East Lothian Council

REPORT TO: Audit and Governance Committee

MEETING DATE: 18 November 2014

BY: Depute Chief Executive - Partnerships & Community Services

SUBJECT: 2014/15 Council Improvement Plan Monitoring Report

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1 PURPOSE

1.1 To present the 2014/15 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 2014/15 Council Improvement Plan was approved by Council on 24th June 2014. 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, 20th May 2014). The results of the 2014 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 2014/15 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 2013/14 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 11 action points in the Improvement Plan.

4   POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1   The 2014/15 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, 24th June 2014

7.2   Appendix 1: 2014/15 Council Improvement Plan Monitoring Report

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DATE	6th November 2014

Appendix 1: 2014/14 Council Improvement Plan Monitoring Report

	2014/15 Council Improvement Plan			

	We deliver excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible			

	ACTION	**LEAD SERVICE**	**TIMESCALE**	**UPDATE**
1	Develop toolkit for self-evaluation of strategic partnerships	Communities and Partnerships	November 2014 – updated to February 2015	The East Lothian Partnership is undertaking a strategic self-assessment supported by the Improvement Service. The toolkit used for this self-evaluation will be adapted for use by other strategic partnerships.
2	Scrutiny training for PPR Co members	Council Resources	September 2014 – updated to February 2015	The training requirements of the PPR Co members will be assessed following elected members' survey which will be carried out during November (see 7 below).
3	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	Communities and Partnerships	Completed	The Improvement Framework has been reviewed. The Council is participating in various national Benchmarking exercises based on the Local Government Benchmarking Framework. A charges benchmarking exercise has been completed and will be report to Council in December. A template for undertaking Best Value Reviews, including options appraisal has been completed.
4	Introduce Combined Impact Assessment and process for monitoring the needs of minority and	Communities and	August 2014 – updated to February	A draft Combined Impact Assessment toolkit has been prepared jointly with Midlothian Council, City of Edinburgh Council and NHS Lothian. It is being

		Partnerships	2015	consulted on.
	vulnerable groups			
5	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	Completed	The Records Management Plan was adopted by the 28th October Council meeting.
6	Work with partners to develop and implement the Children's Services inspection Improvement Plan	Children's Wellbeing	March 2015	The Children's Services Improvement Plan has been approved and the Action Plan is being implemented by the Children's Strategic Partnership and its six implementation groups.
7	Review and develop elected members' training and briefings including briefing on Capital Investment Strategy and development issues arising from Councillors' responses to a survey based Audit Scotland Overview of Scottish Local Government Councillors' Checklist	Communities and Partnerships / Council Resources	September 2014 – updated to December 2015	The elected members' survey will be carried out in November. The results of the survey will be used to inform the development of elected members' training and briefing sessions in 2015.
8	Implement the action plan based on the Investors in People Improvement Plan and Workforce Development Plan	Communities and Partnerships	March 2015	The key actions from the Investors in People assessment are reflected in the Workforce Development Plan that is being implemented on schedule.
9	Review and revise the staff communications plan to ensure staff are fully informed and engaged	Communities and Partnerships	Completed	Staff communications has been revised and actions to improve staff engagement will be carried out over the next three months, including new staff newsletter / briefings. A key part of the engagement with staff over the next year will be the roll out of a series of 'One Council – Working Together' workshops starting in February 2015.
10	Implement the Web Development strategy to provide a more responsive and effective Council website that will support more 'self-service' activity by council service users	Communities and Partnerships	March 2015	The Web Development Strategy has been agreed to produce a new website using Responsive Design to suit a range of devices, replace existing website self-service functions with improved self-

				service facilities and extend self-service capability to other services and provide improved on-line booking and payments facilities. Implementation has been delayed but measures are now in place to begin the project and bring it back on track.
11	Further develop the Council's service planning process moving towards three-year service planning linked to financial planning based on staff and stakeholder engagement	Communities and Partnerships	Completed	A three-year service planning framework linked to financial planning and How Good is Our Council self-evaluation with staff and stakeholder engagement has been developed. This will be rolled out for use by all services over the next year.