

REPORT TO: Audit and Governance Committee

MEETING DATE: 19 November 2013

BY: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan Monitoring Report

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To present the 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan six-month monitoring report to the Audit and Governance Committee.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Audit and Governance Committee notes the progress in achieving the Council Improvement Plan as detailed in the monitoring report (Appendix 1).

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan was approved by Council on 25th June 2013. The action points in the Plan are primarily drawn from the results of the How Good is Our Council? (HGIOC) self-evaluation carried out by all services and the Corporate Governance self-evaluation (reported to Audit & Governance Committee, 11th June 2013). The results of the 2013 Employee Engagement Survey have also been taken into account. The Plan also contains relevant improvement points and actions from Audit Scotland's Overview of Local Government in Scotland, Audit Scotland's Annual Report to Members and the Shared Risk Assessment prepared by the Local Area Network.
- 3.2 The 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan outlines the actions that the Council as a whole will be undertaking at a council-wide level. Improvement points from HGIOC and other sources relating to specific Council services are not contained within the Plan as they are dealt with in Service and Business Plans.
- 3.3 One of the four objectives of the Council Plan 2012-2017 is: *Growing the capacity of our Council to deliver excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible within our limited resources.* All the improvement points in the 2012/13 Plan will contribute to growing the capacity of the Council to

meet this outcome. Also, the Plan supports the Council's improvement programme based around the following four key elements:

- Services built around people and communities
- Effective, efficient and excellent services
- Working together to achieve outcomes
- Prioritising prevention and promoting equality

3.4 The six month monitoring report (Appendix 1) outlines progress with implementing the 21 action points in the Improvement Plan.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan will assist the Council in demonstrating that it is achieving Best Value. It will provide the necessary focus to improve key areas of the Council at a corporate level, thus aiding delivery of the Council Plan. Moreover, it will support East Lothian Council in its constant striving for continuous improvement, to continue improving the quality and delivery of its services and to meet the Council Plan objective: *Growing the capacity of our Council to deliver excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible within our limited resources.*'

5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 This report is not applicable to the well being of equalities groups and an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial – none.

6.2 Personnel – none directly, although certain actions within the Plan are likely to require the commitment of staff resources.

6.3 Other – none.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Council Improvement Plan; report to Council, 25th June 2012

7.2 Appendix 1: 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan Monitoring Report

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DATE	7 th November 2013

Appendix 1: 2013/14 Council Improvement Plan Monitoring Report

2013/14 Council Improvement Plan

We deliver excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible

	ACTION	LEAD SERVICE	TIMESCALE	Update (November 2013)
1	Develop toolkit for self-evaluation of strategic partnerships	Policy and Partnerships	March 2014	The Toolkit will be based on the Improvement Service's Community Planning Partnership self-evaluation toolkit. The East Lothian Partnership will undertake a self-evaluation supported by the Improvement Service in autumn 2014. The toolkit could be used to evaluate other partnerships, including Area Partnerships
2	Review consultation strategy with view to ensuring that service users' views about quality of services is measured and used effectively	Policy and Partnerships	March 2014	This is an on-going piece of work
3	Roll out CPD for elected members and continue to support elected member and senior management development	Council Resources	Sept 2013 / Mar 2014	Five elected members have signed up for the CPD A management development course leading to a Chartered Institute of Management Level 5 qualification is being offered to all senior managers
4	Hold training session for elected members on new Standing Orders including session on Members Conduct delivered by the Standards Commission	Council Resources	Oct 2013	A briefing session on the Councillors' Code of Conduct will be conducted by the Standards Commission (10 th Dec 2013)
5	Training for Audit & Governance Co and PPR Co members	Council Resources	Oct 2013	Two provisional dates for the day's training were not suitable for members. A new date for a ½ day's training sessions, 21 st Jan 2013, has been set; pending confirmation from CIPFA

6	Induction programme for all members of new Community Planning Partnerships, including elected members	Policy and Partnerships	Oct 2013	An induction session was held for all East Lothian Partnership members in June 2013. A handbook on the role of members of the Partnership has been prepared and will be circulated to all Partnership members
7	Review and revise the Improvement Framework and make more effective use of benchmarking, develop guidance and training on the use of benchmarking, Best Value reviews and options appraisal	Policy and Partnerships	Nov 2013/ Mar 2014	The Improvement Framework is being reviewed and will include guidance on benchmarking and carrying out Best Value Reviews
8	Focused work with Local Area Network (LAN) on an agreed programme of self-evaluation for improvement	Policy and Partnerships	Mar 2014	Local Area Network members have participated as 'critical friends' in the Council's How Good is Our Council? peer review sessions led by the Chief Executive A focused audit of Education shared services is being carried out by members of the LAN The Council Management Team has quarterly meetings with the Local Area Network
9	Implement programme of action to respond to the results of the Employee Engagement Survey	Policy and Partnerships	Nov 2013	See 13 below
10	Review Whistleblowing Policy and publicise to all staff	Internal Audit	Oct 2013	The policy has been reviewed and the list of contacts will be updated once the re-structuring of Council services has been completed and the revised policy will be communicated to staff
11	Introduce Combined Impact Assessment and process for monitoring the needs of minority and vulnerable groups	Policy and Partnerships	Aug 2013/ Mar 2014	The framework for conducting Combined Impact Assessments has been finalised and is being rolled out amongst services
12	Review People Strategy including the how the values from the East Lothian Way are disseminated to staff	Policy and Partnerships	Oct 2013	See 13 below

13	Develop Workforce Development Plan (including supporting internal jobs market, management of change, leadership development and succession planning)	Policy and Partnerships	Nov 2013	A draft Workforce Development Plan has been prepared and an Action / Work Plan detailing how the Plan will be carried out is being prepared. The Plan directly respond to the issues raised in the Employee Engagement Survey and includes an action to refresh how the East Lothian Way is being used and disseminated
14	Review and further develop How Good is Our Council? (HGIOC) self-evaluation, including involvement of stakeholders	Policy and Partnerships	Jan 2014	HGIOC has been reviewed and new guidance including stakeholder involvement is to be issued in December
15	Review service planning guidance and develop 3-year service plans	Policy and Partnerships	Dec 2013	New Service planning guidance for 3-year service plans will be issued in the new year
16	Review staff communications	Policy and Partnerships	Nov 2014	Staff communications is being reviewed alongside the Workforce Development Plan
17	Prepare and implement Records Management Plan setting out arrangements for management and retention of records in line with requirements of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011	Council Resources	May 2014	Work is progressing on all the 14 elements of the Records Management Plan, some of which have been completed already. The full plan is due to be completed by May 2014 and will then be the basis for a 5-year improvement model on this area of activity across the organisation. Some improvements are being implemented as they are discovered rather than waiting for formal introduction, but on the whole the process is moving onwards to bring about improvement to the Records Management provision and efficiency across the entire Council
18	Complete review of Standing Orders and Schemes of Administration and Delegation	Council Resources	June 2013	Completed with a report to Council, August 2013
19	Develop a methodology for systematically reviewing and updating corporate policies	Council Resources	Jan 2013	Work to commence
20	Review and further strengthen the Council's	Council	Dec 2013	In accordance with agreed actions arising from the

	financial management process	Resources		annual audit process, a number of improvements have now been implemented e.g. introduction of a new Efficiency Progress Rating that supplements the existing Financial Risk Rating
21	Focused work with the Local Area Network and external auditors as part of an agreed programme of external audit to meet the financial challenges faced by the Council	Council Resources	Mar 2014	The Council's external auditors have completed their audit of the 2012/13 accounts and associated work and reported to Council and have reported positive findings to Council within their Annual Report to Members