



PLANNING FOR CHANGE

Reshaping local services
in Midlothian

Shaping Midlothian's future

Everyone has a part to play in helping shape Midlothian's future. That's why we want you to have your say on the tough decisions Midlothian Council will need to take over the next few years. It's about making changes now, to make sure our services, and our finances, are fit for the future.

The challenge of change

Like all council areas, Midlothian faces big challenges. With continuing funding cuts and increased demand from a growing population for key services such as education, health and social care, the council needs to look at new way of working.

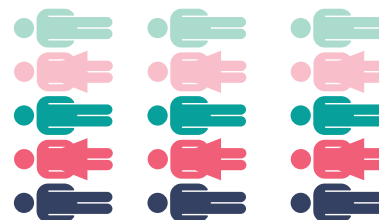
We've already made substantial changes to save money but we need to do much more. The council estimates that next year (from April 2020 to March 2021), we will have a budget gap of £4.6 million. That means that the council will be £4.6 million short of what we need to spend to keep services at current levels. By 2022/23, this gap is expected to be £18.8 million.

Council Tax meets less than a quarter of the cost of local services in Midlothian. Most of the council's money (around 75%) comes from the Scottish Government. But our core funding is reducing every year. At the same time, Midlothian has the fastest growing population in Scotland. Our population is also changing. We will have more older people and more children of school age in the years ahead. This means that the demand for essential services, and the cost of providing them, is rising rapidly.



Planning our spending

With much less money to spend at a time of growing demand, the council is planning for major change. This will include bringing forward a medium-term financial strategy by the summer of 2019, setting out planned and balanced budgets covering the next three years up to 2022/23.



By law, the council must balance its budget. To do this, we are planning to deliver services in different ways:



Planning our spending

We believe that Midlothian is 'a great place to grow.' The council and its partners have agreed that this is our overarching vision for Midlothian. It is the key message in the Single Midlothian Plan, with its focus on:

- **reducing the gap in learning outcomes**
- **reducing the gap in health outcomes, and**
- **reducing the gap in economic circumstances.**

The Single Midlothian Plan says what the council and its partners are committed to but its success relies on you - our citizens, communities and businesses - playing your part. The council needs to make some tough choices in these difficult times. We want you to have your say.

Planning for change

Planning for change is about reshaping local services in Midlothian to meet local needs. It's about recognising that we will no longer have the money to do all things we did in the past. We want to focus on the things that meet our priorities and continue to do these well. At the same time, we will inevitably have to stop or reduce other services if we are to make the savings now needed. There will also be a greater focus on communities doing more, and on the council working in partnership with others.

Our medium-term financial strategy will be put to a meeting of the full Council before the summer of 2019. This is a key planning document, setting out how Midlothian Council can balance its budget for the next three years up until 2022/23. As the strategy develops, we will provide more details of the changes we might have to make to achieve our savings targets.

How to get involved

Throughout this period, we will be encouraging everyone to have their say. We will be speaking to community councils and other local groups, our partners, residents, service users, businesses and trades unions, to let them know why we are having to change, and to get their views on our plans for change covering the next three years up to 2022/23.

WHAT WE'RE ASKING

What are the priorities for your community?



HAVE YOUR SAY

We know from recent consultations that education is the top priority for most local people. Services for the elderly and vulnerable are also viewed as very important, followed by road improvements. Do you agree?

Which services would you want community groups and volunteers to help deliver? Would you want to get involved?



In future, the council won't have the money to run all the services and local facilities that we currently have. If local people want to keep these going, the council might be able to provide support and training to get them started.

What services can the council stop providing to save money?



The council will have to look at every service that it is not legally obliged to provide to see what it can stop doing to save money. Even some statutory services will be reduced, closer to the legal minimum.

Find out more

The latest Planning for Change updates can be found on the council's website: www.midlothian.gov.uk/planning-for-change

You can also find more information there on the council's budget challenge and on the steps the council has already taken to make savings, work more efficiently and improve service delivery.

Get in touch

Email comments and suggestions to HaveYourSay@midlothian.gov.uk

Write to Have Your Say, Midlothian Council, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith EH22 1DN

Join the conversation on Facebook and Twitter @midgov #MakingADifference

Look out for the local engagement meetings we will be holding with community groups.