

Progress Against Strategic Outcomes

The Route Map through and out of the crisis, approved by Council in June 2020, set out how the Council would work with its partners and communities to put the necessary changes in place to support recovery from the pandemic and to meet the challenges ahead. Our focus in supporting the recovery and retaining the best elements of transformation that took place in response to the pandemic has been to secure permanent changes to the way the services are delivered in order to build back better.

Each service has a Service Plan which provides a link to the outcomes contained within the commitments of the Single Midlothian Plan, the Route Map through and out of the crisis, the Listen and Learn report, any relevant legislation that is specific to the service and to the strengths and improvement activities identified as part of self-evaluation.

Service plans translate 'what we intend to do' into 'how we will achieve it'. There is a clear link between the priorities in the service plan and those identified in the SMP and the Council's strategic priorities. Whilst detailed progress for individual service plans are provided quarterly the following provides a summary of key updates against the five overarching thematic areas within the Single Midlothian Plan 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.

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 2021/22

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 is required to develop, consult on, and publish a new 3 year Strategic Plan in 2022. The IJB Strategic Plan 2022-25 will be published in April 2022. Consultation and engagement in the development of the plan included the views of over 3000 people, with the feedback received shared on an ongoing basis with all planning leads and senior management to ensure this could be taken into account in the finalisation of the plans. A summary of Consultation and engagement across the development of the plan can be found in the [Midlothian Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan 2022-2025 Consultation Report](#).

HSCP COVID-19 Response

Covid-19 continues to bring challenge and disruption across the Health and Social Care Partnership, its partners, and the communities it serves. While the challenges we face may have changed since 2020, the need to adapt and flexibly respond to both new and evolving challenges in health and social care has continued throughout 2021, and into 2022. This has resulted in increased demand and sustained pressure across the whole system. The main challenges in were the Omicron variant and the subsequent spread of infection within the community, staff absence,

and both care home and ward closures relating to covid outbreaks. There was increased anxiety and pressure on many service users, unpaid carers and staff.

Even in the most challenging of circumstances, teams have continued to work flexibly, collaboratively, and innovatively to manage this demand. By working together, services taken steps to reduce inappropriate admissions, reduce length of stay, facilitate earlier appropriate discharge and reduce unnecessary delay wherever possible.

As we begin to emerge from this most recent peak of infection rates, the Partnership continues to hold the safety of clients, carers, communities, and staff as its top priority. Services have been able to continue to adapt and find new and innovative ways to deliver service offers effectively and safely. Many services have increased the number of video consultations, adopted new digital approaches and taken a proactive outreach approach. Reduced opportunities for carer respite have remained a concern.

Despite the challenges faced by all our services, staff and partners, the opportunity to work together in new ways has helped develop our existing and build new community connections. Volunteering programmes continued and were further supported by the Partnership.

Learning Disabilities

Work continues to ensure Midlothian compliance with the national timescale for the reduction of inappropriate hospital admissions, delayed discharge, and out of area placements for people with complex care needs. Midlothian remains in a relatively good position in this respect as a result of the housing programme, the work overseen by the Positive Behavioural Support Steering Group, partnerships with third sector organisations specialising in support for people with Complex Care needs in local communities, and the development of local intelligence about people at high risk of family or placement breakdown.

The Midlothian Learning Disability Planning Group is supported by 'Expert Panels' that draw together experts, including people with lived experience, to develop solutions in implementing specific areas of our Strategic Plan. As part of Equal Midlothian Week the Human Rights Panel, led by People First Midlothian, held the first of a series of Human Rights sessions focussing on Supported Decision Making and how we can support people to feel fully engaged in decisions about their lives.

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 ECH bungalows or flats. Timescales were impacted by Covid 19 but completion dates are still estimated as to be complete by spring/summer 2024.

Care Homes: Midlothian has 10 older people's care homes, 2 of which are HSCP run with one being an intermediate care facility. The remaining 8 are privately run either by private companies, charitable organisations or independent care homes. Health Boards and local Health and Social Care Partnerships continue to carry responsibilities for the clinical and professional oversight of the care provided to people resident in care homes in line with the Scottish Government guidelines (May 2020).

The Care Home Support Team has provided substantial support to care homes for older people to address the challenges faced throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Examples include the provision of direct support to meet staffing challenges, input to meet the complex care needs of individual residents, vaccination, testing of staff and residents, support with the reintroduction of visiting and providing practical and emotional support to staff affected by the impacts of the loss of residents in unprecedented numbers.

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. Midlothian experienced significant pressures within Care at Home services over the last 12 months. This was in line with the national challenges to recruit care staff. Despite this pressure, Care at Home worked hard to ensure packages of care continued to be delivered.

Carers

In early 2021 services were re-commissioned in line with changes in Carer's Act legislation and the carer support service review and consultation undertaken in 2020. The new contracts were implemented 1st July 2021 with VOCAL Midlothian and British Red Cross as key agencies. The key themes of the contracts are: (i) Carer Identification, Information and Advice Services (including financial advice) and (ii) Carer Health and Wellbeing (including breaks from caring).

A series of workshops held in the summer of 2021 supported collaborative discussions on how best to utilise the Scottish Governments announcement of additional funding for carers. Feedback and consideration of how proposals met strategic aims or supported existing work was fed back to SMT and the Performance and Finance group. Progress is now being made towards payment of carer additional resource allocations to community partners; target would be for this to be in place for payment during Q1.

Mental Health

The Mental Health Strategic Planning group developed the Mental Health Action Plan reflecting the priorities set out in the Midlothian HSCP Strategic Plan. Primary Care Mental Health Nurses are now in 12 practices across Midlothian and we have appointed to the OT role to supplement the service. Evaluation of the impact of primary care nurses is ongoing and is a blend of quantitative and qualitative data. Current findings are positive.

Adults with Long Term Conditions, Disability and Impairment

Sight Scotland continue to provide information sessions to staff in relation to the services they provide. Work has commenced with Deaf Action to review the work being undertaken.

Sport and Leisure

Most sites are operating as near to “normal” as possible with the re-introduction of a wide range of programmes and activities on offer, including swimming lessons, fitness classes, MAC classes, Ageing Well activities as well as accommodating local sport/activity clubs and organisations.

The Ageing Well programme of activities is nearly back to pre-covid levels in terms of the range of activities on offer

Sport & Leisure services will continue to develop its digital capabilities including an expanded role out of online booking and advance payment for all activities.

Community Safety – Achievements

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

Justice Service:

Service delivery focused on managing individuals in the Justice system through a mixture of face-to-face and virtual meetings. This continues to be based on dynamic assessments using risk and needs to determine levels of involvement

Substance Misuse:

Key services based in Number 11 in Dalkeith continued to provide services including outreach treatment, injecting equipment provision [IEP], naloxone, and information/advice. During Covid restrictions the Midlothian Substance Use Service instigated an outreach model to those individuals who were most at risk. This includes the provision of Buprenorphine [an injectable form of Buprenorphine].

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

National Child Protection Guidance: The new National Child Protection Guidance has been published. The national implementation group which Midlothian is part of, is responsible for implementing all the actions and have already commissioned someone to write local procedures.

Mental Health Services: The increase in the number of referrals for support for mental health over the past year has proven to be a challenge across the country. With the additional funding from government we have worked with our third sector colleagues and developed many opportunities such as nurture and wellbeing sessions, adult counselling, art therapy, family support and counselling and play therapy to name but a few of the sessions people can access. These groups offer early support for mental health and wellbeing.

Equipped for learning Digital devices to support learning have been provided to every secondary school pupil as part of the Equipped for Learning programme. These devices are being used daily in classrooms and at home. Specific pedagogical approaches, linked to the use of digital technology in the classroom are being trialled

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

The Scottish Government (SG) published the National Improvement Framework (NIF) Report 2021 and Improvement Plan 2022 December 2021. The SG NIF report highlighted the impact of the pandemic on attainment within the BGE with the attainment gap widening between the most and least disadvantaged children.

At P1, performance in listening & talking, reading, writing and numeracy were all above the national figures. Performance in listening and talking at P4 and P7 is in line with the national picture.

At P7, fewer children attained the expected CfE level in numeracy and this has been a key focus for schools in terms of closing the learning gap caused by the pandemic. Overall, the Midlothian CfE data mirrors the national picture and a Building Back Better Recovery Programme was initiated within identified schools and/or stages. The Building Back Better team matched expertise to need, and targeted schools with the largest gaps

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.

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. During 2020/21, increasing the pace of digital transformation, particularly in front-facing customer services, will be a service and corporate priority, for Midlothian Council – one that can deliver the required efficiencies without negatively affecting customer experience.

Reducing Poverty: There is a renewed focus on ensuring we return to pre-Covid numbers at youth clubs as a priority in order to re-engage young people who have experienced disruption to their education, training and employment opportunities. Identifying and supporting this group is key if we are to improve their longer term outcomes as they enter adulthood.

The Community Planning Partnership has approved a one year strategic poverty prevention group, co-chaired by Dona Milne. The operational child poverty group led by CLLE and Health has completed the final Local Child Poverty Action Report (Year 3) and this is going through governance arrangements before submission. The child poverty plan will focus on poverty prevention and early intervention, particularly income maximisation, cost of living, income from employment and income from benefits.

Supporting local people to secure employment or learning opportunities – Improving skills, for learning, life and work: Our employability programmes for all ages have experienced an increase in numbers of local people accessing them. There has been an increase in the number of employers accessing the employment recruitment incentive which we operate as part of our youth guarantee (YPG) support via local businesses accessing this fund. Through YPG funding we have been able to extend a significant number of Kickstart Placements.

Supporting young people through youth work and wider learning opportunities: The youth work service has provided opportunities for young people. CLLE operated transitional support to P7s going to high school programme in each cluster. There are lunch time secondary school drop-ins for youth work for young carers in each cluster. The Bounce project is a diversionary project for those at risk of offending and has completed working with the second cohort of young people. These young people have not reoffended whilst engaged with the project.

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 the past year, innovative ways of working have been introduced and services adapted to respond to the needs of our citizens at pace, in particular those experiencing the greatest levels of poverty and inequality. This has resulted in a complete transformation of how the Council works. 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: Midlothian Council's Economic Renewal Strategy sets out its ambitious approach to managing the transition from lockdown and planning for the longer term challenges the local economy will face, the strategy aims to mitigate the adverse economic impact on the local economy from COVID-19. 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.

The Carbon Charter was refreshed and a marketing campaign developed with the aim of encouraging businesses to sign up and benefit from developing tailored action plans with our Business Gateway team to support the net zero agenda.

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.

An SME Strategy has been developed to support and assist local businesses to win contracts fairly and transparently on a competitive market. We will further develop our collaborative and commercial relationships with key partners as part of our strategic category management approach, to deliver the best possible outcomes for the citizens of Midlothian.

Capital Strategy: As Scotland's fastest growing local authority area, it is critical to delivery investment in community infrastructure, such as housing, the learning estate, economic investment and green infrastructure, 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 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.

Among the aims set out in the new strategy are plans to:

- Refresh the council's approach to customer service, focussing on 'digital first', while making sure alternatives remain in place for those who need them
- Have a council website that meets customer needs , enabling customers to request and pay for services online and to log in to see their interactions
- Implement an update service, so that customers contacting the council online can receive follow up text messages or emails
- Look at opportunities to automate and better integrate processes so that staff can focus on the things that matter most to customers
- Enable people to stay independent and healthy for longer by using data and technology
- Introduce bookable online and face-to-face appointments so that customers don't have to waste time queuing or travelling and to help the council reduce costs
- Review and improve online engagement with customers, including online consultations, communications and social media
- Promote Midlothian as a digital destination, creating an environment that attracts leading digital businesses to the area and supporting the innovation of start-ups
- Cultivate digital skills in our communities, ensuring that young people have access to the technology and support that they need to improve educational outcomes and to prepare them with the skills they need for the future
- Reduce digital exclusion and empower learners of all ages, enabling online access and supporting them to develop digital skills
- Support Midlothian to achieve high speed connectivity, smart infrastructure and resilient cyber defences

Housing and homelessness: Midlothian Council's Strategic Housing Investment Programme (SHIP) was submitted to the Scottish Government in November 2021. To address the need for affordable housing, the SHIP details potential sites for 2,446 new affordable homes to be built between 2022/2022 and 2026/27.

Midlothian Council's Rapid Rehousing Plan (RRTP) was submitted to the Scottish Government on 30th June 2021. This sets out a vision that by 2024: an increased number of homeless households will obtain permanent accommodation, no homeless household will be accommodated in bed and breakfast accommodation, and the average time taken for the Council to complete its homeless duty will have halved from 105 to 52 weeks. .

Challenges and Risks

The challenges for Midlothian continue with our recovery out of the pandemic, increasing inequality as a result of covid-19 and the current 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 fall into the most deprived areas giving a local share of 8.7% living in the most deprived areas in Scotland. This pace of growth demands additional capacity within the school estate to cope with the projected increase in pupil numbers. The general population growth forecast places additional pressure on our infrastructure, including the growth of the road

network as new development roads are adopted, and increases the demand on essential services such as waste collection.

As part of work to address the issue of significant population growth and demographic changes within Midlothian, the key drivers of change in delivery of sustainable and transformational services and regeneration of our communities must be viewed holistically. We have endorsed the Place Principle because we are committed to strengthening the co-ordination and integration of all place based activity. This means we will:

- consider the benefits of planning, investment and implementation activity at the regional level of place - where that focus could drive faster rates of sustainable and inclusive economic growth
- ensure that place based work at the local level being led by Midlothian Council and its agencies/partnerships is taken forward in a way that is integrated and complementary of all the work being taken forward in associated policy areas and plans
- exemplify the behaviours reflecting the core of the principle, working and planning together with our partners and local communities to improve the lives of people, support inclusive growth and create more successful places.

Financial Stability: The settlement for Local Government for 2022/23 was announced in December 2021 and represented a cash reduction in core grant nationally of circa £100m at a time where costs continue to rise. On 27th January 2022 a further £120 million one off funding was announced for Local Government. However Councils continue to face a £251m real terms cut which will increase again in 2023/24 by a further £120m if the one-off funding for 2022/23 is not baselined within the Local Government settlement. The settlement announced in December gave Councils full flexibility to set the Council Tax rate that is appropriate for their local authority area.

It is against that backdrop that the cross party Business Transformation Steering Group considered options to balance the 2022/23 budget and as part of that the Council Tax policy for the year ahead to enable Council to fulfil its statutory duty, as set out in Section 93 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended), namely to set its Council Tax and a Balanced Budget for 2022/23 and made recommendations to Council on 15 February 2022. While Council subsequently agreed a balanced budget and a Band D Council Tax of £1,442.60. Balancing the budget was reliant of £12 million of one off funding. Accordingly the recurring expenditure of £251 million for 2022/23 exceeds recurring funding by that £12 million.

The challenging grant settlement presents challenges not just for the year ahead but over the medium term, with projections of recurring expenditure to provide services exceeding the recurring funding available. Projections are that 2023/24 and beyond will require significant service reductions, focusing on statutory requirements as well as continued service transformation.

Health and Social Care: The Health and Social Care Partnership, its partners and the communities it serves continued to be impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic. Covid continued to influence how the HSCP delivered core services, it impacted on staff absence and deployment, and it required additional resource, for example to deliver vaccination clinics, coordinate staff testing for HSCP and other staff, and manage PPE provision locally

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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