

# Midlothian Council Report 2019/20



## Progress Against Strategic Outcomes

Community Planning partners have previously agreed the following ambitious vision for Midlothian:

“Midlothian – a great place to grow”.

Midlothian Council delivers its priorities through the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) and the Single Midlothian Plan. The Council Change and Transformation programme and individual Service Plans outline how Midlothian Council will deliver its contribution to the Single Midlothian Plan.

The top three priorities for 2019-22 are:

- . Reducing inequalities in learning outcomes
- . Reducing inequalities in health outcomes
- . Reducing inequalities in economic circumstances

The Single Midlothian Plan incorporates five overarching thematic groups which support the achievement of outcomes. This thematic approach is used for quarterly reporting, the themes are as follows:

- . Adult Health and Social Care - Responding to growing demand for adult social care and health services
- . Community Safety & Justice - Ensuring Midlothian is a safe place to live, work and grow up in
- . Getting it Right for Every Midlothian Child - Improving outcomes for children, young people and their families.
- . Improving Opportunities for Midlothian - Creating opportunities for all and reducing inequalities.
- . Sustainable Growth in Midlothian - Growing the local economy by supporting business growth and responding to growing demand for housing in a sustainable environment.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was approved by Council in June 2019. The public consultation visionary exercise supporting development of the MTFS 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:

- . **Theme 1: 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.
- . **Theme 2: 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.
- . **Theme 3: 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.
- . **Theme 4: Innovative and Ambitious** - recognises our ambition for Midlothian and to make sure it is a great place

to grow, now and in the future.

### Best Value

Key actions from the Best Value report are progressing including the progression of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the ongoing implementation of rigorous financial discipline.

### City Deal

The City Region Deal is emerging as a sound basis for regional level working between the six Councils together with key partners in the further/higher education, business, and third sectors. This is particularly relevant at a time when policies, plans and projects are being developed at national level. The expectation is that the intended Regional Growth Framework will ensure that the collectively agreed strategy to address key issues affecting the region in order to drive sustainable inclusive growth is both documented and promoted.

### Senior Leadership Review

The Senior Leadership Review is now complete with the appointment of the Executive Team and all Chief Officer appointments now made.

### Key Drivers for Change – ‘Making a Difference’

The key drivers for change were approved by Council on June 2019. A key focus is moving from silo-based working to holistic working which was also the basis of the rationale for the Senior Leadership Review. Also approved by Council, we are focussing on moving from mixed performance to continuous improvement and ensuring that we are data-driven and improve performance based on information gathered. There are excellent examples of improvement across the Council and we have introduced the Customer Service Excellence Standard as the core continuous improvement model for service improvement.



### Progress of Single Midlothian Plan Themes in 2019/20

#### Adult, Health and Care - Achievements

*Responding to growing demand for adult social care and health services*

***"People in Midlothian will lead longer and healthier lives by getting the right advice, care, and support, in the right place, at the right time."***

The Adult Health and Social Care service continues to undergo ambitious redesign. The Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership 2019-22 Strategic Plan outlines a major programme of activity focused on prevention and early intervention; planned support, treatment and recovery; and unplanned treatment and support. We are achieving this by changing the emphasis of our services, placing more importance and a greater proportion of our resources on our key values.

The threat and uncertainty of the emerging coronavirus pandemic became a significant challenge at year end as our priorities changed. As expected this has impacted on the delivery for some of our strategic outcomes.

**Integration** - Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership is progressing work to implement the ambitions of the

Strategic Plan. Efforts to support people most vulnerable to health and other inequalities continues to progress. This includes specific programmes involving pregnant women who smoke, people living in homeless accommodation, people who use alcohol and drugs, carers, people/families who could benefit from welfare rights checks and others. In addition the Community Planning partnership work to tackle Type 2 Diabetes continues to progress well. Several programmes of work are underway in order to best support people who are frail. Midlothian HSCP and Midlothian GPs have been working together to improve the quality of care (health and social care) provided to people with frailty.

Local Planning Groups have prepared their action plans in line with the Partnership values: prevention, recovery, co-ordinated care, supporting the person not just focussing on the condition.

**Inequalities** - Health and Social Care services remain committed to contributing to reduce health inequalities. Local people, the third sector, public sector and private sector created a plan to prevent type 2 diabetes. This includes supporting people to be healthy, active and engaged in community life. Having a healthy diet and being physically active are important to reduce risk of type 2 diabetes but so are environmental, financial and social barriers, not just individual lifestyle choices. Actions we are taking forward include increasing capacity of weight management services, training on eating well and moving more as well as strengthening links between services to ensure people are in receipt of all the welfare support they are entitled to.

**Substance Misuse** - The Mental Health Team and MELD, the main third sector partner, have both relocated to No11 and are fully operational in the building. All key services have now relocated to Number 11. Staff from Substance Misuse, Mental Health, Community Justice and key 3rd sector partners are now based at the Hub with scope for partner services such as CLEAR, VOCAL and Children 1st to hot desk and attend team meetings as required. MELDAP continues to lead work in developing responses to changing drug trends. The "drop in" clinic to offer patients who find keeping appointments challenging continues to be a success. This is a partnership with Nurses, Peers and Social Work. The aim is to keep the chaotic population engaged and reduce unused appointments.

**Technology** - Technology offers a range of tools to support pathway and service redesign in terms of both iterative improvements and transformative initiatives. We continue to proactively engage with the emerging digital agenda in Scotland to maximise the value that technology, in all its forms, can add. The COVID-19 Outbreak brought forward NHS Lothian rollout of NHS Near Me video conferencing (powered by attend anywhere) and supported by a dedicated project team. Access to this channel is now widely available with multiple services signed up. Embedding the channel into the service TrakCare eWorkflow becomes the new challenge. This is a pan Lothian challenge and the central Trak team are seeking board support for resources. Issues securing resources to implement the necessary technical changes to enable safe data sharing from Midlothian Council to NHS Lothian (both eHealth and Digital Services) and finalising information security remain.

COVID-19 has changed priorities and pressures in the central Trak team in the development of improved informatics for MERRIT. The changes we would have been seeking are now needed across most services in Lothian and resourcing this is being considered by NHS Lothian eHealth Board. Our needs and aspirations have been voiced with the team and they are aware that we remain keen for these changes.

**Learning Disabilities** - Implementation of a framework for providing positive behavioural support within Midlothian completed and continues to receive support from all stakeholders. Implementation, however, this will be impacted by COVID-19. The project to review and redesign day services to reduce costs including transport has been suspended due to Covid-19. This action will be progressed as part of the Covid-19 recovery plan. Work continues to progress plans in relation to housing, both short term by making best use of the property available and longer term by ensuring needs as considered as part of the Phase 3 Housing Programme.

**Older People** - Older people's services continue to develop and also be challenged. Cross referencing those waiting for a package of care with clients who have been identified on the frailty index has helped us explore how we can support these individuals in a more proactive way. Discharge to assess continues to support people discharged from hospital in a more timely manner providing rehab where needed. Continual improvement in the in house care at home service is demonstrating improved management oversight, addressing and reducing sickness absence and improved training achievements.

All the care homes having either sustained good grades or improved grades. Reducing unplanned admissions to hospital from care homes continues to be on track with ongoing support from the care home support team to ensure staff in the care homes are upskilled to support residents when unwell in the care homes.

The Joint Dementia team is now fully staffed and managing an increasing number of complex cases and supporting

people with advanced dementia in their own homes. Post diagnostic support is a highly valuable resource within the team and it is acknowledged to be part of the role of each professional in the team as well as the dedicated Post Diagnostic support workers.

A scoping exercise is being carried out to assess the extent of people who are housebound requiring social engagement to reduce social isolation and loneliness – a number of initiatives are being explored including a “roaming model of day care”, increasing befriending opportunities and undertaking intergenerational work to reduce social isolation and loneliness amongst older people in Midlothian.

**Carers** - Since implementation of the Carers Act in April 2018, there have been considerable changes in funding, service demand, and duties on Local Authorities and Health Boards. There is significant demand for VOCAL services, Midlothian's largest carer service provider, and for other carer support delivered by other partners. VOCAL are approaching the end of their current 3 year contract. A report was submitted to the Contracts and Commissioning Group to propose a one year extension to the current contract to allow time for carers, stakeholder and providers to be involved in consultation and a review of carer supports and service provision. This process began in Q3 2019/20, with an invitation to tender for services taking place in Q2/3 of 2020/21, new contracts beginning April 2021.

Work to achieve Carer positive employer status (level one) is being progressed as part of the Healthy Working Lives agenda and nearing completion with the final pieces of evidence being sourced. Covid-19 has impacted on requests for Adult Carer Support Plans and the development of the Midlothian Carer Strategy and Action Plan for 2019-22.

**Mental Health** - The Mental Health Strategic Planning group developed the Mental Health Action Plan reflecting the priorities set out in the Midlothian Strategic Plan 2019-2022. Primary Care nurses are being rolled out in medical practices. Planning is underway for reviewing commissioned mental health and wellbeing supports currently provided by the third sector. Covid-19 has had an impact on the method of delivery of mental health services since week of 16 March due to government advice and social distancing. The primary care mental health nurses continue to work remotely by providing support by telephone, there has been some staff turnover but recruitment is underway.

**Adults with Long Term Conditions, Disability and Impairment** - Midlothian continues to be part of the East Region work stream for Weight Management and the local service has increased in capacity. Weight management services continue to be promoted and additional programmes in 2019-20 were fully booked. Work was paused in March due to Covid-19. The initiation of audiology clinics in Midlothian Community Hospital to improve service accessibility remains off target. Further funding opportunities unavailable as impacted by Covid-19. Improving awareness and understanding of sensory impairment among HSCP staff and partners by delivering 2 half days of training with RNIB and Deaf Action has taken place, however further progress impacted by the pandemic.

### **Community Safety – Achievements**

*Ensuring Midlothian is a safe place to live, work and grow up in*

**Justice Service** - In November 2019 a very successful Community Justice event was held. This included an address by the Chief Executive of Community Justice Scotland. All teams are now present within the Number 11 Recovery Hub. A regular multiagency meeting at Number 11 has been introduced where partners from the statutory and voluntary sector get together and discuss who will be leaving prison within the following three months. Key staff in Midlothian Council are provided with the names of individuals entering the prison system and release dates. This information is provided by the SPS.

Safe and Together continues to operate in Midlothian. During this period Covid 19 has significantly impacted on services but the Justice Team continue to provide phone contact with participants and new referrals for the Midlothian Families First (MFF) project where staff can work with men involved in domestically abusive behaviour on a voluntary basis. The referral route into the service has also opened up to include self-referral following contact with the police (enhanced call-back service). To respond to concerns regarding the rising risk of domestic abuse during this time the Justice Team have continued to support the implementation of Safe and Together by offering consultations to C&F staff on domestic abuse informed practice, continued participation on the implementation group and delivering briefings to staff, including at the Midlothian head teachers forum.

The Spring service has expanded in terms of the provision of service. There is now a drop in service for women which provides peer to peer support for women moving on from the service and in the longer term, enables women who have lived experience to develop a peer support role for Spring and represent service users within the steering group.

**Youth Justice Strategy** - The Midlothian Youth Justice Strategy, 2020-022 was developed during 2019/2020 to provide a robust approach to tackling youth offending and using diversion through intervening at an earlier stage. The draft will be finalised in 2020 and will highlight a wide partnership approach involving Police Scotland colleagues and the Early Intervention and Prevention Development Officer to examine and review process for managing youth offending in Midlothian. We have developed positive links and networking with the Centre for Youth and Criminal Justice (CYCJ) and the Scottish Government to focus on priority themes;

- Advancing the whole system approach
- Improving life chances
- Developing Capacity and Improvement

**Housing** - Midlothian Council has a long-standing nominations agreement with East and Midlothian Women's Aid. The purpose of this agreement is to enable households fleeing domestic abuse to access secure accommodation quickly, without the need to present for homeless assistance. Removing the need for potentially lengthy placements in temporary accommodation. In previous years this agreement resulted in two households being housed. This agreement was recently revised. As a result of this review a minimum of four nominations will be made by East and Midlothian Women's Aid.

**Road Services** - Good progress continued into Q4 with the capital programme for carriageway and footway renewal/improvement schemes. However, the onset of two severe storm events, winter conditions, and the Covid-19 pandemic, prevented the completion of the full programme. However, 85% of the 33 individual schemes programmed were completed, with a further 2 schemes part completed, and 3 schemes carried over to 2020/21. This resulted in a total of 5.80km and 3.34km of carriageway and footway resurfacing respectively.

**Environmental Health** - Midlothian Rural Crime Partnership was set up in October 2019 to bring partner agencies, including police, Scottish water and SEPA together to tackle rural crime, with official launch date for the Midlothian Partnership against Rural Crime taking place on 25 February 2020.

### **Getting it Right for Every Midlothian Child - Achievements** *Improving outcomes for children, young people and their families*

Overall 2019-20 has been a successful year for children's services. In March 2020 the Care Inspectorate completed their Joint Inspection of Children's Services the findings of which shall become available in September 2020.

**Foster Carers and Adopters** - Though a number of foster carers retired during 2019/20 we have been fortunate to replace our fostering population who are all at capacity and working hard to support vulnerable children and families. The recent increase to our fees and allowances coupled with streamlining of some of our fostering processes will hopefully have a greater impact in 20/21. Many of our foster carers are moving on to become Continuing Care Carers and in most cases are dual registered. We have worked hard to strengthen our systems and processes for continuing Care which has resulted in the Care Inspectorate agreeing to regulate Midlothian Council as an Adult-Continuing Care service

**Adoption and Permanence Planning** - 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.

**Residential Care Homes** - Our care homes continue to provide residential care for up to 9 young people with one emergency bed. Learning and development sessions for the staff have included a focus on adapting a Continuing Care approach for young people aged 16+, 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. 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.



**Hawthorn Family Learning Centre** - This continues to be an invaluable resource that supports those from 0-8 years of age as well as pregnant young mums and support for dads. As a result of COVID-19 a review of the services was postponed, however the learning and changes in practice during lock down will prove invaluable once we begin to emerge from the lockdown phase and begin a full review of the service.

**Mental Health** - The Midlothian Early Action Partnership (MEAP) project started in January 2019, to effect system change so that children, young people and young adults get timely and appropriate mental health support. The first year of the project has provided a learning journey, with opportunities to review and refine our approach to the project delivery. In January 2020, the first annual MEAP report was approved by the National Lottery. They observed that the report evidenced a 'strong sense of genuine partnership working within this project'. The funders are pleased with progress made to date and are supportive of the plans for 2020, which for the early part of the year include:

- commissioning a mapping process to understand the mental health supports available to children, young people and young adults in Midlothian.
- establishing a comprehensive evaluation framework to include the Tests of Change and overall project performance.
- exploring new Tests of Change ideas, using geographic, education and health data currently available.

As part of the wider project, Midlothian Sure Start continued to undertake the Test of Change around embedding trauma-informed practice within primary schools. This will continue in earnest during 2020. On 24th March a decision was made by the Steering Group to put the project on hold for some months, to allow staff involved to respond to immediate COVID-19 priorities focused on preventing loss of life and protecting the most at risk in society.

In order to ensure that the work MEAP is doing is not duplicated we are setting up a strategic planning group for children and young people's mental health, to 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 to bring a progress report to the GIRFEC Board on a 6 monthly basis

**Housing** - Planning is underway with Children's Services to establish the National House Project to commence later this year, providing direct access to secure tenancies for looked after young people in accordance with the Housing theme, Corporate Parent Strategy.

**Ensuring Excellence and Equity for All Learners** - The Education Service Plan sets out 4 key priorities aligned to the Council's strategic priorities to reduce inequalities in learning outcomes, health outcomes and economic circumstance:

- Priority 1 Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy
- Priority 2 Closing the attainment gap between most and least disadvantaged children
- Priority 3 Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Priority 4 Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people

Due to the impact of the pandemic and closure of schools, all schools provided an estimated CfE level based on progress made August 2019 – March 2020. CfE data was not collected by Scottish Government academic session 2019/20 and any analysis of performance 2019/20 at local and school level will not be considered suitable for accountability purposes (last reported data is detailed in the Education Service report).

Information from Insight shows Midlothian Leavers performance in Numeracy at SCQF Level 3, 4 and 5 is greater than the Virtual Comparator. Literacy results for School Leavers showed Performance above their virtual comparator in Level 3 and Level 4 Literacy. Level 5 Literacy has increased and continues to track above the Virtual comparator. Level 6 Literacy and Level 6 Numeracy performance are both below the Virtual comparator and have decreased on figures from last year

Information from Insight showed that Midlothian leavers in 2018/19 continued to perform above the Virtual comparator levels at Lowest 20%, Middle 60% and Highest 20% groups. All secondary schools continue to review the curricular offer within the senior phase to ensure young people can access a broader range of opportunities, courses and qualifications to meet their needs and aspirations. The closure of schools may impact on maximising the tariff scores for all learners given not all courses could be certificated.

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. 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.

The Attainment Adviser, Education Scotland has been working closely with all schools to review progress made towards closing the poverty related attainment gap and provided advice to schools on how to target resources more effectively to address inequalities in attainment and wellbeing.

It is envisaged that practitioner enquiry will become an integral aspect of the day-to-day practice of teachers and other education professionals (General Teaching Council for Scotland). Practitioner enquiry can play a major part in making change more sustainable and have greater impact on improving outcomes for our learners.

Midlothian schools are making good progress in embedding practitioner enquiry as an integral part of professional learning and development and improvement methodology.

Attendance and absence rates for session 2019/20 will not be comparable to previous years due to the closure of schools. An initial review of attendance and absence will be carried out on the reopening of schools and data will be tracked and reported Q2 2020/21 onwards. Exclusion rates for session 2019/20 will not be meaningful given the closure of schools and it will not be appropriate to compare the data to previous years. The secondary school exclusion rate per 1000 has significantly reduced with the current picture looking very positive in relation to below 40 per 1000. The rate for primaries has also reduced in line with the target.

Communities and Lifelong Learning Youth Work programme is now fully operational for 2019/2020, and there is a youth work offer from age 8 to 18 in all school clusters. All youth clubs are offered at low or no cost, with programming and reviewing planned with the young people. Attendance in all of the youth clubs are at a very high level.

A very successful Midlothian Young People Awards Ceremony took place in September with over 50 young people being nominated, celebrating the contribution and achievements of young people. Schools have made good progress in taking into account the recommendations made by the Child Poverty Action Group, particularly in relation to the cost of the school day. Work is ongoing to embed consideration of the cost of the school day in the life and work of our schools and evidence of progress made will be reported within individual school PEF and Standards and Quality reports June 2020.

**Early Years** - An ongoing campaign to raise awareness about the opportunity for 2 year old places in ELC ensured that we have an increasing families who take up this offer. The ELC service has introduced discretionary funding criteria, following a consultation with representative populations of parents, which means that discretionary funding will be targeted at children "in need" (CYP Act 2014). This criteria was introduced in September 2019 meaning that families that are above the income threshold could now be approved for the funding if they meet one or more of the identified discretionary criteria. There is an increased number of eligible 2s receiving pilot 1140 hour places. In addition to numbers increasing, children also received more funded hours. From January 2020, children were able to access 1140 hour placements. Multi agency working was key to success in increasing take up. We were also involved with a Pan Lothian working group with health and neighbouring authorities to share ideas that have helped increase take up overall.

The council has now completed the fifth phase of piloting expanded hours places and by the end of this quarter, 1,205 expanded hour places were available in Midlothian. This works out to be 43% of the places available which is slightly above Scottish Government expectations (40% in August). Almost all settings are providing 1140 hours provision across the council. Projects of note which have opened this session include Vogrie Outdoor Early Learning and Childcare Setting, Scots Corner Early Learning and Childcare Setting and a new ELC setting at St Davids PS. Vogrie Outdoor ELC is the Council's first fully outdoor nursery and has received considerable national and international interest. The ELC provision at Scots corner is developing in partnership with the MoD and this unique setting works closely with families to develop our family learning approach and areas of practice in supporting Armed Forces families throughout their early learning journey and beyond.

Due to Covid all settings closed in mid-March and the Scottish Government decided to put the legislative duty for implementation of 1140 hours on hold. Staff continued to make contact with families throughout this time and lunches were provided for families who were entitled or challenged by the circumstances. Vulnerable families with children aged 2-5 years were allocated support through a Gatekeeping process at Midlothian Sure Start or Hawthorn Children and Family Centre.

## **Improving Opportunities Midlothian - Achievements**

### *Creating opportunities for all and reducing inequalities*

**Positive Destinations** - The latest positive destinations information showed 35% of Midlothian school leavers going into Employment this is 10% higher than the National rate. Although the gap is closing the number of leavers going into Higher and Further Education is below all comparators. There are currently 98 modern apprentices on our apprenticeship programme, including 55 on Midlothian Child Care as part of the early year's expansion. In year one of the Foundation apprentice offer, there are 44 young people engaging in this programme. In the Employability Fund, there are 8 participants in the sector based academy which is a full time 6 week programme for learners who were previously unemployed. This programme provides them with learning, work experience and a guaranteed job interview. We have secured funding for 20 places for Sector Based Academies this year.

**Sport and Leisure** - Directed more of their programmes online, namely Active schools, making it easier for parents to join/pay and also reducing a lot of the paperwork previously involved. Work started on the new Funslope at Hillend Snowsport centre and will be completed during quarter two 2020 – 2021.

Active Schools worked with Yoga partners to offer Children & Family Yoga Sessions running two sessions a week the yoga delivered helps children with coordination, agility, injury and prevention. Research has shown that children who practice yoga can - Perform better at school, Be more calm in class, Improve concentration levels, Be more compassionate and caring with peers and help Improve sleep patterns. Active Schools Coordinators have been developing and strengthening links with Scottish Disability Sport through primary school Boccia delivery, and secondary school leadership opportunities. This year, there has been an increase in the number of schools within Midlothian receiving Gold school sport award and schools gaining successful revalidation.

GP practices in Midlothian agreed to come on board with a new scheme to recommend Ageing Well activities to patients who would benefit from getting more active and meeting new people. The fit-scription pads are available in all GP practices now with details of all Ageing Well walking groups and contact details to find out more about Ageing Wells other activities. Management of changes within Midlothian Active Choices programme personnel and practices has led to drastically reduced waiting times for our customers, from average of 4 months to average 2 weeks.

Sport and Leisure staff have worked closely with the HWL Team on health & wellbeing initiatives this year which means that Midlothian Council has retained the Healthy Working Lives Gold Award for 2019-2020

Since March and during the Lockdown Ageing well volunteers have been helping vulnerable members of the public, approx. 40 volunteers called round individuals to check they have a network of family and friends helping them and ensuring that they get the help they need by reporting back to a central Coordinator, dealing with any necessary shopping and linking with community groups.

**Facilities Management** - As part of the Early Years expansion Pilot, Nursery meal provision is now operational in 25 kitchens. The catering team has been working very closely with the Early Years team to achieve a good meal time experience. The catering team provided 2,340 meals for the Newbattle Summer Programme last year. In addition, cleaning and Janitorial staff were put in place to deal with the outbreak of COVID 19 including setting up packed lunches for the hub buildings.

**Property Assets** - Conclusion of a Community Asset Transfer of Polton Bowling Pavilion and Green at 62A Eskdale Drive, Bonnyrigg to Bonnyrigg After School Club on 18th of March 2020.

## **Sustainable Growth - Achievements**

### *Growing the local economy by supporting business growth and responding to growing demand for housing in a sustainable environment*

**Place** - The Place Principle builds on a shared understanding of place. Place helps to build momentum and increase the pace of collaborative actions to achieve better outcomes for people, with a particular emphasis on those experiencing disadvantage. The Place Principle encourages better collaboration, resource utilisation and community participation in trying to change the culture of public service delivery so there is a presumption in favour of place-based approaches centred around communities and encourages local flexibility. Places are shaped by the way resources, services and assets are directed and used by the people who live in and invest in them.



A Place approach provides all partners with a simple mechanism by which to encourage accountability over decisions taken about the way resources, services and assets are directed and delivered. It builds upon the Christie Commission report on the Future Delivery of Public Services which highlighted that in order to deliver good public services with positive outcomes for people and communities, there must be a reform process and new ways of working which have empowerment at their heart to ensure maximum impact of resources and strategic action in reducing inequalities.

Throughout 19/20, the Place Directorate has continued to consider how it can transform in order to improve outcomes for communities by contributing to the Council's short to long term priorities whilst taking into account the financial challenges ahead. In support of the Council's strategic approaches continued progress on the following transformational activities, aimed at maximising the use of assets and creating flexibility across the workforce will continue:

- Development of the Street Scene/neighbourhood model for service delivery to involve local communities and/or the criminal justice teams.
- Maximising the utilisation of the Council's fleet and passenger transportation arrangements (including third sector providers) by reducing costs and contributing to the environmental agenda in reducing the travel carbon footprint.
- Maximising the utilisation of the Council's property and land portfolio including progressing sites for the building of additional Social Housing.
- Move towards an asset management plan identifying planned preventative maintenance regimes for properties similar to those operated in our PPP contracts.
- Changing the way that Council Staff travel on behalf of the Council.
- Optimising the use of Property assets including industrial estates.
- Rationalisation of the Council office and depot estate to a modern fit for purpose portfolio operating from the minimum number of buildings utilising flexible ways of working whilst retaining a customer focus.
- Seeking commercialisation opportunities and trading with a wide range of organisations including the Private Sector and public sector partners.
- Reducing the volume of waste managed and maximise recycling from all sectors with a clear focus on Municipal Premises as detailed within a developed waste strategy.
- Reviewing Building Facility Management Services including the development of Integrated Facilities
- Delivering a learning estate programme to deliver Education's vision of centres of excellence and a world class status for facilities which support and enhance this aim.
- Developing community participation opportunities with local organisations and groups, particularly in our parks and open spaces.
- Introducing renewable sources of energy production to reduce utility costs and the carbon tax including utilising available energy for district heating

All services continue to contribute to environmental responsibilities, providing opportunities for young people through positive destinations work placements, supporting the economic growth of Midlothian and working in partnership with Communities and Voluntary Organisations.

Midlothian Council is addressing the demographic growth and the future demands of a growing and ageing population by maximising its use of assets, whilst changing service design and delivery through a Transformational approach, where we become more efficient and at the same time deliver changes to improve the way we work, the services we deliver and the quality of life experienced by local people.

Towards the end of Quarter 4 of 19/20, focus for services was placed on the response to COVID 19 which resulted in transforming the way we work in order to provide essential services. Going into 20/21 services within Place will continue to align its priorities with those set out in the Covid recovery plan, ensuring we support recovery whilst retaining the best elements of transformation and making those changes permanent to the way we deliver council services.

**Waste** - Delivery of the Waste Management Strategy will influence future direction of Waste Services as reviewed in the programme of cross party, cross cutting meetings. The Strategy ensures that Waste Services has sufficient plans in place to meet legislative and policy requirements to achieve landfill reduction targets. Long term disposal outlets for residual, food and dry recycle waste streams are secured although the dry recycle market in particular continues to be volatile.

We will continue to explore options for future service delivery through partnerships (e.g. waste facilities with City of Edinburgh and work through the Edinburgh, Lothian, Borders, and Fife (ELBF) for Road Services, shared services (e.g. Health and Safety with East Lothian) and co-production with community partners (e.g. grounds maintenance, and winter service).

This year we completed a successful pilot for a reuse cabin located at Stobhill recycling centre which has now been extended as a result. The 'Making a Difference' idea submitted by a member of the waste team offers local charities the chance to reuse furniture and other bulky items left in our recycling centre. This year SEPA verified the Midlothian 2018 recycling rate was 58.2%, which was the third highest performing Local Authority area in Scotland.

In keeping with objectives of the waste strategy to continually increase recycling rates, food waste recycling was introduced internally to staff offices at Fairfield House and Midlothian House after a successful month's trial. Food waste collected goes to the food waste plant at Millerhill to create energy and agricultural fertiliser. An income of over £512,000 has been realised with over 14,000 households paying the new charge for the kerbside collection of garden waste.

**Homelessness and Housing Services** - Continued good progress has been made in respect of the 4 strategic outcomes set out in Midlothian's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) 2019 – 2024:

- The supply of permanent accommodation for homeless households increases.
- Bed and breakfast accommodation is no longer routinely used as emergency accommodation for homeless households and the time household's spend in temporary accommodation reduces.
- Homeless households with support needs are supported to access and maintain permanent accommodation.
- Housing options and support are in place to prevent homelessness.

The Revised Housing Allocation Policy agreed by Council in December 2019 has been implemented. This places a renewed focus on addressing homelessness, with a significant increase in the proportion of lets to homeless and increased flexibility in the properties being allocated which will reduce waiting times. The impact of these changes will also reduce the demand for bed and breakfast accommodation during 2020/21. Additional temporary accommodation services are progressing which will reduce reliance and cost of using bed and breakfast accommodation. The Mayfield Family Service became operational during April. This service delivers eight, fully furnished, self-contained flats to be used as emergency accommodation for households with either children or a pregnant person as a member of the household. This service provides an excellent standard of accommodation.

A review of the rent model for temporary accommodation was undertaken and approved in line with the recommendation from the Scottish Government's Homelessness Strategy that rents should be set at a level in order to provide a more equitable system and provide a clearer path for people to move on from Temporary Accommodation. It is anticipated this will be implemented further to service user consultation as from 1st April 2021.

The Housing First programme will commence in July providing 20 secure council tenancies per annum targeted at hard to reach and vulnerable homeless households. Many of these households have previously spent lengthy periods living in emergency accommodation. A tender process was completed to appoint a specialist support provider as these household's will require intensive support in order to sustain their accommodation.

A service provider was appointed to manage the supported accommodation services and deliver a tenancy support service on 1st April 2020. This delivers a saving of £742,529 over the duration of the contract period.

The use of shared temporary accommodation as an alternative to bed and breakfast will be available to single homeless applicants and couples. Each household will be provided with their own bedroom, while sharing kitchen, bathroom and living room areas. The accommodation provided will be more affordable for households who are in employment. For those not in employment access to education, training and employment opportunities will also be improved. A 0.5 FTE Temporary Accommodation Officer has been recruited to manage up to 20 properties per annum for a fixed term period to 2023/24. These will provide a more satisfactory temporary accommodation option for up to 40 households per annum. The first of these properties to be available by July 2020.

**Housing** - A large number of sites are under construction as part of Midlothian Council's new build council housing programme. Areas with sites under construction include Bilston (8 units), Penicuik (21 units), Loanhead (2 sites – 49 units), Roslyn (13 units), Pathhead (10 units), Danderhall (47 units), Bonnyrigg (16 units) and Dalkeith (27 units). There has also been significant numbers of open market acquisitions undertaken with 48 purchases undertaken in 2019/20.

**Travel and Fleet Services** - Grant funding was secured from Edinburgh ULEZ Fund to purchase four electric cars, install a further two rapid Chargers at Sheriffhall Park and Ride and £500,000 towards installation and replacement of bus shelters in Midlothian. Utilising external funding from the Scottish Government, a new post of Sustainable Transport Project Officer was appointed this year. The project officer is responsible for the Electric Vehicle infrastructure and implementation of Electric vehicles into the Council Fleet to meet 2025 Deadline set by the Scottish Government to decarbonise Local authority Fleet.

The team were successful in bidding to Transport Scotland Smarter Choices Smarter Places (SCSP) fund to a value of £80,000. This enabled the team to take forward the active travel strategy and related sustainable travel initiatives and projects. In addition the team were also successful in bidding to Scotrail for a grant to market and publicise the electric Bike project for Dalkeith/ Eskbank Station. The Electric Bike Project is fully funded by SEStran with officer support from ourselves (SCSP funding). This year funding was received from Cycling Scotland for the purchase of approximately ten bikes to be used by staff members for commuting to work

A bid was successful for £863,000 of LEZ (Low emission zone) Funding from Transport Scotland. Funding has been allocated against 5 projects that must be completed and claimed for end of financial year.

**Building Services** - Grant Funding of £511,345 from the External Window Insulation Scheme (EWI) has been allocated and completed within the Ladywood area of Penicuik. Further grant funding of £544,644 for 2019/20 EWI has been allocated to the Cameron Crescent area of Bonnyrigg work has stalled due to COVID restrictions. However, start-up procedures are in place for when restrictions are lifted. Scottish Government award of a grant of £941,000, payable over the financial year 2019/20 and 2020/21 in connection with Solar PV, Air Source Heat Pumps, and Battery Storage solutions in up to 182 Council properties. Project at early stages.

£13.8m Project funding approved for Destination Hillend Project. Design team appointed, planning in Principal applied for and detailed project programme being developed

**Landscape and Countryside** - The Ranger Service has generated a total of 9,714 hours of volunteer time this year to maintain areas across the county. Two sites were awarded Green Flags, Kings Park and Straiton Pond. This success was the first submission for Straiton pond. Only two sites out of a possible six were submitted due to financial restrictions. Two different sites will be submitted each year going forward. A Final Draft of the Allotment and Food Growing Strategy 2020-30 was produced and the Audit Review of Existing Open Spaces was completed.

Towards the end of Quarter 4 and during COVID 19, Land services provided staff for front line services such as waste, ensuring the provision of waste collections and cleaning of town centres. In addition ensured social distancing signage was in place and adopted alternative working practices to ensure staff safety.

**Economic Development** - The Council's Strategy for Growth 2020-25 was formally endorsed by members in December 2019 and its progress will be monitored through annual review through the Community Planning Partnerships Sustainable Growth theme. Town centre Capital Fund: A total of seven applications are now underway; ranging from community facilities to enhancing links to town centres. Projects total £910,000 and will be planned to complete by September 2020.

**Environmental Health** - A review of the air quality monitoring locations within Midlothian is complete. This was following an undertaking given by Midlothian Council in the 2019 Air Quality Report which was supported by Scottish Government and SEPA. The new locations will include monitoring levels of NO2 (main source is traffic pollution) close to schools near busy roads and in the wider Shawfair area and incorporated suggestions by members of the CAFS Working Group.

#### **Additional Areas of Interest**

*Internal Council actions/activities supporting the delivery of agreed outcomes*

**Finance and Integrated Service Support** - Throughout 19/20 Finance and Integrated Service Support continued to have a strategic focus on securing the financial sustainability of the council, strengthening financial management and nurturing a highly motivated and effective workforce. All of which were recognised as critical to the achievement of the Council's priority outcomes and continued delivery of services to a growing county.

The key activities which support this strategic focus were:

- The delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) incorporating Capital Strategy and

Capital Investment plans, Reserves Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy together with the development and implementation of a comprehensive Change Programme;

- The Workforce Strategy and the development of Service Workforce Plans;
- Delivery of the Integrated Service Support review, reducing the overall cost of providing the Finance and Integrated Support Services and ensuring the service is delivered within the approved budget.

The strategic focus was also supported by:

- The Digital Strategy and Digital Learning Strategy
- The Procurement Strategy and Contract Delivery Plan

**Health, Safety and Civil Contingencies** - The reviewed Council's Health and Safety Policy and Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy covering the next 4 year period was presented to CMT on 16th of October. A revised audit/review programme for management arrangements were also presented and approved. Throughout the year the team have provided a lead to the preparations for a no-deal exit from the European Union. The Health and Safety team rose to the challenge of providing support to services faced with the workplace risk of COVID 19, this work continued into 2020/21.

### Challenges and Risks

**COVID-19 Pandemic** - The impact, threat and uncertainty of the emerging coronavirus pandemic became a significant challenge during Q4 and will continue to be a challenge during 2020/21 and beyond. Collaboration and effective community and interagency working is fundamental, along with having in place a clear mobilisation and recovery programme to address the significant challenges faced in service delivery, addressing the wider health and care needs of the people of Midlothian, and ensuring workforce resilience and safety.

Additionally addressing the financial impact of Covid 19 on the Council and as part of that to increase the pace in which change, improvement and transformation is being delivered. Ensuring that there is clarity on priorities and that strategic outcomes are clearly defined and articulated. Maintaining forward momentum amid a period of fundamental change.

**Children's Services** - Budget continues to remain a significant and ongoing challenge.

**Homeless** - There continues to be a significant demand on the homeless service set against an ambitious and challenging legislative environment, including the changes proposed by the Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2020. There is a risk of a significant increase in homelessness presentations as the financial and legal measures put in place to protect households during the Covid pandemic are withdrawn. This will require a collaborative preventative approach as set out in the Council's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. Some examples of current work to mitigate these challenges are detailed in this report.

**Financial Sustainability** - Given the impact of Covid 19 on the Council's finances, the expectation of continuing challenging grant settlements, a real terms reduction in core funding together with the impact of a rapidly growing population and greater demand for services, the Council will need to maintain a focus on securing a sustainable and deliverable Medium Term Financial Strategy. This will include the evolution of the forward plans for HRA, Capital and Reserves. Delivery of savings plans, both within the MTFS and relating to previous slippage is key and this needs to be monitored closely. Values attached to proposals in the MTFS were reviewed further to ensure they sat correctly within a detailed delivery plan which was reflected in the final 20/21 budget recognising that it is important for the Council that the measures in the MTFS are fully developed (where necessary) at pace and also proceed to implementation at pace.

**UK Decision to leave the EU** - All Council services have been kept abreast of the risks associated with the UK leaving the EU and in particular the risks for a no deal scenario. Services have been directed towards UK Government guidance on how to prepare for a no deal and have been tasked with assessing the potential impact and identifying appropriate risk responses. A Council Cross Service Brexit Working Group has been set up in preparation for a potential No Deal exit from the European Union.

**Financial Strategy** - The need to continue to strengthen financial sustainability and financial management.

**Workforce Strategy** - Alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 to 2022/3 we will continue to implement the Workforce Strategy 2017-2022. This includes a focus on the identified themes over the next five years. The Service Workforce Plans will need to be updated to align to the MTFS, the new leadership structure and detail

the projected workforce actions over the medium term.

**Digital Strategy and Digital Learning Strategy** - Covid 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 of the Covid response. 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







Council Midlothian Council Performance

Midlothian Council  
How we are performing



Corporate Performance Indicators (Latest)

 8    3    6    0



 Off Target    On Target    Data Only Indicator    The Data is not available yet

# Midlothian Council Complaints Indicator Summary



## 01. Manage budget effectively

Indicator	2018/19	Q1 2019/20	Q2 2019/20	Q3 2019/20	Q4 2019/20	2019/20				Annual Target 2019/20
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Status	Note	Short Trend	
Performance against revenue budget	£203.596m	£215.039m	£3.004m	£214.219m	£206.362m	£206.362m		<b>19/20:</b> Off Target Positive outcome for the 2019/20 End of Year Financial reports was a net underspend of £102,000 which was achieved by everyone working together, demonstrating strict financial discipline despite some one-off financial pressures;		£206.173m



## 02. Manage stress and absence

Indicator	2018/19	Q1 2019/20	Q2 2019/20	Q3 2019/20	Q4 2019/20	2019/20				Annual Target 2019/20
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Status	Note	Short Trend	
Corporate Indicator - Sickness Absence Days per Employee (All employees)	8.55	2.52	4.49	7.23	9.7	9.7		<b>19/20:</b> Off Target COVID-19 has significantly affected absence levels across the council. Pro active work is now underway to work with manager's to facilitate a return to work for those who cannot work from home ensuring a robust risk assessment is in place and where relevant an OH assessment.		7.5



## 03. Process invoices efficiently

Indicator	2018/19	Q1 2019/20	Q2 2019/20	Q3 2019/20	Q4 2019/20	2019/20				Annual Target 2019/20
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Status	Note	Short Trend	
Corporate Indicator - Percentage of invoices sampled and paid within 30 days (LGBF)	91.1%	92.2%	88.8%	89.2%	89.6%	89.6%		<b>19/20:</b> Off Target Via the purchase to pay project, invoice approval implementations have recently been complete for Gas maintenance, HR, Dalkeith Social Work centre, Hawthorn Children's Centre. Procurement and Communications. E-invoicing phase 2 complete and suppliers identified for phase 3.		95.0%











#### 04. Control risk











Indicator	2018/19	Q1 2019/20	Q2 2019/20	Q3 2019/20	Q4 2019/20	2019/20				Annual Target 2019/20
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Status	Note	Short Trend	
% of high risks that have been reviewed in the last quarter	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%		19/20: There was 5 High Risks reviewed and 5 are on target.		100%




#### 05. Implement improvement plans

Indicator	2018/19	Q1 2019/20	Q2 2019/20	Q3 2019/20	Q4 2019/20	2019/20				Annual Target 2019/20
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Status	Note	Short Trend	
% of internal/external audit actions progressing on target.	66.67 %	91.78 %	90.79 %	78.95 %	73.97 %	73.97 %		19/20: Off Target		85%

#### 06. Commitment to valuing complaints

Indicator	2018/19	Q1 2019/20	Q2 2019/20	Q3 2019/20	Q4 2019/20	2019/20				Annual Target 2019/20
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Status	Note	Short Trend	
Total number of complaints received (quarterly)	5,107	1,407	1,614	1,176	1,271	5,421		19/20: Data Only		
Number of complaints upheld (quarterly)	3,772	1,108	1,247	906	970	4,247		19/20: Data Only		
Number of complaints partially upheld (quarterly)	197	63	54	25	23	202		19/20: Data Only		
Number of complaints not upheld (quarterly)	633	109	90	60	60	430		19/20: Data Only		
Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working days	87.72 %	90.26 %	86.45 %	87.53 %	88.66 %	87.61 %		19/20: Off Target - Whilst detailed reports at quarter end are provided for services to better understand their complaints position, a resourcing issue caused an unexpected delay to the planned roll-out of a monthly Service Complaints Dashboard. As a result manual monthly updates were introduced to help services with earlier identification of complaints performance later in the year and this process provides the opportunity for services to be more proactive in dealing with complaints. Further support in applying the complaint handling process more effectively to ensure more accurate reporting has also been discussed at CMT and is available to Directorates.		95%

Percentage of complaints at stage 2 complete within 20 working days	73.33 %	54.55 %	87.5%	81.82 %	66.67 %	60.87 %		<p><b>19/20:</b> Off Target - Whilst detailed reports at quarter end are provided for services to better understand their complaints position, a resourcing issue caused an unexpected delay to the planned roll-out of a monthly Service Complaints Dashboard. As a result manual monthly updates were introduced to help services with earlier identification of complaints performance later in the year and this process provides the opportunity for services to be more proactive in dealing with complaints. Further support in applying the complaint handling process more effectively to ensure more accurate reporting has also been discussed at CMT and is available to Directorates.</p>		95%
Percentage of complaints escalated and complete within 20 working days	61.04 %	78.57 %	75%	90%	60%	74.07 %		<p><b>19/20:</b> Off Target Whilst detailed reports at quarter end are provided for services to better understand their complaints position, an under used option within the CHP is the ability to escalate a complaint from Stage 1 to Stage 2 to ensure that more appropriate timescales for more complex complaints are applied.</p>		95%
Number of complaints closed in the year	5,066	1,380	1,567	1,104	1,157	5,280		<b>19/20:</b> Data Only		
Average time in working days for a full response at stage 1	3.96	2.3	3.07	3.23	2.56	3.28		<b>19/20:</b> On Target		5
Average time in working days for a full response at stage 2	18.31	20	15	15.27	26.83	20.13		<p><b>19/20:</b> Off Target Whilst detailed reports at quarter end are provided for services to better understand their complaints position, a resourcing issue caused an unexpected delay to the planned roll-out of a monthly Service Complaints Dashboard. As a result manual monthly updates were introduced to help services with earlier identification of complaints performance later in the year and this process provides the opportunity for services to be more proactive in dealing with complaints. Further support in applying the complaint handling process more</p>		20

								effectively to ensure more accurate reporting has also been discussed at CMT and is available to Directorates.		
Average time in working days for a full response for escalated complaints	21.08	11.43	16.13	17.1	31.6	19.11		19/20: On Target		20
Number of complaints where an extension to the 5 or 20 day target has been authorised (quarterly)	11	1	3	1	3	14		19/20: Data Only	