



Midlothian

Midlothian – A Great Place to Grow

Customer and Housing Services Plan.

Year: 2019 - 2020

Customer Services, Housing Services and Revenues Services.

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1. Customer & Housing Services Overview

The scale of the financial challenge facing the public sector continues to grow. The impact of the planned funding cuts on Council services across Midlothian will be substantial - particularly when we are also faced with the challenges of a growing and ageing population and the increasing demand for services that this will bring.

So far, we have made savings by reshaping the council and changing the way we work. This has been achieved through a series of service reviews, reducing the number of managers and staff we employ, reducing our offices and other property needs and changing the way we purchase and deliver services.

Due to the scale of the forecast budget gap for 2019/20, budget measures have been developed to consider reductions, or the cessation, of some non-statutory services. Consideration is also being given to new models and modes of service delivery for statutory services to provide further efficiencies to meet future budget gaps and requirements. This work will support the development of a medium-term financial strategy during 2019/20.

Midlothian Council delivers its priorities through the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) and the Single Midlothian Plan.

Taking into consideration evidence regarding the comparative quality of life of people living in Midlothian, it is clear that less well-off residents experience poorer health, have fewer or no choices in how they use low incomes, and also that there is a proven relationship between these factors and their learning. Education is generally regarded as the best route out of poverty. As a result the top three priorities for 2019 to 2022 of the Council are:

- **Reducing the gap in learning outcomes**
- **Reducing the gap in health outcomes**
- **Reducing the gap in economic circumstances**

The previous 'Future Service Delivery Models' exercise identified three key approaches for how the council works with its communities – preventive intervention, co- production and capacity building and localising / modernising access to services. A key aspect of the medium term financial strategy will be how we can use these approaches, whilst working in a context of reducing finance, to put citizens and customers at the heart of what we do and shape service delivery to meet local needs.

In addition to the agreed priorities and approaches, the Council will also focus on reducing the gap between outcomes for residents living in parts of the county which

for many years have shown a significant gap between their outcomes and the average outcomes for Midlothian and Scotland as a whole. The areas targeted are Dalkeith Central/Woodburn, Mayfield/Easthouses and Gorebridge.

A key requirement from this document and the further development and scrutiny that will follow is the need to clearly articulate the change programme in the context of the Council’s future strategic direction and resource priorities. This will provide a robust and cohesive approach to leadership, which drives transformational and sustainable change to better respond to both current and future challenges and ensures delivery of Midlothian’s One Council vision.



Customer & Housing Services consists of the following:

- Customer Services
- Housing Services
- Housing Planning & Performance
- Revenues Services

Housing Services

Social Rented Housing is provided and maintained through the Housing Revenue Account funding, with the needs of the service met from the rent collected. The demand for social housing has resulted in the Council's Social Housing Programme of new build properties continuing to increase the housing stock. Houses are allocated to meet assessed need detailed in the Housing Allocation Policy to ensure that the most appropriate use is made of available properties. Managing our tenancies and contributing to the effective management of multi-tenure estates.

Housing Planning & Performance

The Housing Planning & Performance Team manage the Performance Management Framework for all the Customer & Housing Services, which contains a range of performance indicators with improvement targets, and participate in national benchmarking networks.

The team also develop the Midlothian Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP), which informs the Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Investment Programme (AHIP), to support the delivery of affordable housing development. However, other funding streams which seek to support Local Housing Strategy priorities for affordable housing or compliment the AHIP resources are also detailed.

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 & 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.

Revenues Services

Comprises services for the development, operation and collection of local taxation through Council Tax, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction. In addition, the administration of Scottish Welfare Fund (Crisis Grants and Community Care Grants); administration and collection of Housing Rents, of Non- Domestic Rate and of

Accounts Receivable and administration of the delegated Welfare Reform services, to ensure processes across all revenue service and transactional activities are maximising income to the Council.

Customer Services

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.

Customer self-service and new automated processes can help deliver some key services without customers dealing directly with a member of staff and could truly transform the way the Council deliver 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, 50 Content Editors and council employees, generally 'get it' and already we have been able to transform how our customers interact with the council. During 2019/20, 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.

Workforce Planning

A key enabler to support the organisation through change is focusing on having the right people, with the right skills, working in the right way. Achievements through this enabler include the development of smarter working policies for:

- Promotion and support of flexible working;
- Promoting Midlothian as an employer of choice and improving the employment deal;
- Ensuring we have a workforce profile that adapts as the organisation changes; and
- An Investing in Our Workforce strategy to reshape the relationship with employees.

People Values describe the Midlothian way we do things here to shape the way we behave, underpin competencies and influence the decisions in the Council. These are detailed in the separate Customer and Housing Services Workforce Plan.

CREST

- ❖ **Celebrate**
Recognise, celebrate and share all our achievements
- ❖ **Respect**
Respect each other's differences in a culture of trust and flexibility
- ❖ **Excellence**
Make the most of opportunities to develop ourselves and our teams to provide excellent services
- ❖ **Support**
Lead by example and be approachable and supportive of each other
- ❖ **Together**
Work together to make a difference for Midlothian

2. Service Challenges ahead

Delivering Excellence

Our employees are key to the successful delivery of the existing transformation programme and our medium term financial strategy, and as such, the development to shape and lead transformation projects has never been more critical. All staff will be expected to work in new and different ways, will have the tools for the job and will know what is expected of them. A programme of cultural change and different ways of working across the council will be essential as the council moves forward on this next phase of Transformation. Areas of focus for change will include:

1. Delivery of our services in new and effective ways, using the most up to date thinking, the joining of complimentary services and effective partnership working to provide better outcomes for our customers.
2. Helping our customers and communities to become and remain independent by understanding needs and by providing appropriate responses.
3. Continuing our changes to become a more modern council, improving our use of digital and automated approaches, improving access to information and increasing our self-service offering for customers where it makes sense to do so.
4. Shaping structures, resources and ways of working, to reflect a lean and effective model that; remains responsive to the challenges and priorities ahead.

Resources

With a forecast increase in the budget gap, which will be experienced by Midlothian Council, we need to deliver efficiencies and change our service design and delivery model to make sure that we are able to deal with the future demands of a growing and ageing population.

Legislative requirements

The introduction and implementation of the following legislation will have an impact on services:

- Welfare Reform Act 2012
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2014
- Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
- Private Housing (Tenancies)(Scotland) Act 2016
- Social Security system in Scotland

Ending Homelessness Action Plan

The Scottish Government established a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) in 2017, which has made recommendations on ending rough sleeping and transforming the use of temporary accommodation through a Rapid Rehousing approach for homeless households, and Housing First for people with complex needs.

The HARSAG recognises the fundamental role to be played by local authorities, housing providers, health and social care partnerships and the broad range of organisations that provide support. The HARSAG also recognises that in some localities the transition will not be straightforward and recommended a 5-year timescale for the transformation to rapid rehousing.

Rapid rehousing is about taking a housing-led approach for rehousing people that have experienced homelessness, making sure they reach a settled housing option as quickly as possible rather than staying in temporary accommodation for too long. Transition to a rapid rehousing approach means that some local authorities and partners will have to redress the balance of housing and support options that are available, and how quickly they are accessed.

The Scottish Government published the Ending Homelessness Action Plan in November 2018, identifying actions, which local and national government, in partnership with local authorities, third sector agencies and others, would work to deliver by 2023. Midlothian Council approved our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan in December 2018, which identifies local actions and priorities to contribute to the national strategy. Scottish Government will assess the plan with a view to allocation of funding across Scotland, for rollout from April 2019.

Health & Social Care Integration

Customer & Housing Services are keen to take examples of good practice in this area and share with others with a view to helping promote and understand the potential contribution that housing and customer services can give to the desired outcomes for health and social care integration, with developments already achieved in Extra Care and Complex Care housing provision and the Health & Homelessness strategic planning.

Changes to service delivery such as corporate working, partnerships, technology, efficient government, culture change and new initiatives represent significant changes to working practices. Whilst these changes bring fresh opportunities for new ways of working, they also present a risk whilst changes are made.

Universal Credit

Midlothian Council was initially involved as a partner agency to Dalkeith and Penicuik Job Centre Plus, (JCP) during the rollout of the Universal Credit 'Live Service' (UCLS) from 27 April 2015. The Council subsequently signed up to a further Delivery Partnership Agreement, (DPA) for the full digital rollout of the Universal Credit "Full Service" (UCFS) from 22 March 2017.

Universal Credit aims to make the welfare system simpler by replacing six benefits and tax credits with a single monthly payment. It is administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). It replaces:

- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Income-Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment & Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credits
- Working Tax Credits

In Midlothian UCFS is being rolled out by Dalkeith and Penicuik Job Centre through a 'natural migration' phase which requires claimants of the above legacy benefits to transfer to UC as and when they encounter a significant, (trigger) change in circumstance.

It is noted that 'Managed Migration' of those on legacy benefits will now progress at a slower pace than was first agreed. Recent information from DWP in early November 2018 states that 2019 will be a year of consolidation for UC with the expectation of around 10,000 claimants currently on legacy benefits being 'managed migrated' to UC during 2019 as part of a pilot approach. In response to feedback on 'Managed Migration', HM Treasury announced as part of the Budget 2018, the implementation schedule for 'Managed Migration' has now been updated and will conclude in December 2023.

The Scotland Act 2016 gave the Scottish Government powers to vary how Universal Credit is paid in Scotland. The new Universal Credit choices were made available from 4 October 2017 to people living in Scotland making a new Universal Credit claim in full service areas.

Eligible claimants of Universal Credit will be offered the choice after they have received their first payment of Universal Credit. This means the offer will be made at the start of the second assessment period, when the expected Universal Credit award is known, and there has been time to assess the claimant's award, including housing costs if applicable.

A Scottish Social Security Agency has been established by the Scottish Government to administer the devolved benefits responsibilities.

Council Officers have met with the Scottish Government's Agency Implementation Team to provide them with an understanding of how services are delivered in Midlothian for people seeking assistance on social security and other related matters and to consider how the new social security agency will deliver its local services and explore local delivery options for the different communities in our area in places that people already visit.

Discussions shall continue in the different methods and partnership models of delivery in place for the Scottish Social Security Agency's development of an Overarching Partnership Agreement on specific types of assistance and wider service delivery input.

Discussions during 2019/20 will focus on the potential for co-location to assist the rollout of local service delivery and the on boarding of new/migrated devolved benefits. Members of Social Security Scotland and the Cabinet Secretary have visited and met with citizens at the Loanhead Centre, which is likely to be the preferred locality for partnership service delivery.

Libraries

The National Strategy for Public Libraries was launched in 2015. Midlothian Libraries are partners in the delivery of the six national strategic aims:

- Reading, literacy and learning
- Digital inclusion
- Economic wellbeing
- Social wellbeing
- Culture and creativity
- Excellent public services

Local service plan priorities relating to libraries in Midlothian align with the national strategic aims whilst focusing on local need.

We have introduced innovative models of service delivery in our libraries, which have been recognised as best practice nationally, including:

- Opening our new hub model facilities at Loanhead and Newbattle offering a single hub service for our customers, integrating a library, leisure centre, café, medical centre, primary school, nursery and after school provision.
- Increasing the availability of self-service technology across libraries which has given us the opportunity to increase opening hours for our customers and communities, with no revenue budget impact.
- 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:
 - Continued funding for our Bibliotherapy services and extended funding has given us the opportunity to expand this service into each of our secondary schools in order to support young people in improving their mental health.
 - Moving onto a new e-book and e-audio book platform which has improved accessibility and increased availability of new titles for our customers.
 - Continued to deliver Code Clubs, Lego Clubs, reading groups and crafting groups in all of our libraries in response to community demand.
 - Expanded our library cinema clubs to include different user groups and purchased licences for our new sites.
 - Secured funding to extend autism support services for young people in our libraries.
 - Re-launched our outreach book delivery service for our customers who are housebound, in partnership with local community volunteers.

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- Worked in partnership with our care homes and supported accommodation services across Midlothian to deliver library collections to customers in these communities.

City Deal

As a unique collaboration between the six local authorities and the UK and Scottish Governments the ESES (Edinburgh and South East Scotland) City Deal can drive forward the housing supply across the city region by strengthening the housing programme capability as a key driver for the south east of Scotland economy as upfront infrastructure finance can deliver transformational change in regional housing supply.

Midlothian Housing Services continues to play an important part in the policy approach to housing, as a specific work stream ask in relation to the role of cities in economic development and public service delivery.

Housing is one of the five key themes in the City Region Deal Document. The regional housing programme will work to accelerate the delivery of affordable housing and housing of all tenures, enable the development of the seven major strategic sites reference in the Deal document (specifically Shawfair in Midlothian) and drive efficiencies across the public sector estate.

The Regional Housing Board is in the process of being established with representatives from Midlothian playing a key role.

3. Service Evaluation

The Customer & Housing Services Plan provides a more specific representation of what is involved in the delivery of outcomes and priorities, recognising the resource implications, actions, and risks concerned. Service Plans translate to a clear link between the priorities in the Service Plan and those identified in the SMP and the Council's Transformation Strategy.

Service Plans demonstrate how the service activities will contribute to the planned outcomes. They are an essential link between the ambition and reality of the services that are actually delivered.

An important element of the budget development work has been to develop the next iteration of the transformation programme as a key element of a medium term Financial Strategy to ensure that available resources are as far as possible targeted on the delivery of improved outcomes, particularly against the key priorities.

Current transformation work in the Delivering Excellence programme is focused on the following areas, of which Customer and Housing services are specifically involved in the development of **Digital/Customer** and **Services with Communities**:

- 1. Services with Communities** – there is a clear need to change the relationship we have with communities from a paternalistic one focused on service provision to one based on partnership and co-production and working together. This element of transformation builds upon and refocuses the existing Services to Communities Project within the existing Transformation Programme.
- 2. Entrepreneurial Council** – covering property development, income generation, asset utilisation, energy, commercial opportunities etc.
- 3. Digitally-led transformation/Customer Service** – we want to be at the forefront of digitally enabled change which will connect with the next phase or acceleration of customer services transformation.
- 4. Shared Services** – as a result of the current climate of reduced public spend and growing pressures on public services for the foreseeable future, service sharing and collaborative working will be a key consideration for options available to sustain services.

Work is required in 2019/20 to deliver against these transformational programmes however, consideration on their longer-term scope will form part of the development of the medium term financial strategy.

Customer and Housing Services plan to undertake a programme of self-evaluation in early 2020 to align with the re-launch of the corporate programme.

4. Service Priorities

New challenges are emerging which place greater emphasis on integration, co-production and customer engagement while responding appropriately to individual or collective needs and capabilities in delivering the range of customer and housing services. Service Reviews have implemented new ways of working designed by the respective teams and had positive impacts on performance and outcomes.

In this transformational approach, we have become more efficient and at the same time delivered changes resulting in improvements to work practice, the services we deliver and the quality of life experienced in our communities.

Housing and Homelessness

Midlothian Council's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan details the vision for the delivery of Housing and Homelessness services by 2024, which is to have:

“An increased number of homeless households [who] 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 weeks to 52 weeks.”

To do this, we will deliver against the following actions:

- Increase the supply of new build affordable housing in Midlothian with the ambitious new build programme set out in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24
- Review Midlothian Council's Allocation Policy during 2019/20 to ensure homeless households are housed more quickly.
- Develop actions relating to the acquisition of models of temporary accommodation to reduce the need for bed and breakfast accommodation.
- Support homeless households to access a tenancy in the private rented sector.
- Develop an approach to housing those with complex needs through a 'housing first' model.
- Review our Tenancy Support services prior to contract end in June 2019.
- Withdraw from all B&B provision supported by the reuse of suitable vacant or vacated council buildings as an alternative option that provides a more supportive and productive environment to homeless households and is also cost effective to the local authority.
- Investigate the introduction of a Choice-based Letting model for housing allocation.

Customer Services

As Midlothian's population is expanding rapidly whilst resource within Midlothian Council is reducing, we need to radically change and further develop the way we deliver customer services and plan for the future. There are two key thematic areas to consider for the development of customer services across 2019/20 and into the future:

- Develop front-facing models of service delivery, which are efficient, provide an excellent customer journey and meet customer need – both centrally and in our localities. To do this, we will:
 - Make best use of our buildings including closing down Buccleuch House and moving all front-facing customer services into Midlothian House.
 - Build on our hub service model delivered currently at the Newbattle Community Campus and Loanhead Centre – initially improving the model at Lasswade and Penicuik, delivering the current service model at Danderhall and investigating other opportunities as part of ongoing master-planning programmes.

- Increase the pace of channel-shift by adopting new digital tools and automated practices including:
 - Increased use of self-service technology to improve the customer journey, increase opening hours and provide efficiencies in our staffing model.
 - Introduce a new Customer Service Platform, which will increase the availability of council online transactions and payments, improve the customer journey and deliver a single view of customer interaction across the council. As part of the customer service transaction mapping process, various components will be identified which will support the introduction of new digital transactions – this will include the use of automated process components.
 - Introduce new automated tools, which will improve customer service response through telephony, in the Contact Centre.
 - Introduction of new contact channels including increased use of social media and live web services.

Governance will be sought for delivery of these two thematic areas through the development of the Customer Services Strategy 2019 – 2022 (*Midlothian: Improving the Customer Experience*).

The final stage of the Customer Service Review will be delivered in 2019/20 with the introduction of new library opening hours and staff working patterns. It is envisaged that this will deliver the required £50,000 savings previously identified.

Revenues

A review of the Revenues service is proposed as there is significant change planned in the model of local taxation through Council Tax and also the rents and benefits systems continue to change as a result of the UK Government Welfare Reform, also the Universal Credit Full Service level in Midlothian implemented from April, 2017, and further planned devolution of powers to the Scottish Government, which is developing a Social Security System for Scotland to be established.

A Service Review is scheduled to begin in April 2019 to allow the timescales and effects of Universal Credit full service, the local taxation changes and Scottish Social Security system to be implemented and determined and the resulting impact on workforce planning.

There are also opportunities to release efficiencies and improve processing times, by introducing online and automated processes for Revenues and Benefits. These opportunities will be investigated in 2019/20 and as part of the transaction mapping work for the introduction of the new Customer Service Platform.

Customer and Housing Services are committed to improving customer outcomes and are working together with other partners who share the same objective. The vision is to “make our customer service the best it can be by being responsive to customer need”.

5 Service Outcomes

Strengths and areas for improvement arising from self-evaluation

Areas to be assessed in relation to agreed outcomes	Brief Overview	Existing Strengths	Areas for Improvement
How effective is our Leadership?	Management review delivered positive change.	Produced clear plan to progress MEF review with completion date.	Review the approach to service planning to ensure the involvement of strategic partners.
How effective is our planning and performance management?	Improved approach in measuring and reporting on services.	Improved customer focus in service planning and delivery and management of complaints and appeals.	Review the objectives in the C&HS Strategies and ensure they are SMART.
How well are our People managed?	Expected behaviours and values agreed. Culture change to be embedded.	Improved employee survey results year-on-year.	Review and improve the Council's approach to communicating service priorities to its staff.
How effective are we with Partnerships and other resources?	Improved partnership working opportunities.	Improved consultation and planning process with partners to set objectives.	Underdeveloped in agreed actions by partners.
How effective are our services and processes at meeting the needs of our communities?	Increase further consultation opportunities with stakeholders in the development of service objectives.	Improved consultation with stakeholders in the development of service objectives.	Using service user feedback to improve and inform C&HS Strategies ensuring they are up to date.
How good are our results in relation to our Customers, People, Communities and performance targets?	Developed and implemented a current customer service plan to deliver direction and develop customer focus.	Regularly review LPIs and targets with the aim to rationalise them and align them with the Service Plan.	Improve the Council's analysis. Developing a SMART action plan to address areas of lower satisfaction.

Financial 2019/20 Customer and Housing Services

SERVICE FUNCTION	2018/19	2019/20
	£	£
Customer Services	1,033,513	1,075,043
Homelessness	1,364,281	1,295,680
Housing	427,075	434,415
Library Services	1,258,111	1,257,049
Revenues & Benefits	6,163,622	6,151,491
Service Management	221,432	22,627
NET EXPENDITURE	<u>10,468,034</u>	<u>10,236,304</u>
SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS		
Employee Costs	4,313,833	4,274,630
Premises Costs	377,590	385,729
Transport Costs	77,294	78,012
Supplies and Services Costs	466,959	422,259
Third Party Payments	1,495,461	1,364,740
Transfer Payments	<u>29,262,713</u>	<u>29,310,987</u>
GROSS EXPENDITURE	<u>35,993,850</u>	<u>35,836,357</u>
INCOME	25,525,816	25,600,052
NET EXPENDITURE	<u>10,468,034</u>	<u>10,236,304</u>

a. Annual Scrutiny, Quality Assurance and Self Assessment.

To ensure that corporate quality initiatives can be integrated with and complimentary to service activity, please provide indicative dates and details of planned.

1. External scrutiny or audits
2. Self assessment or quality assurance activity

Scrutiny / Self Assessment Activity 19/20	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Scottish Housing Regulator - ARC	√	√				√						
Audit Scotland	√											
Internal Audit	√											

b. Performance Management Indicators

1. Performance Management

Service performance is reported in the quarterly performance reports. Performance information is also published annually in the regulated requirements for housing services. The Customer and Housing Services Service quarterly performance report includes the following information, in addition to Single Midlothian Plan and Service priority indicators and actions.

Midlothian Council Balanced Scorecard:

The Balanced Scorecard approach provides the Council with a strategic performance management tool, which allows each service area to consider and contribute to core Council priorities in terms of planning and performance management. The following shows the Balanced Scorecard perspectives that are applicable across the Councils services.

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

Each of the perspectives shown above are supported by a number of measures and indicators which ensures that the Balanced Scorecard informs ongoing performance reporting and public performance reporting throughout the cycle and also help identify areas for further improvement throughout the year.

2. Statutory Performance Indicators – SOLACE Benchmarking Indicators

The following details those indicators applicable to the Service performance reporting process

Reference	Description
Housing Services HSN2	Percentage of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids
Corporate Services CORP 4	Cost of collecting council tax per dwelling
Corporate Services CORP 7	Percentage of income due from council tax received by the end of the year %
Housing Services HSN1	Current tenants' arrears as a percentage of total rent due (quarterly-formula)
Culture and Leisure Services C&L2	Cost per library visit
Culture and Leisure Services C&L2	% of adults satisfied with libraries

These local priorities were agreed based on the strategic assessment undertaken and partnership development planning work. In retaining this focus, the partners accept that progress will also be required, and will be made on the three other national agenda's. The partners view is that action is well advanced in respect of change in older people's services and improvement in community safety.

3. Service Objectives

The following tables contain key service priorities, actions and indicators for 2019/20.

2019/20									
Action	Due Date	Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline	Previous Trend Data	Team	Managed By	Source	New indicator for 2018/19 yes/no
Service Priority : Support People out of Poverty and Welfare Dependency									
Support financially vulnerable households in mitigating Welfare Reform impact	31/03/20	Number of calls received regarding Scottish Welfare Fund (CH.SMP.12.01a)	Data Only	n/a	2017/18 9181	Revenues Services	Ken Pike		No
	31/03/20	Number of calls leading to application for Scottish Welfare Fund (CH.SMP.12.01b)	Data Only	n/a	2017/18 4755	Revenues Services	Ken Pike		No
	31/03/20	% of claims to Scottish Welfare Fund dealt with within	Data Only	n/a	2017/18 92.34%	Revenues Services	Ken Pike		No
	31/03/20	Average processing time for new claims	25 days	25 days	2017/18 26 days	Revenues Services	Ken Pike		No
	31/03/20	Average processing time for change of circumstances claim	8 days	8 days	2017/18 7 days	Revenues Services	Ken Pike		No
Award Scottish Welfare Fund monies in line with criteria set for crisis grants and community care grants to meet the needs of vulnerable claimants	31/03/20	Total amount granted from Scottish Welfare Fund for crisis grants and community care grants	Data Only	n/a	2017/18 Community Care grants - £165,833 Crisis Grants - £125,166	Revenues Services	Ken Pike		
Service Priority: Deliver further affordable housing									
Number of social housing completions	31/03/20	Social Housing – number of completions	100	100	89	Customer and Housing Services	Stephen Clark		No
Designate housing for particular needs with existing and new build stock	31/03/20	Percentage of housing units provided for particular needs within existing and new build stock.	10%	10%	14 (units)	Customer and Housing Services	Stephen Clark		No

Service Priority: Homelessness has reduced, and people threatened with homelessness can access advice and support services									
Prevent homelessness through delivery of an education programme	31/03/20	Number of school homeless prevention presentations undertaken.	12	12	12	Housing Services	Simon Bain		No
Access to homelessness advice and assistance	31/03/20	Number of customers accessing Advice and Assistance Service	Data Only	100%	2017/18	Housing Services	Simon Bain		No
Minimise re-let timescales for mainstream housing	31/03/20	Re-let time Permanent Properties (CH.SMP.11.01a)	45 days	47	2017/18	Housing Services	Simon Bain		No
Minimise re-let timescales for temporary accommodation	31/03/20	Re-let temporary accommodation properties	35 days	22	2017/18	Housing Services	Simon Bain		No
Service Priority: Revenues – HB accuracy and Interventions									
Maximise recovery of HB Overpayment debt	31/03/20	In-year recovery of overpayments - % of all HB overpayments identified during the financial year	80%	80%	2017/18 81.50%	Revenues Services	Ken Pike		No
	31/03/20	All recovery overpayments – as a % of all HB overpayment debt	30%	30%	2017/18 26.68%	Revenues Services	Ken Pike		No
Service Priority: Libraries – Library activity									
Access to library services, events and information	31/03/20	Number of physical library visits	Data Only	n/a		Customer Services	Annabel Cavarolie		No
Access to online library services, eResources and social media	31/03/20	Number of virtual library visits	Data Only	n/a		Customer Services	Annabel Cavarolie		No
Service Priority: Customer Services – Electronic Communication									
Increased access to Council services, feedback and information	31/03/20	Number of webforms, emails and social media contact received by Contact Centre	Data Only	n/a		Customer Services	Annabel Cavarolie		Yes

Integrated Impact Assessment Form

Promoting Equality, Human Rights and Sustainability



Integrated Impact Assessment Form

Promoting Equality, Human Rights and Sustainability

Title of Policy/ Proposal	Customer and Housing Service Plan 2019-20
Completion Date	26 February 2019
Completed by	Jane Milne
Lead officer	Jane Milne

Type of Initiative:

Policy/Strategy

Programme/Plan New or Proposed

Project Changing/Updated

Service Review or existing

Function

Other Statement of Intent.....

1. Briefly describe the policy/proposal you are assessing.

Set out a clear understanding of the purpose of the policy being developed or reviewed

Service objectives, aims and management arrangements for Customer and Housing Services: Housing Services Housing Planning and Performance Customer Services Revenues Services

(e.g. objectives, aims) including the context within which it will operate.

2. What will change as a result of this policy?

The scale of the financial challenge facing the public sector continues to grow. The impact of the planned funding cuts on Council services across Midlothian will be substantial – particularly when we are also faced with the challenges of a growing and ageing population and the increasing demand for services that this will bring.

A key requirement from this document and the further development and scrutiny that will follow is the need to clearly articulate the change programme in the context of the Council’s future strategic direction and resource priorities. This will provide a robust and cohesive approach to leadership which drives transformational and sustainable change to better respond to both current and future challenges and ensures delivery of Midlothian’s One Council vision.

The themes addressed in this Service Plan impact on the delivery of the Single Midlothian Plan outcome particularly in terms of priorities in relation to the delivery of affordable housing, homelessness and health and social care outcomes.

Planned consultation and engagement exercises will confirm whether this is still correct and if it not still the case then appropriate action will be taken to mitigate and resolve.

3. Do I need to undertake a Combined Impact Assessment?

High Relevance	Yes/no
The policy/ proposal has consequences for or affects people	Yes
The policy/proposal has potential to make a significant impact on equality	No
The policy/ proposal has the potential to make a significant impact on the economy and the delivery of economic outcomes	No
The policy/proposal is likely to have a significant environmental impact	No
Low Relevance	
The policy/proposal has little relevance to equality	No
The policy/proposal has negligible impact on the economy	Yes
The policy/proposal has no/ minimal impact on the environment	Yes
If you have identified low relevance please give a brief description of your reasoning here and send it to your Head of Service to record.	

If you have answered yes to high relevance above, please proceed to complete the Integrated Impact Assessment.

4. What information/data/ consultation have you used to inform the policy to date?

Evidence	Comments: what does the evidence tell you?
Data on populations in need	<p>Service Plan consultations have been carried out with service teams and Registered Tenant Organisations to brief on service aims and outcomes. We know that the Midlothian population will continue to grow and increasingly age. Building housing for varying needs will help to meet the needs of an ageing population.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Housing Needs & Demand Analysis · Local Housing Strategy · Housing Allocation Policy Review · Rent Strategy Review · Midlothian Council Tenant Survey

Data on service uptake/access	Housing Applications and Allocations Performance Monitoring equalities categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Gypsy Travellers · BME · Disabilities
Data on quality/outcomes	
Research/literature evidence	Scottish Housing Regulator thematic studies. Library strategy 2015-2020 - National Library of Scotland. Chartered Institute of Housing Institute of Revenues Ratings and Valuation
Service user experience information	The Local Housing Strategy review will be carried out in 2019. This update will provide information on how the Council has performed in its commitments, including in terms of how well the housing needs of equality groups are being met in developing a revised LHS.
Consultation and involvement findings	A Tenants survey will be carried out during 2019 with various means of participation being offered from face to face to survey based. Specific consultation will also be undertaken on Housing Allocation Policy Review during 2019 with opportunities for tenants and waiting list applicants, to participate.
Good practice guidelines	Scottish Housing Regulator thematic studies. Library strategy 2015-2020 - National Library of Scotland. Chartered Institute of Housing Institute of Revenues Ratings and Valuation
Other (please specify)	The research and engagement with tenants and customers provide the Council and partners with relevant knowledge on the housing needs of equality groups which are then incorporated into future investment plans which includes specialist provision to meet identified needs.
Is any further information required? How will you gather this?	No

5. How does the policy meet the different needs of and impact on groups in the community?

	Comments – positive/ negative impact
<p>Equality Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older people, people in the middle years, • Young people and children • Women, men and transgender people (includes issues relating to pregnancy and maternity) • Disabled people (includes physical disability, learning disability, sensory impairment, long-term medical conditions, mental health problems) • Minority ethnic people (includes Gypsy/Travellers, migrant workers, non-English speakers) • Refugees and asylum seekers • People with different religions or beliefs (includes people with no religion or belief) • Lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual people • People who are unmarried, married or in a civil partnership 	<p>Currently there is no evidence that any group or community is discriminated against by the policies or services delivered by Customer & Housing Services.</p>
<p>Those vulnerable to falling into poverty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployed • People on benefits • Single Parents and vulnerable families 	<p>Currently there is no evidence that any group or community is discriminated against by the policies or services delivered by Customer & Housing Services.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pensioners • Looked after children • Those leaving care settings (including children and young people and those with illness) • Homeless people • Carers (including young carers) • Those involved in the criminal justice system • Those living in the most deprived communities (bottom 20% SIMD areas) • People misusing services • People with low literacy/numeracy • Others e.g. veterans, students 	
<p>Geographical communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural/ semi rural communities • Urban Communities • Coastal communities 	<p>Irrespective of the geographical location, the new build housing programme will comply with all current building regulations and follows best practice in line with the Council's policies on the environment.</p> <p>Consultations internally and externally continue to be carried out with all appropriate stakeholders ensuring input/comment on the proposed layouts / house types and mix.</p>

6. Are there any other factors which will affect the way this policy impacts on the community or staff groups?

No

7. Is any part of this policy/ service to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?

If yes, how have you included equality and human rights considerations into the

No

contract?

8. Have you considered how you will communicate information about this policy or policy change to those affected e.g. to those with hearing loss, speech impairment or English as a second language?

We can translate or interpret on request and provide information or publications in other formats including Braille, British Sign Language, tape or large prints, as detailed in the Customer Services Strategy and the Tenant Participation & Engagement Strategy.

9. Please consider how your policy will impact on each of the following?

Objectives	Comments
Equality and Human rights	
Promotes / advances equality of opportunity e.g. improves access to and quality of services, status	Whilst there are significant resources available for developing housing, the demand for new affordable housing cannot be met during the lifetime of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan, therefore there are difficult decisions to be made on how best to meet the housing needs within the community, and this could impact upon all equality strands.
Promotes good relations within and between people with protected characteristics and tackles harassment	The Local Housing Strategy and the Strategic Housing Investment Plan both provide delivery opportunities to provide affordable housing to meet the defined needs of communities in Midlothian. Policy reviews are carried out on the Housing Allocations Policy and the Rent Strategy Review to consider any necessary changes and identified actions.
Promotes participation, inclusion, dignity and self control over decisions	Customer & Housing Services consult with the wider community when taking decisions regarding service development and contribute to research on the specific equality strands.
Builds family support networks, resilience and community capacity	The allocation of recently developed housing is let in accordance with Midlothian Council's revised Housing Allocation Policy and ensures that the needs of equality strands have been assessed to ensure that the new policy does not discriminate

	against anyone in any way.
Reduces crime and fear of crime	
Promotes healthier lifestyles including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diet and nutrition, • sexual health, • substance misuse • Exercise and physical activity. • Lifeskills 	The Strategic Housing Investment Plan targets the development of particular needs housing at up to 5% of new housing. These include amenity and wheelchair housing and other forms of housing, such as extra care housing. This will increase housing options for people living with disability and the elderly.
Environmental	
Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in East Lothian (including carbon management)	<p>The new build housing programme will comply with all current building regulations and follows best practice in line with the Council's policies on the environment.</p> <p>Consultations internally and externally continue to be carried out with all appropriate stakeholders ensuring input/comment on the proposed layouts/house types and mix.</p>
Plan for future climate change	
Pollution: air/ water/ soil/ noise	
Protect coastal and inland waters	
Enhance biodiversity	
Encourage resource efficiency (energy, water, materials and minerals)	
Public Safety: Minimise waste generation/ infection control/ accidental injury /fire risk	
Reduce need to travel / promote sustainable forms or transport	
Improves the physical environment e.g. housing quality, public and green space	
Economic	
Maximises income and /or reduces income inequality	<p>The new build housing programme will comply with all current building regulations and follows best practice in line with Council's policies.</p> <p>Community benefit provisions are included in the</p>
Helps young people into positive destinations	
Supports local business	

Helps people to access jobs (both paid and unpaid)	new build social housing programme tender process.
Improving literacy and numeracy	
Improves working conditions, including equal pay	
Improves local employment opportunities	Community benefit provisions are included in the new build social housing programme tender process.

10. Is the policy a qualifying Policy, Programme or Strategy as defined by The Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005?

No

11. Action Plan

Identified negative impact	Mitigating circumstances	Mitigating actions	Timeline	Responsible person

12. Sign off by Head of Service/ NHS Project Lead



Name Jane Milne

Date 26 February 2019