
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# Introduction

**Over the past 20 years, digital technology has radically transformed almost every part of our lives - at work, at home and at school.**

The opportunities that digital, data and technology offer to connect with others, to collaborate, to learn, to enable growth and to improve people's lives have never been greater.

Within the Council, we are already using technology to enable our services to be more flexible and responsive - but we know we have more to do to unlock the true value that digital investment can bring.

Midlothian is undergoing a period of unprecedented change, with a growing and ageing population. Like many councils we are facing the dual challenge of increased demand for our services while at the same time having to reduce our budget.

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of flexible and customer-focussed services and having the right data available so that support can be offered to the right people, in the right ways, at the right time. It has also shone a spotlight on the need for an inclusive approach that maximises the benefit of digital for everyone.

By investing wisely in growing our digital and data capabilities, we will be able to make better use of data to enable prevention and earlier intervention; keep people independent and healthier for longer; deliver the responsive and reliable services our citizens expect; introduce new ways of working that are more efficient; support our communities and Midlothian's businesses to thrive in a digital world and to ensure that our children are prepared for the workplace of the future.

This strategy is not about 'IT'. It is about integrating digital ways of working into all areas of the Council, resulting in fundamental changes to how we do things. If we do everything in this strategy, we will become more efficient, more effective and will be able to maximise the positive impact that the council and its partners have on people's lives, ensuring that Midlothian remains a 'Great Place to Grow'.

# Strategic Context

**This strategy links to the aims of the [Single Midlothian Plan](#) and takes into account the desired outcomes in each of the following areas:**

- Health and Social Care
- Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- Sustainable growth
- Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- Community Safety and Justice



We recognise that digital, data and technology are fundamental to supporting us to:

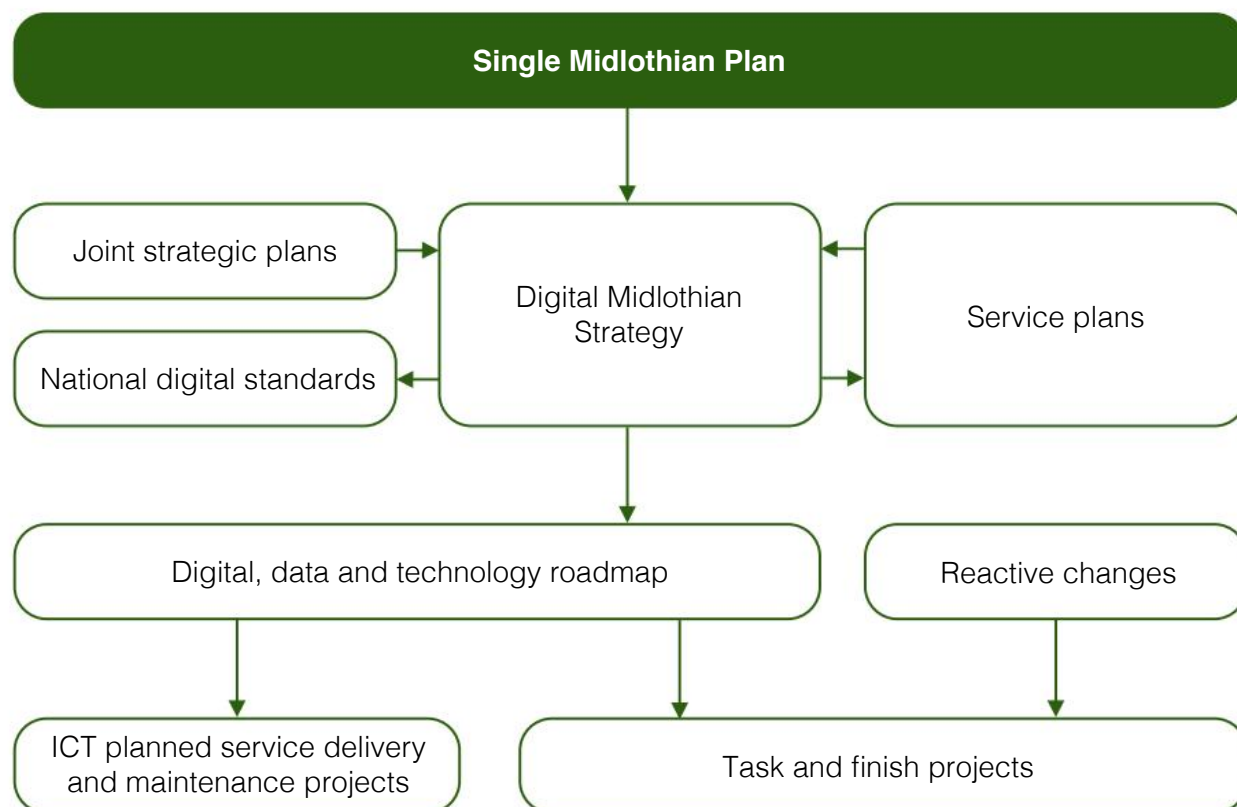
- Reduce the economic circumstances gap
- Reduce the gap in learning outcomes
- Reduce the gap in health outcomes
- Reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2030



The strategy also includes consideration of the wider operating context and strategic framework, including:

- Health and Social Care Strategic Plan 2019 - 2022
- Tenant Participation and Customer Engagement Strategy 2020 - 2023
- Midlothian Strategy for Growth 2020 - 2025
- Midlothian Council Medium-Term Financial Strategy
- Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal - Data Driven Innovation
- Digital Scotland Service Standard
- Renewing Scotland's full potential in a Digital World: Updating the Digital Strategy for Scotland Discussion Document, September 2020
- NHS Lothian Strategic Plan 2014 - 2024
- Enhancing Learning and Teaching through the Use of Digital Technology - A Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy for Scotland, September 2016
- The Promise: Independent Care Review
- Midlothian Council's Strategy for Digital Learning
- The Midlothian Profile 2019
- Midlothian Local Procurement Strategy
- Scottish Attainment Challenge 2020 - 2021

## Where this strategy fits





# Our Vision

**We will make the most of digital, data and technology to deliver easy to use, joined up services that empower our communities, partners, businesses and workforce, enabling greater independence and supporting learning and growth.**

By doing this, we will build better relationships, deliver improved value for money and enable better outcomes for everyone in Midlothian.



## Pledge 1: Digital Council

We pledge to optimise the ways in which the Council does digital, data and technology to work effectively, collaborate, make decisions, adapt and innovate



## Pledge 2: Digital Services

We pledge to create better relationships between the Council and its communities by providing modern digital services that communities want to use



## Pledge 3: Digital Place

We pledge to maximise opportunities for digital, data and technology to enhance quality of life, the economy, sustainability and individual opportunity in Midlothian

To achieve our aims, we need to ensure a unified, one Council approach to how we work. This means our services will need to work together and be willing to change how they do things where it is in our customers' interests to do so. We are committed to working collaboratively with our partners to maximise the value of the investments we make and the impact that we have.





# Our Guiding Principles



Using our empathy to **understand user needs** across our whole community



**Prioritise** getting the right jobs done



Work on the **essentials** for digital delivery to **transform peoples lives in Midlothian**



**Continuously improve** our products and services through **user collaboration**



Base our decisions on **evidence**



**Invest in people, teams and skills**, not just projects



Work in the **open**



Get better with **data**



**Modernise** our infrastructure and systems



Build **digital capability**

# Digital Principles



## Pledge 1: Digital Council

We pledge to optimise the ways in which the Council does digital, data and technology to work effectively, collaborate, make decisions, adapt and innovate

### We will:

- Ensure our Councillors, Executive Team, Chief Officers and managers champion the use of digital, data and technology across all service areas and seek to embed new ways of working that enable us to become more customer-focussed, data driven, open and efficient in how we work
- Ensure that the Council has a full understanding of its total spend on digital, data and technology and the related return on investment, seeking to make savings over time where possible
- Improve the visibility, of digital, data and technology demand, working with services and the Digital First Board to prioritise effectively, ensuring projects provide value for money and are well managed
- Provide expert, evidence-backed advice to Council services to help them to understand how digital, data and technology can be used to improve outcomes and reduce costs
- Help our own employees to get online and increase their knowledge and skills so that they can act as digital ambassadors at work and in their communities
- Ensure that we have the right mix of professional digital and data skills and capabilities needed to deliver our ambitions, and that our supporting structures enable focus on the highest areas of priority
- Provide our teams with fit-for-purpose, reliable and secure technology and line of business systems which help them to deliver effective and efficient services and can be adapted to meet changing needs
- Ensure Council employees can work effectively from anywhere, enabled by a fast and reliable infrastructure in all council-owned buildings and remote access from other sites in line with service needs
- Encourage our employees to make effective use of cloud collaboration software to communicate and to safely share and store information to minimise data risks and to enable us to bring data together to make better use of it in our decision making



- Determine service requirements for business intelligence and performance reporting, standardising and automating regular reports to ensure we have capacity in place for more complex data modelling and analysis work
- Determine the 'key questions' that we need to answer to best support outcomes in each service area and the data needed to achieve this
- Invest in the ongoing development of our people to maximise the positive impact that they can have

### We will do this by:

- Introducing Digital Business Partners who will work with services to understand and prioritise their needs, prioritise demand and provide expert advice and support, acting as trusted advisors
- Developing a set of architecture principles to be used in all decision making, to enable us to work towards creating a set of common components to we re-use across services, improving value for money and reducing our reliance on specialist applications over time
- Using cloud and Software as a Service where possible to increase flexibility and reduce maintenance overheads
- Implementing a new integrated change governance framework that oversees all changes to structures, processes, technology and data across the Council to ensure that interdependencies are understood and planned for, that technology aligns to the architecture principles and that changes made are cost-effective, secure and efficient
- Reporting regularly on digital, data and technology spend across the whole of the Council, linking this back to outcomes
- Conducting a digital skills audit and defining a digital skills training programme for our leaders and our teams to increase digital literacy and confidence, to ensure effective governance and to reduce risk
- Reviewing the professional skills we need to deliver against this strategy, looking across the whole Council to determine how best to structure ourselves to maximise efficient and effective delivery and minimise 'shadow IT and data' functions
- Working with our teams to understand how they want to access work related digital content and the most appropriate way to enable this
- Reviewing and refreshing all existing technology policies

- Ensuring effective procurement and contract management practices, re-tendering our contracts every few years to ensure best value. We will aim to support local businesses and SMEs where it is possible and appropriate to do so
- Delivering a rolling programme of improvements to council systems, corporate ICT and automation of our manual processes, starting by enabling internal self-service
- Involving our workforce in the design of internal digital services, so that they feel greater ownership, ensuring what is delivered better meets their needs and is easier to train
- Conducting a data maturity review, followed by a data discovery to understand what we need to do to improve our data foundations, and to identify the key questions that each service needs to be able to answer to deliver strategic outcomes. This will determine what data is available, how accessible it is, what its quality is like and how to bridge any gaps so that we can make better use of data in our decision making, enabling more predictive capability that enables prevention to reduce costs and improve outcomes over time
- Establishing a Midlothian Office for Data Analytics (MODA) - building a single data and performance team with the remit to bring insights directly to business areas, which anyone in the council can draw on as a resource to help them better understand their business and users
- Implementing a minimum data set to capture data that supports schools to improve their data literacy and enable improved outcomes for children and young people
- Working with services to capture regular reporting requirements so that these can be standardised and automated wherever possible to create capacity for more complex value adding data work
- Improving the Council's intranet and related tools to ensure that all Council staff can get information quickly and easily and are able to communicate and collaborate in a more efficient manner







## Pledge 2: Digital Services

We pledge to create better relationships between the Council and its communities by providing modern digital services that communities want to use

### We will:

- Refresh our approach to customer service delivery, focussing on 'digital first', while ensuring alternatives remain in place for people that need our help most
- Ensure that however people choose to contact us they receive a consistent, responsive, fully traceable end-to-end service
- Have a Council website that is as good as any bank or supermarket website, enabling our customers to request and pay for services online and to log in, see their interactions with us and get information about where any requests they've made are up to
- Implement an update service - so if customers contact us online, they receive SMS text messages or emails to tell them exactly what is happening and when, so they don't need to chase up
- Ensure that our online service is easy to use from a desktop, laptop, tablet or smart phone
- Be clear with our customers why we are capturing their data and how it might be used
- Re-design our processes with our customers so that we understand their needs and implement services that meet them, increasing the uptake of online services where appropriate
- Adapt our processes and structures to enable improvements for our customers, and aim to complete things 'right first time' wherever possible
- Continue to support and further develop a fast, reliable, secure network and infrastructure, including for our schools
- Seek opportunities to automate and integrate our processes so that we can focus our 'people effort' on the things that matter most
- Use well-established technologies such as chatbots, interactive voice response and dynamic scheduling to make our services more efficient, considering customer preferences and needs
- Enable people to stay independent and healthy for longer by using data and technology to aid prevention and early intervention

- Support the national pathfinder and trial and encourage the take up of technology enabled care solutions that help prevent and delay acute support being needed
- Ensure that people who need help to use digital services are able to access this easily
- Introduce bookable online and face-to-face appointments so that customers don't have to waste time queuing or travelling and to help the council to reduce costs
- Create new ways that customers can provide us with ongoing feedback and combine this with web analytics, complaints data, satisfaction data and customer insight to continually improve our services
- Introduce mechanisms that explain how long requests are likely to take and how we will keep customers updated
- Review and improve our online engagement with customers, including online consultation, communications and social media



### We will do this by:

- Creating a new Customer Strategy, to set the strategic direction for integrated customer service delivery
- Moving our website and main customer access channels under single line management to enable strategic focus on channel shift
- Carrying out an initial discovery to feed into our Customer Strategy to understand user needs for our highest volume transactional services, building a rolling programme to create new digital services
- Embedding customer focussed design principles into the overall architecture principles for the council and ensuring that a quality assurance process is put in place for designs to be reviewed prior to services being built
- Defining and introducing a new service design methodology that seeks to involve real service users in design
- Reviewing the technology underpinning our digital services against our architecture principles (once defined), to ensure we have a resilient, supported and fit-for-purpose set of capabilities that are efficient, scalable, user-friendly and enable us to achieve our ambitions
- Creating re-usable capabilities such as 'booking', 'payment', 'contact details' that can be re-used across multiple service areas
- Changing how we deliver digital services, working in multi-disciplinary agile deliver teams to design services end-to-end, enabling joined up, easy to use, integrated services for customers

- Developing a new suite of KPIs to measure service responsiveness and quality
- Updating the Council website platform and making improvements to the content, moving away from a service-by-service layout to a more customer-centric approach with an optimised search
- Introducing a Council-wide 'My Account' capability to provide a single view of the council to customers
- Using gov.notify to implement an update service, using SMS text messages or emails to reduce avoidable contact
- Building online services to meet WCAG2.1AA standards
- Using fair processing notices to capture customer consent in relation to data use
- Validating data at the point of input to improve data quality from the start of any process
- Starting with a 'blank sheet of paper' for the re-design of services, rather than assuming that the current processes and structures will remain in place
- Delivering a discovery within Place Services to collect requirements and consider opportunities to invest in a new fleet management solution, route optimisation and dynamic scheduling
- Conducting a chatbot pilot for high volume services
- Work effectively with the Health and Social Care Partnership to support the national pathfinder and to ensure applications support organisational efficiency, including to implement a care management solution at Newbyres and Highbank
- Prioritising 'assisted digital' services in our face-to-face environments, creating a network of ambassadors, including within partner agencies and across the voluntary sector
- Introducing automated feedback mechanisms to enable people to feed back how easy or difficult they found our services
- Support the modernisation of telecare services to ensure service continuity to our most vulnerable customers
- Integrating our communications to enable customers to 'opt in' to regular updates from the council







### Pledge 3: Digital Place

We pledge to maximise opportunities for digital, data and technology to enhance quality of life, the economy, sustainability and individual opportunity in Midlothian

#### We will:

- Work collectively with our partners, balancing an inward and outward looking focus, to drive digital opportunities, supporting our shared vision of making Midlothian 'a great place to grow'
- Promote Midlothian as a digital destination, showcasing the best of our place, to encourage tourism, inward investment, re-location and growth
- Cultivate digital skills in our communities, invest in ensuring our children and young people have access to the technology and support that they need to enable educational outcomes and to prepare them with the skills they need for the future, including for jobs that might not yet exist
- Create an environment that attracts leading digital businesses to Midlothian and supports the innovation of start-ups
- Empower learners of all ages by creating a digitally rich learning culture, enabling online access and supporting them to develop digital skills
- Seek to reduce digital exclusion across our communities to ensure access to services and opportunity for all
- Support Midlothian to achieve high speed connectivity, smart infrastructure and resilient cyber defences
- Work closely with our multi agency partners to ensure interoperability of systems, the ability to securely exchange information and to enable effective collaboration using online tools and capabilities
- Leverage the benefits of the Data Driven Innovation Initiative, working closely with Edinburgh University to support local outcomes
- Consider the potential of expanding the use of Internet of Things to take advantage of the advances in sensor technology in service delivery
- Seek to leverage the forthcoming investment in 5G connectivity across Scotland
- Proactively seek to embed digital into all new infrastructure investment including traditional highways and building developments so that they are fit for the future
- Support the Council's asset management programme, ensuring buildings are fit for the future
- Wherever possible, implement digital technologies that are low carbon in themselves and seek to enable and support other green and low carbon initiatives, activities and working practices



## We will do this by:

- Forming a Digital First Board with both internal and external representation to ensure joint focus on embedding digital opportunities to support our shared vision of making Midlothian 'a great place to grow'
- Promoting Midlothian as a digital destination, optimising our 'place' website to encourage people to live, work, invest and grow in Midlothian
- Investing in digitally enabling our children and young people, equipping them with the technology, connectivity, skills and support that they need to thrive in a digital world
- Playing a proactive role in convening and promoting Midlothian's existing digital, data and technology community, creating and thriving digital network, offering new ways for businesses to connect, work together and grow
- Conducting research to identify the skills our digital businesses need, working with businesses to create work experience
- Working proactively with the University, schools, colleges and libraries and City Region partners to ensure the alignment of employability needs with learning pathways, creating supportive environments that enable digital access and learning for people at any stage of life, ensuring everyone in Midlothian has the opportunity to become 'digitally savvy'
- Working with the Scotland 5G centre to enable and leverage the forthcoming investment in 5G connectivity across Scotland
- Investing in the skills and tools needed to mitigate growing cyber security threats
- Sharing our data safely and appropriately to help others create value from it
- Encouraging open ways of working, including sharing our learnings, code, and other products we create, enabling others to benefit our efforts
- Proactively engaging with digital, data and technology businesses locally and across Edinburgh and South East Scotland to provide insight to the council's plans and to help them to understand how they might get involved
- Collaborating with partners as part of the Data Driven Innovation Initiative to ensure that Midlothian contributed to, and benefits from the investment being made
- Upskilling our workforce, 70% of whom live in Midlothian
- Actively engaging with housing colleagues, external developers and planning to encourage the development of 'smart homes' that seek to leverage digital, data and technology to improve lives and support carbon reduction targets



# Our Current Landscape



**12,209** emails per day



**Approx. 250** applications



**30,672** devices



**18,200** user accounts



**42** networked schools



**15,115** incidents opened last year



**£3.84m** annual ICT budget



**3,521** mobile devices



**14,000** pupils



**351** servers



**120** supplier contracts



**40** networked offices



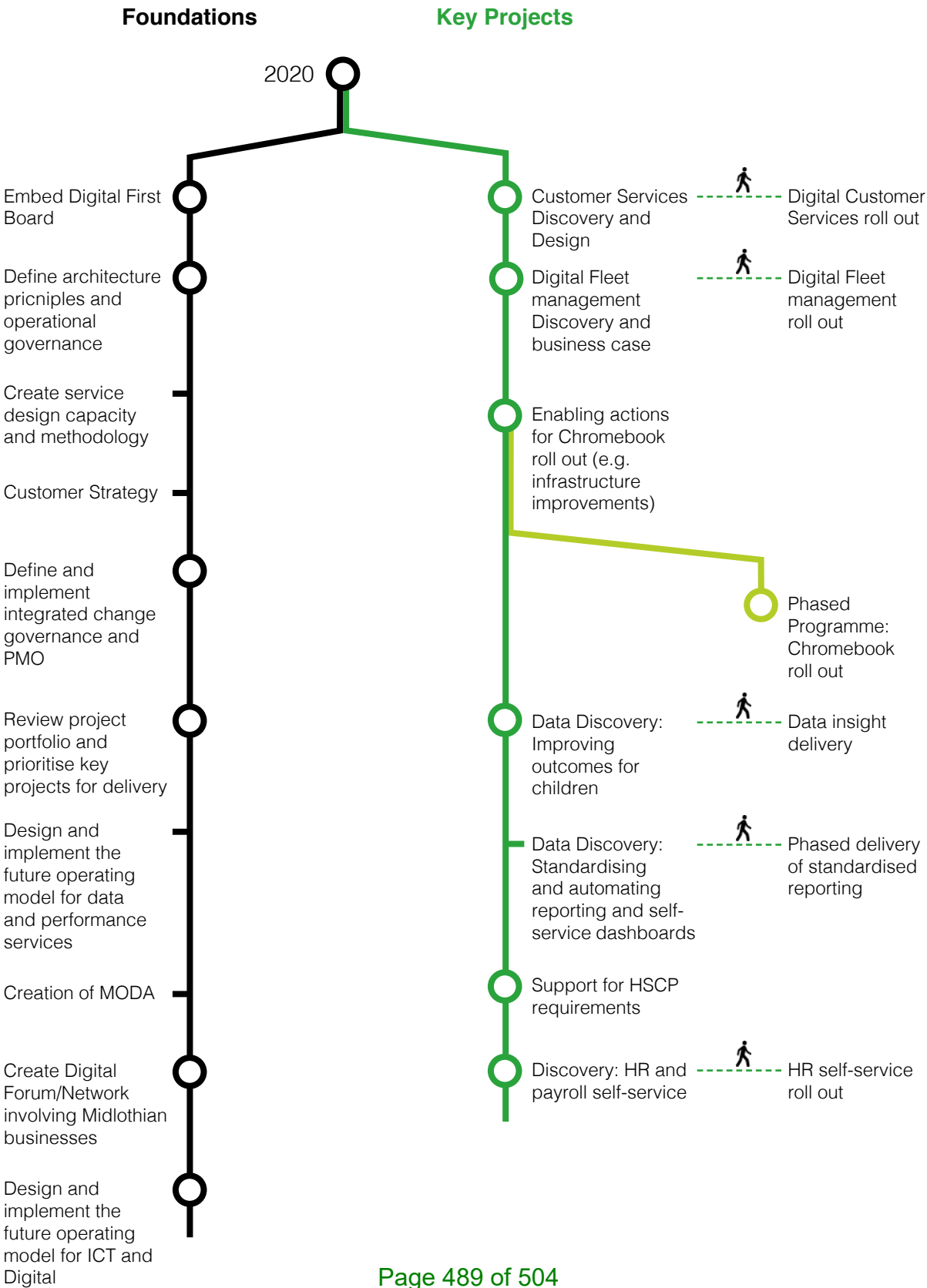
**6,800** requests for service to the Service Desk



**50** core staff

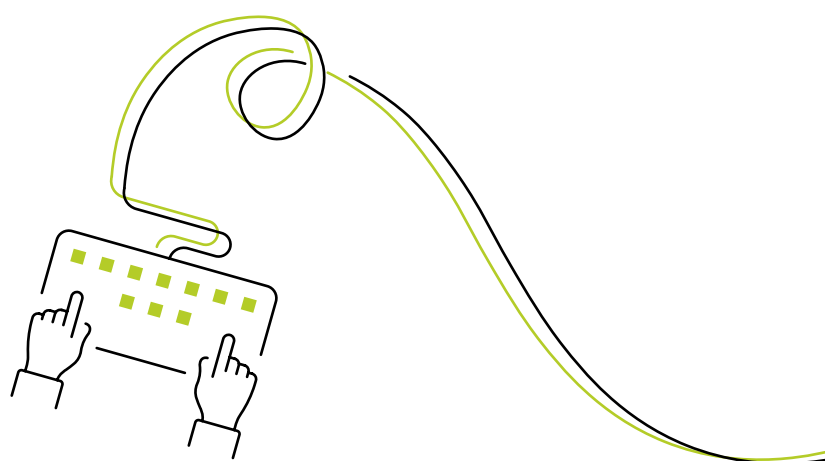
# Digital Roadmap

This roadmap sets out the high-level activities required over the first 12 months of the Strategy. It does not contain every activity or project. A detailed supporting plan is in place and will be monitored by the Digital First Board. The plan will be updated on an ongoing basis and reviewed annually in line with the Council's service planning cycle.





Produced in collaboration with Socitm Advisory



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# **Midlothian Council**

## **Tenant Participation and Customer Engagement Strategy**

### **2021-2024**



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### **Foreword from Councillor Stephen Curran - Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing**

Welcome to Midlothian Council's Tenant Participation and Customer Engagement Strategy, which sets out how we plan to involve our tenants and customers and make sure that they can influence and scrutinise the housing services that we deliver. This strategy reflects how much more we want to achieve and the steps we will be taking to involve tenants and customers in the next three years.

I would like to thank all tenants and service users for their continued commitment and support over the last few years. This input has helped us immensely and I would encourage tenants and customers to get involved and have their say in shaping future housing services.



## Legal Framework

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 gives tenants rights, and sets out duties for landlords.

Tenants have a right to:

- Form independent representative associations
- Access information about housing policies
- Be consulted on issues that affect them
- Participate in decisions that affect the services tenants receive and be given adequate time to fully consider proposals.

Key landlord duties are to:

- Produce a Tenant Participation Strategy
- Ensure the Tenant Participation Strategy complies with equal opportunity requirements
- Set up a register of tenant organisations in line with Scottish Government guidance
- Take into account representations made by individual tenants or tenant groups
- Inform tenants and Registered Tenant Organisations (RTOs) of proposals for housing management, standards of service and the Tenant Participation Strategy.

## The Scottish Social Housing Charter

This was introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 and sets out the standards and outcomes that social landlords should aim to achieve whilst performing their housing duties.

The Charter has 16 outcomes:

### ***The Customer / Landlord Relationship***

1. Equalities
2. Communication
3. Participation

### ***Housing Quality and Maintenance***

4. Quality of Housing
5. Repairs, maintenance and improvements

### ***Neighbourhood and Community***

6. Estate Management, antisocial behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes

### ***Access to Housing and Support***

- 7, 8 and 9 Housing Options
10. Access to social housing
11. Tenancy Sustainment
12. Homeless people

### ***Getting Good Value from Rents and Service Charges***

13. Value for money
- 14 and 15 Rent and Service charges

## ***Other Customers***

### **16. Gypsy / Travellers**

The purpose of the Charter is to help improve the quality and value of the services that social landlords provide. We are required by the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) to submit an Annual Return on the Charter by the end of May. We then need to produce by October a Landlord's Report to explain to our tenants how we are performing as a service. This report is available on the council's website.

For more information and a copy of the Scottish Social Housing Charter please go to:

[www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-social-housing-charter-april-2017](http://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-social-housing-charter-april-2017)

## **Annual Assurance Statement**

In October each year, we are required to submit an Annual Assurance Statement to the SHR. We need to confirm to the SHR that it is complying with all regulatory requirements and standards. If it is not meeting these requirements, we must advise the SHR and say what we are doing to address the issue. We gather evidence to assess overall compliance, which is monitored on an ongoing basis. A report is submitted annually to Council for approval. Once it has been approved, the Assurance Statement is signed and submitted to the SHR and then made available publicly on the council's website.

## Our Aims

We are committed to focussing on the needs of all tenants and customers. We want to be inclusive and provide a range of opportunities to get involved, whilst making best use of the resources available to us.

We aim to encourage as many tenants and customers as possible to get involved with us and will give them a range of options. We want tenants and customers to get involved in a way that suits them and will agree timescales with tenants and customers to make sure they can properly participate. We will make sure our participation activities are accessible to all and will be responsive to tenants' and customers' individual needs. We will provide tenants and customers with access to the services and resources they need to allow them to become fully involved.

We will support all tenants and customers to participate while maintaining their right to privacy and confidentiality. We have carried out an impact assessment of this strategy to make sure that we do not discriminate against anyone and uphold equal opportunities in all the work that we do.

We value all forms of tenant participation equally and will make sure that support is available to encourage participation. We will consult, inform, involve and work with our tenants as equal partners to make sure our services are tenant focussed and our scrutiny work is tenant led.



### **Ways our tenants and customers can get involved include**

- as an individual
- through a tenants and residents group
- by getting involved with the Midlothian Tenant Panel. The Tenant Panel acts as a voice for council tenants on a range of housing issues and helps to influence the decisions on housing services.

### **We will involve tenants and customers at different stages of our work by:**

- Drawing on the skills, knowledge and experiences of our tenants and customers working with them as equal partners to plan and deliver services.
- Sharing information and giving tenants and customers the opportunity to take part in decision-making and influence our housing services.
- Tenants and customers are given the opportunity to comment on services, policies and procedures before they are finally agreed.
- Providing easy to understand information in good time to allow tenants and customers to make informed decisions.

We want to make sure we offer tenants and customers a range of different ways for them to get involved. Some examples of this are: monthly neighbourhood walkabouts; satisfaction surveys; face to face drop-in sessions; the Annual Tenant Day; Garden Competition; review of new policies / procedures and scrutiny of our housing services and performance.

We will always make sure that we keep our tenants and customers informed through regular communication and make sure that they have enough time to consider our proposals when we are consulting with them. Giving feedback after consultations is something we always do. The main method of communication we will use will be through our Tenants Today and Temporary Times newsletters. We also produce special editions of Tenants Today for specific consultations issues such as Rent Setting Strategy and Housing Allocations Policy review.

### **Use of new technology within Tenant Participation**

Given most people are making more use of technology in their everyday lives, it is important that over the next few years Tenant Participation keeps pace with technological change and reflects the ways people interact with information.

Alongside using traditional participation methods, we will promote the use of digital channels of communication. We will work to develop our digital and online presence through our website and use of social media, including Twitter and Facebook. This will make tenant participation more accessible, inclusive and encourage wider engagement, particularly tenants and customers residing in rural areas and households with childcare responsibilities.

The COVID-19 pandemic required us to find new ways of keeping in touch and engaging with our Tenant Panel and tenant and resident groups. We did a number of things to change

the way we worked including providing support to enable tenants attend online meetings with us and organising informal events to encourage tenants to meet online. We will increase the number of online meetings in the future and provide this as an option for tenants and customers to get involved. Key benefits include:

- Encourages people to participate from their own homes and reduces the need for face to face meetings and travel
- Younger people will find this easier to fit around their lifestyle
- People are more at ease in their own home surroundings and facilitate more effective participation and engagement
- Reduces cost, time and offers more flexibility to people
- Environmentally friendly
- Easier to organise other Council services to engage
- Assists people with personal circumstances or conditions to access and engage

### **Making tenant participation accessible and inclusive**

The Covid-19 pandemic required us to find new ways of keeping in touch and engaging with all our tenants and RTO group. We did a number of things to change the way we worked, including:

- Keeping in touch with tenants by email and phone
- Providing support to enable tenants to attend online meetings with us
- Providing one-to-one and group support to help tenants attend online meetings on Zoom and Microsoft Teams.
- Attending regular online meetings with our Tenant Panel members and keeping in contact by telephone and emails with our Registered Tenant Organisation (RTO) group.
- Providing links to let all tenants join a series of free online Mental Health Well Being course

We understand not all tenants and customers will be keen to use video conferencing and will also continue with face-to-face meetings where this is appropriate.

### **Register of Interested Tenants**

Not all tenants are interested in coming to public meetings but want to be kept informed and be directly consulted in relation to policies, procedures and events that are of interest to them. We hold a Register of Interested Tenants who are happy for us to send them more information. If you are currently a Council tenant and would like to join this list then please contact the Tenant Participation Officer on 07785 382170 or email:

[tenantparticipation@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:tenantparticipation@midlothian.gov.uk)



Best Communal Garden Winners, Cowan Court, Penicuik.

## Resourcing Tenant and Customer Participation

We recognise the importance of providing adequate resources to achieve our aims of continuing to develop and promote tenant and customer participation.

In terms of funding for tenant and customer participation activity, the Council generally spends in the region of £50,000 every year. This can fluctuate depending on activities that are taking place. This budget covers support and resources including:

- A dedicated council officer with responsibility for tenant and customer participation
- Organising the Annual Tenants Day
- Free access to venues for meetings
- Supplying refreshments and food at events
- Providing free crèche facilities
- Upskilling our staff to provide training and support for Midlothian Tenant Panel and RTOs
- Supporting tenants to get online and participate with us
- Reimbursement of travel expenses
- Transport on request for specific events
- General administration- taking minutes, photocopying, stationery supplies
- Provision of other resources on request to assist tenants and customers who may be traditionally excluded or have particular needs
- Working with partners at East Lothian Council to ensure Gypsy / Travellers are provided with opportunities to participate and provide feedback on the services supplied.



Annual Tenants Day, 2019

## Future Priorities and Actions

The key outcomes we want to achieve by 2024 are:

- Information on our service and ways to get involved is promoted to tenant and customers
- We ensure that tenants and customers participate in the decision making and operation of our services
- We listen to your views to improve our performance

We will undertake a range of activities and actions to enable us to build on the previous Strategy and achieve the outcomes of **Promotion, Participation and Performance**:

- Promote and publish the Tenant and Customer Engagement Strategy
- Produce easy read and summary versions
- Agree an annual participation agenda and schedule of consultations topics. Key topics during the period is expected to include: investment in new and existing housing; Rent Setting Strategy; repairs and maintenance service; housing allocation policy and lettings analysis; estate management; homelessness and housing support; performance; Annual Assurance Statement; meeting our Social Housing Charter requirements; monitoring the Local Housing Strategy 2021-26.
- Produce quarterly newsletters for tenants and bi-annual newsletter for homeless temporary tenants. Involve and encourage tenants and customers to contribute ideas and articles
- Produce annual return on the social housing charter and publicise performance information in a variety of formats
- Provide up to date information on the Housing Services on the council website
- Publish an annual programme of Estate Walkabouts and publish reports online
- Publicise RTOs and tenant events in a variety of formats to increase the number of tenant and customer participating
- Produce an annual report on the activities of RTO's and the Midlothian Tenant Panel
- Start up a senior group with guest speakers invited along
- Explore opportunities to involve homeless service users to ensure that those with a lived experience influence service planning and service delivery
- Target new tenants giving information on participation and scrutiny activities. Provide welcome packs with useful local information
- Engage with tenants on new housing developments to foster local tenant groups in these areas
- Signpost tenants and customers to opportunities to contribute to national and regional tenant organisations
- Ensure there are opportunities for all equality groups and hard to reach groups to participate
- Facilitate training and development opportunities for members of Midlothian Tenant panel and RTOs, to encourage engagement, build confidence and put tenant participation into practice



- Develop, promote and expand the use of digital (and email) channels for communication
- Organise more informal social events to attract tenants to find out more about the housing service and tenant participation
- Undertake satisfaction surveys to ensure ongoing monitoring and reporting of tenants satisfaction indicators
- Undertake benchmarking of tenant satisfaction with that of other Councils and Scottish Housing Network to consider our performance outcomes
- Publicise tenant satisfaction results and provide opportunities for tenants and customers to provide feedback
- Share satisfaction results with staff and other services, organisations and groups to consider strengths and weaknesses and identify ways of making improvements
- Publish reports on consultation exercises undertaken with tenants and customers
- Ensure survey methods provide an accurate reflection of the households and equalities groups who use our services
- Investigate ways to address tenant satisfaction for specific groups, including younger people and areas where there are lower levels of satisfaction.

## **Monitoring and Review**

We will review this Strategy every 3 years. We will regularly monitor and evaluate our tenant and customer priorities and activities with the Midlothian Tenants Panel to help us achieve our aims and plan for successful future tenant and customer participation.

## Contact Us

Email	<a href="mailto:tenantparticipation@midlothian.gov.uk">tenantparticipation@midlothian.gov.uk</a>
Call	07785 382170
Write	Tenant Participation Officer, Midlothian House, 40-46 Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith, EH22 1DN
Search	<a href="http://www.midlothian.gov.uk">www.midlothian.gov.uk</a> and Facebook 'Midlothian Housing Information'

This Strategy can be supplied in Braille, large print, audiotape or in your own language. If you require assistance please phone 0131 270 7500 or contact [tenant.participation@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:tenant.participation@midlothian.gov.uk)

## Communicating Loud and Clear

We are happy to translate on request and provide information and publications in other formats, including Braille, tape or large print.

如有需要我們樂意提供翻譯本，和其他版本的資訊與刊物，包括盲人點字、錄音帶或大字體。

Zapewnimy tłumaczenie na żądanie oraz dostarczymy informacje i publikacje w innych formatach, w tym Braillem, na kasecie magnetofonowej lub dużym drukiem.

ਅਸੀਂ ਮੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਨਾਲ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਅਤੇ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਬਰੇਲ, ਟੇਪ ਜਾਂ ਵੱਡੀ ਛਪਾਈ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹਨ।

Körler için kabartma yazılar, kaset ve büyük nüshalar da dahil olmak üzere, istenilen bilgileri sağlamak ve tercüme etmekten memnuniyet duyarız.

اگر آپ چاہیں تو ہم خوشی سے آپ کو ترجمہ فراہم کر سکتے ہیں اور معلومات اور دستاویزات دیگر شکلوں میں مثلاً بریل (تایینا افراد کے لیے ابھرے ہوئے حروف کی لکھائی) میں، ٹیپ پر یا بڑے حروف کی لکھائی میں فراہم کر سکتے ہیں۔

**Contact 0131 270 7500 or  
email: [enquiries@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@midlothian.gov.uk)**