

# Midlothian Council Report

## Quarter One 2022/23

Cabinet  
Tuesday 6 September 2022  
Item 5.9

### Progress Against Strategic Outcomes

*Individuals and communities in Midlothian will be able to lead healthier, safer, greener and successful lives by 2030. No child or household need live in poverty. Midlothian will be a Great Green Place to Grow by achieving our net zero carbon ambitions.*

We are focussing on our new [Single Midlothian Plan](#) to reduce the impact of poverty on our most vulnerable.

Midlothian's Child Poverty report 2020 set out Midlothian's commitment to eradicating child poverty by 2030.

The three drivers for achieving this are:

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

We are also committed to improving health outcomes by working with partners to develop and maintain services close to home that support the needs of local people

The Climate Emergency Group's values are to get to net zero equitably, taking into account different people and communities' capacities and abilities to get there. Scotland's national target is to be Net Zero by 2045. Following the motion to Council in 2019, in January 2020 the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) 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.

Whilst a full update for the performance for each of the Council's Service areas is published separately, this report reflects an overview of the key service updates, against the thematic areas of the Single Midlothian Plan.

### Single Midlothian Plan Themes in 2022/23

#### Adult, Health and Care - Achievements

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

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

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

Midlothian Integration Joint Board plan and direct the services that are delivered by Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP). The HSCP is a partnership between NHS Lothian and Midlothian Council and is responsible for services that help Midlothian residents to live well and get support when they need it. This includes all community health and social care services for adults in Midlothian and some hospital based services such as Accident and Emergency.

In order to meet the legal requirements of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014, the HSCP was required to develop, consult on, and publish a new 3 year Strategic Plan in 2022. The new Strategic Plan for 2022-25 was published in April 2022.

**HSCP COVID-19 Response** - The Health and Social Care Partnership, its partners and the communities it serves continued to be impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic. A recent spike in infections has caused continued significant pressure on our workforce due to absences. The Health and Social Care Partnership has maintained delivery of services and continues to work with its partners to ensure resources are being managed and deployed to cover staff absences where needed and continue to develop our remobilisation plans.

**Learning Disabilities:** The effective use of the Community Living Change Fund represents an important part of delivering high quality community based support for people with Complex needs in Midlothian and avoiding hospital delays and out of area placements. The formation of a Complex Care Expert Panel was agreed at the June Finance and Performance Group and this will oversee spending of Midlothian's Complex Care Community Fund up to March 2024.

**Older People:** Extra Care Housing: As with many other areas, Midlothian faces many challenges in addressing the housing and care needs of an ageing population with increasingly complex requirements. Extra Care Housing is a model of accommodation and care that supports people to live in their own tenancy. Work was progressed on 3 sites to provide 106 ECH bungalows or flats.

Moving into a new phase of Covid-19 the Care Home Support Team will continue to provide support in a more planned, proactive way, working alongside Care Home Staff in an advisory role, whilst remaining responsive when necessary. The focus will remain on care provision, applying principles of Quality Improvement, through project-based work.

**Care at Home:** Care at Home continues to be a key contributor to the HSCP vision for people to receive the right care in the right place; in their home and community as far as possible. It supports efforts to reduce length of hospital stay, as well as admission avoidance. Care at Home is currently provided by the HSCP and external providers. Care at Home services continue to meet community needs by allocating new packages of care weekly.

**Mental Health:** Midlothian has invested strongly in its Primary Care Mental Health Team, which, since 2019, has been developed, and rolled out to all 12 GP practices, offering direct access to mental health triage, assessment and brief intervention for people aged 18-65. The team is multi-disciplinary and delivers a community-based access service in partnership with the General practitioners, voluntary sector, third sector and other relevant statutory services.

There continues to be strong partnership working between Housing, Health and Social care and third sector providing support and housing for individuals with complex needs, through the housing first model.

### **Community Safety – Achievements**

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

**Justice** in Midlothian went live with our bespoke Bail Services. Through the introduction of Midlothian Bail Services we intend to provide the Courts a credible alternative to the use of remand where individuals are assessed as needing support and supervision to meet their bail conditions. It is intended to reduce the number of individuals normally resident in Midlothian being held on remand pending trial, or for reports after conviction, who with appropriate safeguards in respect of public protection could be released on bail to the community.

**Substance Misuse:** Key services based in Number 11 in Dalkeith continued to provide services including outreach treatment, injecting equipment provision [IEP], naloxone, information/advice. There has been an impact of Covid related sickness and absence on service delivery. There are also challenges with recruitment at the moment.

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

*Improving outcomes for children, young people and their families*

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

**The Promise:** The Promise is a key driver for moving forward and shaping the future of children's services. Following a nationally published report which was initially critical of Councils for what was perceived to be a lack of progress towards the commitments, Midlothian Council has played a key role in providing CoSLA with information to showcase the work being done. Our local report was developed around the five priority areas and key milestones which are: A Good Childhood; Whole Family Support; Supporting the Workforce; Planning and Building Capacity.

**Positive Destination** figures published in May 2022 highlight a growth of 1.96% from 2019/20, and a 0.16% increase from the five year average from 2015/16-2019/20. The gap in positive destinations between leavers in most deprived vs. least deprived for 2020/21 is now only 4.2%, with 90.7% of leavers from the most deprived neighbourhoods in a positive destination. The figure and the gap are the best compared to any of our comparator authorities

## **Attainment and Achievement: *Improve attainment within the Broad General Education (BGE) stages:***

### *Progress and Achievement in Q1*

- Attainment visits carried out in all primary and secondary schools to review progress of learners across phases.
- The Build Back Better Team continue to support those schools with a significant attainment gap (poverty or covid). The data indicates an improvement across all measures but further improvement is still required. The continuation of Recovery funding will allow for a continued focus on improving outcomes in these schools.
- Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) data was gathered at the end of Q1. A detailed analysis will be provided in Q2.
- Attainment meetings carried out in each secondary school to review predictions, look at progress against school improvement targets and discuss interventions to boost attainment. Easter school provision for targeted groups of students in preparation for exam diet. Senior phase students sat formal examinations/assessments in May/June. A breakdown of all results will be provided in Q2.
- The Equipped for Learning initiative has resulted in all children and young people having their own digital device. The Professional Learning Academy will support the skill development of staff to ensure maximise impact on learners

## **Improving Opportunities Midlothian - Achievements**

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

**Customer Services Strategy:** 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. The strategy will help us to change the way we deliver services utilising the latest technologies and linking to national frameworks.

As one of the fastest growing areas in Scotland, the Council cannot support more customers using the current resources, systems and processes. This means that the adoption of digital and automated processes will be key to continuing to provide a seamless customer journey, satisfying enquiries at the first point of contact and meeting increased demand.

**Sport and Leisure:** Gorebridge Leisure Centre which was utilised as a mass vaccination centre began to operate as a leisure centre with the gym re-opening.

The Active Schools Team have continued to ensure a safe & positive return to sport, re-engaging and rebuilding our Active Schools programme to provide opportunities for our Midlothian young people. The programme has continued to grow with more opportunities to be active being available and more volunteers working in our varied programme.

## **Sustainable Growth - Achievements**

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

***"Place is where people, location and resources combine to create a sense of identity and purpose. The Place service ambition is to deliver joined-up, collaborative, and participative approaches to services, land and buildings, across all sectors within a place, enabling better outcomes for everyone and increased opportunities for people and communities to shape their own lives."***

Over recent years, innovative ways of working have been introduced and services adapted at pace to respond to the needs of our citizens, in particular those experiencing the greatest levels of poverty and inequality. This has resulted in a complete transformation of how the Council works. Our services are continuing to build on this learning moving forward, harnessing the energy, flexibility and creativity demonstrated by our workforce, to embed a culture of continuous improvement and innovation

Hub and Spoke, one of Midlothian's key drivers for change, will see a Locality approach to service delivery adopted, developed in conjunction with community planning partners. The opportunity to review and redesign services that the pandemic has provided will result in a more efficient and effective operation of sites within local communities. This will improve service delivery, and ensure better outcomes for local communities. The continued rollout of enhanced ICT capabilities will strengthen cross service working, produce resource efficiencies and support the localisation of services.

**Environmental:** Midlothian Council was one of the first local authorities to sign Scotland's Climate Change Declaration, publicly acknowledging the challenges and opportunities that climate change brings with a commitment to make the Council's activities net zero carbon by 2030. Work continues to implement the Council's Climate Change

Strategy and focus continues to achieve future emissions targets. The ambitious strategy sets out how we will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, encourage and work with others in our community to mitigate and adapt to changing climate. The strategy incorporates an action plan with a number of initiatives and ongoing programmes which together are helping to reduce our emissions and carbon footprint.

**Economic and Regeneration:** Midlothian Council's Economic Renewal Strategy sets out our ambitious approach to managing the transition from lockdown and planning for the longer term challenges the local economy will face, the strategy aims to mitigate the adverse economic impact on the local economy from COVID-19. Key aims are to protect jobs and aid business recovery using a place based partnership approach that maximises the opportunities developing from the pandemic. Taking this partnership approach, the strategy will foster entrepreneurship, upskilling and training, addressing gaps in the market and changing the way business is done to better align this to customer behaviour. Alongside support for agriculture, tourism and the leisure and hospitality sectors, the council will also promote local jobs and self-employment opportunities, particularly for young people, to give them the necessary skills and support they need to benefit from economic recovery.

**Procurement** - Procurement allows the Council to repurpose its spending power to drive our key strategic priorities and to secure the best possible value and outcomes for Midlothian. Effective procurement can maximise the value of every pound spent in terms of jobs, skills and supply chain opportunities in the local community. We will aim to address economic, social and environmental considerations at all stages of the procurement cycle within the rules of open, fair and transparent competition.

**Capital Strategy:** As Scotland's fastest growing local authority area, it is critical to delivery that investment in community infrastructure, such as housing, the learning estate, economic investment and green infrastructure, is in the right place at the right time. This will help our communities to live well, live locally and prosper.

How we invest in community infrastructure must also respond to changes in our working and living patterns brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Communities need to be able to readily access the services they need. Capital investment is also an opportunity to support our local economy through job creation and skills enhancement, particularly in relation to supporting a transition to a green economy as we invest in sustainable, highly energy efficient buildings.

As a growing Council, we have the opportunity to transform parts of Midlothian in a way that reflects how we live now. We will invest in community infrastructure with a focus on place-making, reducing inequalities, improving economic opportunities and improving education and health and wellbeing outcomes.

The Capital Investment Strategy brings together many strands of the Council's activities to build upon our past successes and drive forward innovation in a co-ordinated and achievable manner for the benefit of Midlothian and its citizens.

The strategy sits centrally within the Council's future planning activities and in doing so has to reflect the demands of Council services to ensure positive outcomes are achieved in the right place, at the right time for the maximum benefit to Midlothian. The extensive capital programme, totalling £0.8bn, delivers new schools, a record investment in council housing, improved community infrastructure, investment in the local transport network and in innovative developments such as the new low carbon heat network in Shawfair.

**Digital Strategy and Digital Learning Strategy:** Supported by the appointment of SOCITIM Advisory (Society for innovation, technology and modernisation) as a strategic partner and led by the Digital First Board work progressed to deliver an ambitious new digital strategy, ***Digital Midlothian 2021-2023, "Empowering People, Enabling Growth"*** aimed at improving the way services are delivered to Midlothian citizens the strategy sets out how local outcomes will be improved by delivering digital services to digitally connected communities.

While responding to the pandemic has also transformed the way the council works, and we are already using technology to allow our services to be more flexible and responsive it was recognised that the Council needs to do much more to harness the opportunities that a digital approach can bring. This includes supporting our communities and local businesses to thrive in a digital world and making sure that our children are prepared for the workplaces of the future.

**Housing and homelessness:** Midlothian Council's updated Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) was submitted to the Scottish Government at the end of June 2022 which sets out key actions for delivery in 22/23 and addresses the next phase in transforming the services provided to meet housing need. These activities are crucial to reduce the time spent in temporary accommodation, improving the quality of temporary accommodation provided, continue to deliver Housing First and improve the health and wellbeing of those most vulnerable households. The plan also explains how Midlothian Council will address the next phase of its approach to transforming the services

provided to those in housing need by developing other initiatives during 2022/23 and into 2023/24, with an emphasis on the prevention of homelessness, tenancy sustainability and early intervention.

### Challenges and Risks

The Financial Sustainability challenges for Midlothian continue with our recovery out of the pandemic, the cost of living crisis, the growing and ageing population and the increasing demand for services that this brings. Midlothian is projected to have the highest percentage change in population size of all council areas in Scotland. From 2018 to 2028, the population of Midlothian is projected to increase from 91,340 to 103,945. This is an increase of 13.8%, which is in contrast to a projected increase of 1.8% for Scotland as a whole with a 40.9% increase in older people over 75. In addition, Midlothian has 10 zones which falls into the most deprived areas giving a local share of 8.7% living in the most deprived areas in Scotland.

**Financial sustainability** has continued to dominate the agenda. In respect of inflation as well as rising energy costs and the real prospect of unfunded pay awards the quarter 1 financial reports to Council on 23 August 2022 highlight that the construction industry in Scotland and the UK is currently experiencing unprecedented adverse market conditions, which is leading to significant rises in tender prices for a wide range of materials. There is evidence that inflation of between 10% and 15% beyond BCIS predictions is affecting projects and whilst measures such as value engineering are partially mitigating cost increase there is a risk that the capital budgets will need to be increased with a resultant impact on the funding strategy. The situation continues to be monitored and as a consequence it may be necessary to both revisit existing capital plans and also review the 2022/23 service budgets and implement savings measures in the year.

The Scottish Government's Resource Spending review published on 31 May 2022 presented very challenging financial planning parameters for Local Government. It indicated cash flat grant settlements through to 2025/26 with a £100m increase for 2026/27. Commentators on the RSR have recognised the impact on Local Government, with both the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) and Fraser of Allander institute stating that the proposals essentially represent a 7% real terms decrease in funding between 22/23 and 26/27. This is in contrast to the 4.7% real terms increase that the Scottish Government will see overall (2% if social security transfers are excluded), and the real terms increases that Health, Social Justice and Housing will see. The real term decrease planned for Local Government comes on top of significant real term reductions since 2013/14, which has driven ongoing reform, rationalisation, innovation and transformation work across Local Government.

On 20 June 2022 the Scottish Parliament published the **National Care Service (NCS) Bill** which will provide the foundation for the NCS. Alongside the Bill, explanatory notes, a policy memorandum, a financial memorandum and a delegated powers memorandum were also published. There are four key Parts of the Bill: part 1 establishes the National Care Service and care boards. It gives Scottish Ministers the power to transfer health and social care functions to the boards; part 2 gives Scottish Minister's powers over health and social care records; part 3 modifies existing laws relating to the provision and regulation of care; and part 4 allows further legislation and regulations to be made.

By far, the most significant part of the legislation is the intention to transfer social care responsibility from local authorities to a new, national service. However, the Bill does not provide any detail as to the logistics of this transfer. It is not clear at this stage the extent to which powers will be removed from local authorities or to what extent local authorities will continue to have involvement in the provision or delivery of services. It is however clear that the Bill anticipates the possibility of a wholesale transfer of powers and duties to NCS. There is also the power for Scottish Ministers to transfer healthcare functions from the NHS to the National Care Service.

**The Health and Social Care Partnership**, its partners and the communities it serves continued to be impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic. A recent spike in infections has caused continued significant pressure on our workforce due to absences. The Health and Social Care Partnership has maintained delivery of services and continues to work with its partners to ensure resources are being managed and deployed to cover staff absences where needed and continue to develop our remobilisation plans

**A growing and ageing population:** Midlothian is 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.

# Midlothian Council - How we are Performing



## Successes and Challenges

### Corporate Performance Indicators (latest)

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