

REPORT TO: Policy and Performance Review Committee

MEETING DATE: 29 September 2015

BY: Depute Chief Executive (Partnerships and Community Services)

SUBJECT: Draft Council Annual Public Performance Report 2014/15

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with the draft Annual Performance Report 2014/15

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to comment on and otherwise approve the draft Annual Performance Report 2014/15 and note that the final draft of the Report will be considered by East Lothian Council (25th October 2015).

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Annual Performance Report is a summary of the Council's performance in relation to its commitments in the Council Plan and the Single Outcome Agreement. The information contained within the report generally relates to the financial year 2014/15 (April 2014 – March 2015).
- 3.2 The report shows performance against the four objectives of the Council Plan 2012-17. Information contained within the report has been drawn from the Council's Key Performance Indicators, from the Council Plan monitoring report, from audit and inspection reports and from reports to Cabinet and Council committees.
- 3.3 Audit Scotland has carried out an evaluation of Council Annual Public Performance Reports. The results of this work were reported to the Accounts Commission in June 2015. East Lothian Council fared well in this evaluation, fully meeting 24 out of 26 criteria against which performance reports were judged.

- 3.4 Given this evaluation the 2014/15 Annual Performance report broadly follows the same structure and format as the previous year's report. The report currently includes the 2013/14 Local Government Benchmarking Framework results. The 2014/15 results will be published later in the year. The Annual Performance Report will be amended to incorporate the results when they are published.
- 3.5 The Draft Annual Public Performance Report 2014/15 will be made available to the general public via the Council's website before the end of September 2015, although hard copies will be available for anyone that does not have access to the internet. The final version of the report will be made available following approval by the Council (25th October 2015).

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The reporting of performance is essential if the Council is to demonstrate Best Value. Reporting performance will help the Council to display openness, transparency and accountability. Best Value places a duty upon the Council to report performance to the public in order to enhance accountability.

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.
- 6.3 Other – none.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Appendix 1: Draft East Lothian Council Annual Performance Report 2014/15
- 7.2 Statutory Performance Information 2013/14: An Evaluation of Public performance Reporting – Report to Accounts Commission 11th June 2015 (Agenda Item 7)

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East Lothian Council

Annual Performance Report 2014/15

DRAFT

Contents

Strategy and objectives.....	3
Performance indicators.....	4
Growing our Economy – to increase sustainable economic growth as the basis for a more prosperous East Lothian.....	5
Growing our People – to give our children the best start in life and protect vulnerable and older people	8
Children and young people.....	8
Education	111
Protecting vulnerable and older people	133
Growing our Communities – to give people a real say in the decisions that matter most and provide communities with the housing, transport links, community facilities and environment that will allow them to flourish	166
Housing	16
Transport.....	18
Communities.....	200
The Environment.....	233
Growing the capacity of our Council – to deliver excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible.....	266
Effective, efficient and excellent services.....	28
Working together to achieve agreed outcomes	31
Tackling Poverty & Prioritising prevention and promoting equality	322
The Local Government Benchmarking Framework	344
Council Finances.....	36
Our plans for 2015/16.....	39

Strategy and objectives

The East Lothian Council Plan 2012-2017 is an ambitious statement setting out what the Council wants to achieve over that period.

The Plan has been influenced by the 2020 Vision for East Lothian, the Single Outcome Agreement 2013-23 (East Lothian Community Planning Partnership's plan for the future of East Lothian), and the Council Administration's manifesto, adopted as Council policy in May 2012. It puts these aspirations and commitments into one strategic document that sets the framework and priorities through which the Council will work towards achieving its ambition for East Lothian.

East Lothian faces significant challenges over the coming years, including: the wider financial environment and period of prolonged austerity in which the Council is operating within; the projected growth in population; and, growing demand for services.

Our primary focus is to respond to these challenges to enable East Lothian to continue to move towards achieving the ambition as set out in the 2020 Vision, the Single Outcome Agreement and the Administration's manifestos.




This year's Annual Performance Report is structured around the four Objectives of the Council Plan 2012-17:




- **Growing our Economy** – to increase sustainable economic growth as the basis for a more prosperous East Lothian
- **Growing our Communities** – to give people a real say in the decisions that matter most and provide communities with the housing, transport links, community facilities and environment that will allow them to flourish
- **Growing our People** – to give our children the best start in life and protect vulnerable and older people
- **Growing the capacity of our Council** – to deliver excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible within our limited resources.

The report includes a summary of the Council's finances and financial position, highlighting 'where the money goes' and an overview of the financial outlook for the Council.

It concludes with a summary of the Council's priorities for the next financial year, 2015/16.

Key to symbols for performance indicators used in this report:

	Performing better than target
	Performing slightly worse than target
	Performing much worse than target

	Improving since the year before
	Staying the same as the year before
	Getting worse than the year before

Performance indicators

The Council monitors how well it delivers its services using a range of performance indicators. Our indicators are generally reported on a quarterly basis (once every three months) or on an annual basis. Most of the indicators have a target that helps to provide context on how well the Council is performing. Comparisons with other areas in Scotland are also available for some indicators.

Further information regarding each indicator can be found on the Council's performance website:
http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/200453/performance_reporting or by clicking on any of the links below:

Growing our economy



Planning



The environment and waste management



Crime, safety, anti-social behaviour and criminal justice social work



Countryside & Leisure



Children's Wellbeing



Tackling poverty



Effective, efficient and excellent services



Transport, roads and lighting



Protective services



Cultural & Community Services



Healthier living, independent living and community care



Education



Housing & Homelessness



Services built around people and communities



Prioritising prevention and promoting equality



Growing our Economy – to increase sustainable economic growth as the basis for a more prosperous East Lothian

Context:

East Lothian's Economic Development Strategy 2012-22 identified a series of strengths and weaknesses for economic development in the area.

Strengths included a diverse business base with strengths in food & drink, tourism, higher education, East Lothian's proximity to Edinburgh and its quality of life.

Weaknesses consisted of a lack of large employers, pockets of deprivation, limited availability of land for economic development and poor public transport infrastructure.

The Strategy outlines two strategic goals aimed at improving the economic competitiveness of East Lothian:

- To increase the number of business in East Lothian with growth potential
- To increase the proportion of East Lothian residents working in and contributing to East Lothian's economy

Key challenges:

Youth unemployment – the proportion of 18-24 year olds claiming Job Seekers Allowance in East Lothian is relatively high in comparison to the overall proportion of the population claiming Job Seekers Allowance.

Wages for those working in East Lothian – the average weekly wage for those working in East Lothian is lower than for East Lothian residents that commute to work outside the area.

New businesses – East Lothian has a lower number of businesses per 10,000 population than the Scottish average.

How we did in 2014/15:

East Lothian Works, East Lothian's employability hub, brings together all employability-related services. The service has made use of the Youth Employment Scotland Fund to support 163 young people into paid work or paid work experience. Of the 163 participants 107 were employed in new jobs in the private sector and 56 young people employed within the Council (including 39 paid work experience placements, 8 graduate internships and 9 new modern apprenticeship opportunities). In addition the Council provided 152 work experience placements for school pupils in 2014/15. The overall proportion of 18-24 year olds claiming Job Seekers Allowance in East Lothian has reduced.

East Lothian Hospitality and Tourism Academy – the Council won the top Gold Award category for Service Innovation and Improvement for the Academy at the CoSLA excellence awards 2015. The Academy aims to provide academic qualifications and experience to enable young people to benefit from a positive destination, as well as smoothing the transition between school, college, university and work and raising standards within the industry. What started as a trial project with three East Lothian secondary schools has now grown into a unique and highly successful partnership involving Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh College, Borders College, four local authorities and industry partners.

Food & Drink – the Council undertook numerous activities to promote the food & drink sector in East Lothian area during 2014/15, including:

- the Eat East Lothian spring promotion, which saw a 27% increase in the number of people participating;
- provision of a branded East Lothian Food & Drink stand at the BBC Good Food Shows in Birmingham and Glasgow, the Speciality Fine Food Show London and the Royal Highland Show
- publishing the 2014 East Lothian Food & Drink directory
- staging the 9th Annual Food and Drinks Competition at the Brunton Hall in November 2014

Broadband – the Council approved a Broadband Strategy in November 2014. Extensive consultation was carried out and the agreed strategy identifies clear points of action for the council, including the need to ensure that Macmerry industrial estate is linked to superfast broadband and the need to investigate methods for attracting infrastructure suppliers to deliver services in East Lothian.

Supporting and encouraging the development of land for business use – work started in 2014 on the extension to the Mid Road Industrial Estate Business Units in Prestonpans funded from European Regional Development Fund. The development will provide seven new units for local businesses.

Performance:

Growing our economy



Planning



Indicator	13/14	14/15	Target	Trend	Comparison
Business and industry local planning applications: average number of weeks to decision	24.6	8.9	10.7	↑	10.7 (Scotland) 9.8 (Similar councils)
Proportion of 18-24 year olds claiming Job Seekers Allowance	5.6 (March 2014)	3.7 (March 2015)	3.8	↑	3.8 (Scotland)
Number of businesses per 10,000 adults	376	374	380	↓	388 (Scotland)
Number of new business starts supported via Business Gateway	206	196	200	↓	

We asked, you said, we did...

Fisherrow Harbour Regeneration

We asked...

About people's current opinion of Fisherrow Harbour and for their thoughts on potential improvements to the harbour.



Respondents raised ongoing issues with maintenance and the lack of facilities at Fisherrow Harbour. The results of the survey also showed support for the Waterfront Group's proposal to fund a feasibility study for ideas to regenerate the Harbour and surrounding area.

We did:

East Lothian Council carried out essential repair work to the internal walls of the harbour. An inspection of the external wall found it to be currently fit for purpose. Professional advice is being sought on the composition of the feasibility study and on any outcomes (e.g. pontoon installations).

Growing our People – to give our children the best start in life and protect vulnerable and older people

Children and young people

Context:

Services for children and young people in East Lothian are facing increasing demands. The number of referrals has risen from 1,768 in 2004 to 2,588 in 2009 and 3,258 by the end of 2014/15. The effects of benefit changes, an increasing population and greater public and multi-agency awareness about child safety and wellbeing contribute to the increasing workload.

Recent inspection reports tell us that our fostering and adoption services, residential units and children's centre are performing at a very high level. The recent Community Planning Inspection of Services for Children evidences for us that we continue to work together effectively in our multi-agency delivery of effective operational services for East Lothian's children, young people and their families. Low rates of Looked After Children and a low (but fluctuating) rate of children on the child protection register provide evidence of the preventative and early intervention strengths of the service.

Key challenges:

The Care Inspectorate concluded an inspection of Services for children and young people in East Lothian in April 2014. The inspection made a number of recommendations, which are being addressed by the Children's Strategic Partnership.

Implementation of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 – the Council will need to implement a number of provisions contained within the Act that are aimed at improving outcomes for children and young people.

How we did in 2014/15:

Child protection - the number of children on the child protection register has remained fairly consistent. Initial Referral Discussions have steadily decreased over the past year. East Lothian has a lower number of repeat child protection registrations over a twelve month period.

Child Protection training has been delivered on an ongoing basis over the past year with a number of child protection courses being reviewed and in turn delivered as joint training.

Inspection of Olivebank Child and Families Centre - Olivebank offers care and support to vulnerable children and their families. In partnership with Children 1st the Council has invested resources in outreach work to supplement the Centre's services. The Centre received a positive inspection report from the Care Inspectorate in July 2014.

What our auditors think:

'Staff across services have a well established history of effective joint working which is continuing to have a very positive impact on the wellbeing of individual children and young people and families...

However, strategic leadership and planning has not been strong enough in driving change and improvement or directing efforts towards early intervention and prevention to achieve sustainable and long term impact.

(Care Inspectorate, Services for children and young people in East Lothian, April 2014)

Performance:

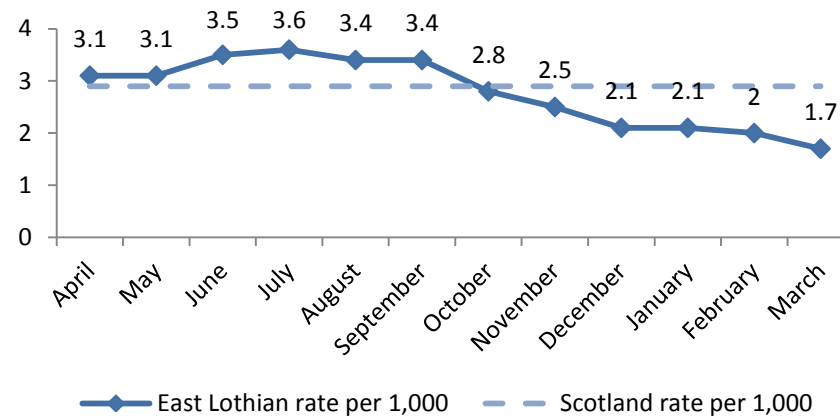
Children’s Wellbeing



Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicators:

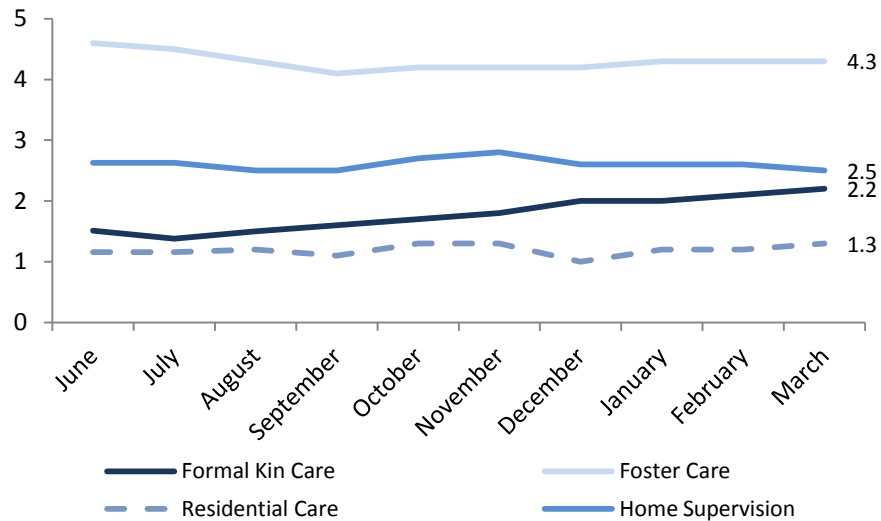
Indicator	12/13	13/14	Target	Trend	Comparison
The Gross Cost of "Children Looked After" in Residential Based Services per Child per Week	£2,478	£2,503	-	-	£3,098 (Scotland)
The Gross Cost of "Children Looked After" in a Community Setting per Child per Week	£310	£311	-	↔	£265 (Scotland)
% of children being looked after in the Community	86%	88%	91%	↑	91% (Scotland)

Children on the Child Protection Register as a rate per 1,000 children aged 0-17, April 2014-March 2015



The rate of children on the Child Protection Register has fallen in East Lothian, which bucks the trend for Scotland as a whole.

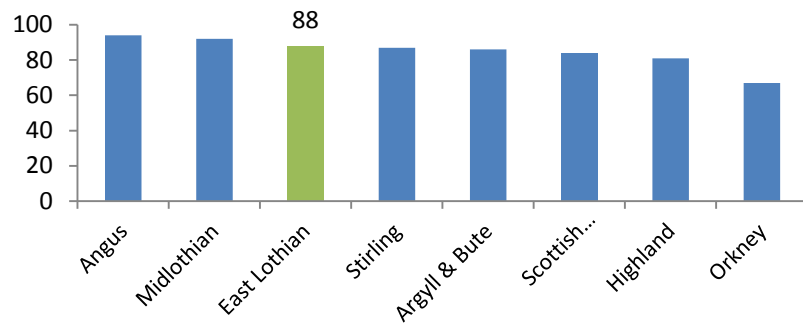
Children in care, by type of care, as a rate per 1,000 children aged 0-17, June 2014-March 2015



Looked After Children in East Lothian are increasingly being looked after in a community setting rather than in residential care. The use of community care leads to better outcomes for children and comes at a far lower cost than residential care. East Lothian Council is making greater use of formal kin care (where children are legally placed in the custody of friends or relatives) and informal kin care arrangements.

The Local Government Benchmarking Framework provides a family group of similar councils that the council can use to compare how well it is performing. East Lothian Council looks after a relatively high proportion of children in a community setting compared to other councils in its family group.

% of children being looked after in the Community, East Lothian compared to its 'family group' of similar councils, 2014



Education

Context:

Education is fundamental in shaping a child's life. Getting a good education improves the likelihood of earning a higher income, enjoying better health and living longer. In December 2014 there were 8,116 pupils 35 primary schools and 5,600 pupils in 6 secondary schools in East Lothian.

Key challenges:

Improving attainment among pupils from deprived areas – pupils living in deprived circumstances tend to attain lower qualifications than other pupils.

Closing the gap between the highest and lowest attaining pupils – the highest attaining 20% of pupils in East Lothian achieved a tariff score that was more than ten times greater than that achieved by the lowest attaining 20%

Gender differences in attainment – girls consistently perform better than boys in relation to literacy at primary and secondary school.

How we did in 2014/15:

Attainment – four new measures of attainment were introduced in Scotland during 2014/15. The measures are:

- Increasing post-school participation (shown as the percentage of School Leavers in a Positive Destination)
- Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy
- Improving attainment for all
- Tackling disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers

Overall, attainment and post school participation in East Lothian has improved over the five-year period to 2014. Further improvements still need to be made in Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF Levels 5 and 6 or better and overall in the Middle 60% attaining grouping to bring East Lothian's performance more in line with the Virtual Comparator.

East Lothian's performance across the four measures in 2014 is typically higher than the national trend with the exception of the percentage of school leavers in positive destinations. The Council can also compare its performance against a 'virtual comparator', which is a group of pupils from elsewhere in Scotland that have similar characteristics to those of pupils in East Lothian. Performance in relation to the Virtual Comparator is typically in line with or lower than its comparator with the exception of the total average tariff scores of the Lowest attaining 20% and Highest attaining 20% groups and the percentage of school leavers attaining both Literacy & Numeracy at SCQF Level 3 and 4 or better which is higher.

Youth achievement – the number of young people achieving Duke of Edinburgh and Saltire Awards has continued to increase. In 2014/15 there were 309 new entrants to the Duke of Edinburgh award (Bronze – 231 / Silver – 60 / Gold -18). Groups are operating across the authority and are run mainly by volunteers. However, challenges remain in relation to the secondary school teachers involved as they carry out this work in spare time, outwith school duties. The Saltire Award Ceremony in March where young people were presented with their certificates by the Provost was organised by the Saltire Ambassadors who are all volunteers under 25 yrs of age themselves.

600 hours of Early Learning and Childcare – the Council has implemented the Scottish Government’s commitment to provide 600 hours of Early Learning and Childcare to eligible 2 year-olds and all 3 and 4 year olds.

Performance:

Education



Indicator	12/13	13/14	Target	Trend	Comparison
Proportion of school leavers entering positive destinations	89.9	92.2	93.2	↑	92.6 (Scotland) 93.2 (Virtual comparator)
Average tariff score of pupils from the most deprived 30% of East Lothian	487	409	416	↓	629 (Scotland) 416 (Virtual comparator)
Average tariff score of the lowest attaining 20% of school leavers	139	179	174	↑	163 (Scotland) 174 (Virtual comparator)
Average tariff score of the lowest attaining 20% of pupils looked after away from home	47	134	118	↑	25 (Scotland) 118 (Virtual comparator)

Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicators:

Indicator	12/13	13/14	Target	Trend	Comparison
Cost Per Primary School Pupil	£4,522	£4,185	-	-	£4,734 (Scotland)
Cost per Secondary School Pupil	£6,161	£5,869	-	-	£6,532 (Scotland)
Cost per Pre-School Education Registration	£2,664	£2,800	-	-	£3,008 (Scotland)
% of Adults Satisfied with Local Schools	91%	89%	81%	↓	81% (Scotland)

Protecting vulnerable and older people

Context:

East Lothian's population is rising quickly and people are living longer, meaning we face greater demands and more acute levels of need in the population. At the same time, public bodies are facing their greatest financial challenge in a generation. Doing nothing is therefore not an option. Equally, while working more collectively and efficiently will yield economies, the extent of the challenge we face will require a more fundamental rethink and transformation of our services.

Key challenges:

Delayed discharge – the national target for delayed discharge performance is that there should be no one waiting more than 2 weeks for discharge from hospital. Up till April 2015 the target was 4 weeks. This is reflected in the East Lothian Single Outcome Agreement.

Ageing population – the population aged over 75 is forecast to increase significantly in East Lothian. The ageing population will bring increased pressures upon health and social care services, which will need to be delivered differently to cope with the anticipated demand.

Health & Social Care Integration – separate systems of health and social care can no longer adequately meet the needs and expectations of increasing numbers of people who are living into older age, often with multiple, complex, long-term conditions, and who need joined up, integrated services. These disconnects make it difficult to address people's needs holistically, and to ensure that resources follow patients', service users' and carers' needs.

How we did in 2014/15:

Health & Social Care Integration – the Council approved an integration scheme in March 2015, which sets out how NHS health services will be integrated with Council social services. Integration of health and social care services is intended to provide a better service by improving joint working and the allocation of resources between health and social care.

Adult protection – the Council and its partners have established a Public Protection Team which works in a more integrated way to strengthen public protection practice. The Public Protection Team aims to support operational staff across partner agencies, by providing a level of expert advice and promoting consistency of practice.

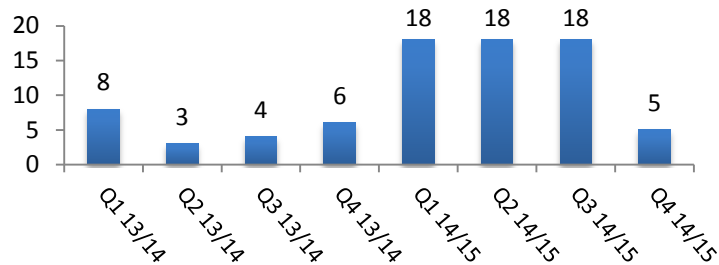
Carers – the Health & Social Care Partnership recognises that we need to make sure that carers remain in good health, and that their health-related quality of life does not deteriorate as a result of their caring responsibilities. 165 new carer's assessments were conducted during 2014/15.

Emergency hospital admissions – East Lothian has a lower rate of emergency hospital admissions than the Scottish average. However, the rate is higher than the Lothian average and people from East Lothian endure longer stays in hospital. For this and for a range of other markers of poorer outcomes such as multiple hospital admissions, readmissions and place of care in last six months of life, the picture varies significantly across localities and we will focus on these differences as we plan services more locally.

Delayed discharge – the Policy & Performance Review Committee received a report relating to the issue of delayed discharge in April 2015. The report noted that the main causes of an increase in incidents of delayed discharge in East Lothian during 2014/15 related to:

- difficulties faced by care providers in staff recruitment and retention, and;
- a lack of capacity within the Council to speedily assess people in hospitals outside East Lothian.

Number of delayed discharge patients waiting over 4 weeks, quarterly, 2013/14 – 2014/15



The Health and Social Care Partnership has been actively working on this problem. The Director of Health and Social Care chairs a delayed discharge task group and a delayed discharge action plan has been in place since September 2014. The action plan is regularly updated and reviewed.

Home care – home care service users received a satisfaction survey in February 2015. In relation to the overall satisfaction of the service received, 73% felt very satisfied, 22% were satisfied, 1% felt neither and 4% were unanswered. The feedback and comments are being addressed through the service user newsletter and a service user engagement/coffee morning is planned so results can be fed back and discussed

Performance:

Healthier living, independent living and community care



Indicator	13/14	14/15	Target	Trend	Comparison
Number of delayed discharge patients waiting over 4 weeks (quarterly average over the year)	5.25	14.75	0	↓	-
Percentage of care at home clients (aged 65+) receiving evening / overnight service	50.2 (March 2014)	52.3 (March 2015)	-	↑	-
Percentage of care at home clients (aged 65+) receiving a service at weekends	86.6 (March 2014)	88.6 (March 2015)	-	↑	

Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicators:

Indicator	12/13	13/14	Target	Trend	Comparison
Older Persons (Over65) Home Care Costs per Hour	£9.70	£13.01	-	-	£20.25 (Scotland)
SDS spend on adults 18+ as a % of total social work spend on adults 18+	£2.93	£4.13	-	↑	£6.40 (Scotland)
% of people 65+ with intensive needs receiving care at home	39.4%	39.7%	34.7%	↑	34.7% (Scotland)
% of Adults satisfied with social care or social work services	65%	78%	55%	↑	55% (Scotland)
Average weekly cost per resident	£546	£410	-	-	£368

Growing our Communities – to give people a real say in the decisions that matter most and provide communities with the housing, transport links, community facilities and environment that will allow them to flourish

Housing

Context:

The East Lothian Local Housing Strategy 2012-2017 shows how the Council plans to address issues relating to housing, homelessness, housing support and fuel poverty. The strategy outlines a range of actions, which are currently being implemented by the Council.

Demand for new housing in East Lothian is very high. However, there is a limited supply of land for new housing in the area. Several potential new sites for housing developments are being assessed and consulted upon as part of the development of the new Local Development Plan.

Key challenges:

Affordable housing – the East Lothian Local Housing Strategy 2012-17 notes that 456 new homes per annum need to be built in East Lothian to meet demand. However, economic conditions meant that only 330 houses were completed in East Lothian in 2013/14.

Rent arrears – the level of rent arrears has increased in recent years. The Council recognises that it has a relatively high level of arrears and has established a number of initiatives to tackle the problem.

How we did in 2014/15:

Affordable housing – the Council has recently seen 41 new homes being handed over at the Pinkie Mains site in Musselburgh. 14 more homes at Monktonhall Terrace in Musselburgh were also handed over in April 2015. The Council has also recently opened 20 amenity homes at Victoria Park in Haddington, four of which are built to wheelchair accessible design. The Council house modernisation programme provided 454 new kitchens and 262 new bathrooms in 2014/15.

Rent arrears – while there is a significant amount of work to do to achieve agreed collection targets, recent results are very encouraging and are demonstrating that the measures put in place to manage rent collection more effectively and to achieve targets are proving successful. Whilst it may take some time to reverse the trends of recent years, the service improvements and collaborative working arrangements being developed give confidence that aspirations can be met.

Fuel poverty – in December 2014 the Council, carried out an intensive energy efficiency programme targeting Prestonpans, which is the worst affected area in terms of fuel poverty. Additional insulation and energy reduction measures as well as information and advice were provided.

Tenant satisfaction – Of the tenants who responded to the Council’s most recent tenant satisfaction survey:

- 84.3% said they were satisfied with the overall service it provided, compared to the Scottish average of 88.1%.
- 88.7% felt that your landlord was good at keeping them informed about its services and outcomes compared to the Scottish average of 89.3%.
- 76.6% of tenants were satisfied with the opportunities to participate in your landlord’s decision making, compared to the Scottish average of 79.6%.

Average weekly rents

	East Lothian	Scottish average
1 apartment	£46.63	£64.03
2 apartment	£53.94	£68.54
3 apartment	£52.70	£69.60
4 apartment	£55.02	£75.69
5 apartment	£56.34	£84.04

East Lothian’s Council house rents are among the lowest in Scotland. The table above shows how rents in East Lothian compare to the Scottish average. Tenants were consulted upon their views about the proposed rent increase for 2014/15:

- 83% thought the Council was proposing a fair rent increase
- 88% said they thought their rent is good value for money
- 94% agreed that their rent money should be used to pay for the following key areas, service delivery, modernisation of council houses and delivery of new affordable homes

Performance:

Housing & Homelessness



Indicator	13/14	14/15	Target	Trend	Comparison
Percentage of reactive repairs carried out in the last year completed right first time	82.5	82	85	↓	87.59% (Scotland)
Average length of time (days) in temporary or emergency accommodation	143.7	136.7	-	↑	113.45 (Scotland)
Percentage of council dwellings that meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard	71.4%	81.6%		↑	90.25% (Scotland)
Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs	6.4 hours	5.4 hours	24 hours	↑	6.08 (Scotland)
Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs	17.4 days	14.8 days	23 days	↑	9.82 (Scotland)
Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year	9.3%	9.1%	6.3%	↑	6.3% (Scotland)
Percentage of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids	1.06%	1.11%	1.5%	↓	1.13% (Scotland)

Transport

Context:

Transport is fundamental to the maintenance of today's lifestyle whether it is for personal work or leisure or for the delivery of the goods and services necessary to sustain this lifestyle. The overall vision for the Local Transport Strategy is that East Lothian will have well-connected communities with increased use of sustainable transport to access services and amenities.

Key challenges:

Reducing the number of single person car journeys – almost half of all journeys to work in East Lothian are conducted in cars containing one person.

Access to public transport – some areas of East Lothian are well served by public transport; however, people in rural areas and areas to the east of the county find public transport less frequent and more difficult to access.

How we did in 2014/15:

North Berwick Car Parking Strategy – the Council agreed a three year strategy to improve parking provision in North Berwick following consultation with local residents. The public consultations showed that there was support for a number of developments relating to car parking in North Berwick including: additional parking provision being put in place at the Upper Glebe, keeping the School Road as a one way, retaining the seasonal restriction for parking in some areas, that there be formal designated places made available for ice cream vans, and that restrictions be introduced to restrict overnight parking.

Cycling – a number of road safety measures have also been put in place across the county to promote cycling. This includes the banning of vehicles near some primary schools at peak times— a practice that has been adopted by other councils — and the introduction of 20mph speed limits where is community support, for example in parts of Dunbar, North Berwick, Tranent and Cockenzie.

Rail and bus services – East Lothian Council and train operator ScotRail signed a concordat in August 2014 to work together to maintain and enhance rail services in the area. The concordat will encourage economic growth, getting people to work, connecting communities and businesses, and opening up leisure opportunities. The East Lothian bus forum has been established to support dialogue between the Council and bus operators. A new supported bus service tendering exercise took place which will result in improved local bus services operating throughout the county from April 2015.

Performance:

Transport, roads and lighting

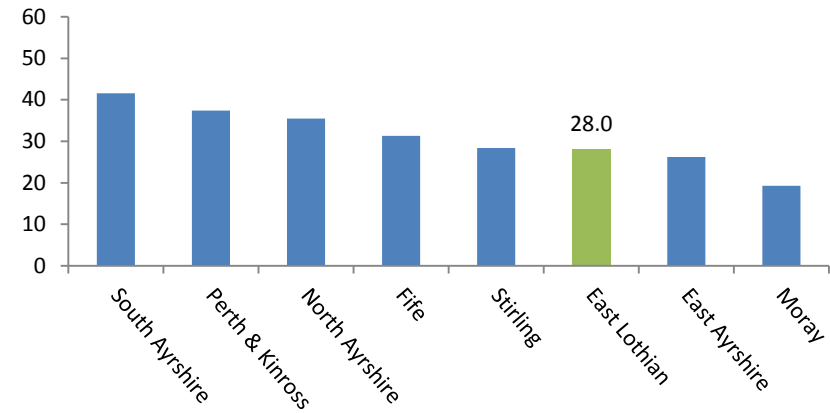


Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicators:

Indicator	12/13	13/14	Target	Trend	Comparison
Proportion of roads in need of maintenance:	26.2%	28%	28.7%	↓	28.7 (Scotland)
- A class roads					
- B class roads	33.3%	34.1%	35.2%	↓	35.2 (Scotland)
- C class roads	28.7%	29.7%	36.6%	↓	36.6 (Scotland)
- Unclassified roads	33.2%	29.6%	39.4%	↑	39.4 (Scotland)
Cost of maintenance per kilometre of roads	£11,911	£11,632	-	-	£6058 (Scotland)

East Lothian Council performed relatively well in comparison to similar councils in relation to the proportion of roads that require maintenance.

Percentage of A class roads in need of maintenance, East Lothian compared to its 'family group' of similar councils, 2014



Communities

Context:

Communities need to be supported to ensure they have the capacity to flourish. The Council is committed to ensuring that communities are empowered to develop strategies and Local Community Plans tailored to their needs and that decision making is devolved to the most appropriate local level.

A key feature of the Council's approach is that services should be built around people and communities; not professions and organisations. The Council is committed to, and has been developing, a range of ways in which to engage effectively with East Lothian's people and communities in order to better develop services around their needs.

Key challenges:

One of East Lothian's strengths is the strong sense of community in each of its towns and villages. The projected increase in population with significant housing developments being planned across the county could threaten this sense of community. Therefore, new settlements or significant additions to existing communities should be accompanied by the community infrastructure required to make viable, balanced and sustainable communities

How we did in 2014/15:

2014-15 was the first full year of operation for the Coastal Communities Museum. The museum is operated by the Coastal Communities Museum Trust in partnership with East Lothian Council. The museum is the realisation of a long held community ambition to have an active and busy museum for the local community and tourists alike and it received 5016 visits in 2014/15. The museum is managed and run by the Coastal Communities Museum Trust and their volunteers who stage their own exhibitions, fundraise, run events and activities as well as opening the museum with support from the East Lothian Council Museums Service team and East Lothian Council who meet property and maintenance costs for the building, which is shared with North Berwick Library.

East Lothian was at the heart of the John Muir Festival in April 2014 with the John Muir Way, a new coast to coast walk across Scotland from Dunbar to Helensburgh, being launched at John Muir's Birthplace in Dunbar on 21st April 2014 by the (then) First Minister for Scotland Alex Salmond. Around 3000 people attended the launch of the John Muir Way and more took part in John Muir Festival events that took place across the region and elsewhere in Scotland throughout the spring. The Festival had a positive effect on the numbers visiting John Muir's Birthplace and on awareness of John Muir and his legacy.

Performance:

Services built around people and communities



Cultural & Community Services

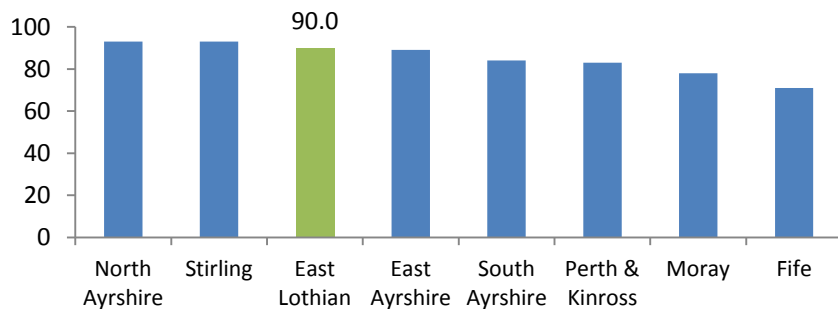


Crime, safety, anti-social behaviour and criminal justice social work



Indicator	13/14	14/15	Target	Trend	Comparison
Number of attendances at pools	342,668	415,180	440,000	↑	
Attendances at indoor sports and leisure facilities	562,149	665,028	520,000	↑	

% of adults satisfied with libraries, East Lothian compared to its 'family group' of similar councils, 2014



Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicators:

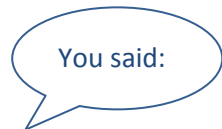
Indicator	12/13	13/14	Target	Trend	Comparison
Cost Per Library Visit	£2.44	£2.48		↔	£2.70 (Scotland)
Cost of Museums per Visit	£2.98	£2.74	-	↑	£3.72 (Scotland)
% of adults satisfied with libraries	94%	90%	81%	↓	81% (Scotland)
% of adults satisfied with museums and galleries	88%	87%	76%	↔	76% (Scotland)
Cost per attendance at Sports facilities	£4.56	£4.15	-	↑	£3.88 (Scotland)
Cost of Parks & Open Spaces per 1,000 Population	£56,440	£52,486	-	↑	£30,738 (Scotland)
% of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces	96%	93%	86%	↓	86% (Scotland)
% of adults satisfied with leisure facilities	93%	88%	78%	↓	78% (Scotland)

We asked, you said, we did...

Beach Wheelchair Project

We asked...

On behalf of The Beach Wheelchair Project team and in collaboration with North Berwick Community Centre and the North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership, we asked for your feedback on a proposal to bring Beach Wheelchairs to the beaches of the North Berwick Coastal area and eventually throughout Scotland.



113 responses were received, with 91% of respondents agreeing that providing Beach Wheelchairs would be a good idea. Over 85% of respondents stated either they, their child or person they care for would 'definitely' or 'most likely' use these Beach Wheelchairs if they were available. Several qualitative comments were also provided, with respondents acknowledging this provision would promote equal opportunity, strengthen inclusiveness and overall improve quality of life through allowing enjoyment of a simple, but beautiful and treasured experience of accessing the sand and beach. Constructive feedback and suggestions were also put forward in qualitative responses.

We did:

On behalf of the Beach Wheelchair Project, a funding application was submitted taking into account the potential interest and possible usage of the local community which could be gauged from the survey. Future consideration will be given to particular beaches and coastal areas referred to which have current regular visitation and/or where respondents expressed they would like to visit more than they do at present. Future consideration will also be given to other areas of improvement required to improve accessibility, notably closer and more disabled parking and improvements in slipways and pathways.



The Environment

Context:

The quality of the natural environment is one of East Lothian's greatest assets. There is a fundamental link between people and place which recognises that looking after our natural and built environments has positive benefits on the health and wellbeing of our communities.

The Council is committed to providing a high quality environment, improving the wellbeing and quality of life of our communities and promoting a sustainable lifestyle, and will work with, encourage and support communities to become actively engaged with their local environment.

Key challenges:

Recycling – the requirement to meet the Scottish Government's waste recycling target is a major challenge for the Council. The target for the amount of waste sent to landfill has increased to 60% by 2020.

Air quality in Musselburgh – the results of the 2013 Air Quality Progress Report indicate that air quality targets are being met across the majority of East Lothian. However, monitoring of Nitrogen Dioxide in Musselburgh confirmed concentrations at various locations in Musselburgh High Street.

How we did in 2014/15:

Recycling – in order to meet the new waste recycling target and new legislative requirements the Council adopted an ambitious Waste Strategy (24th June 2014). Weekly food waste collection and fortnightly refuse and recycling collections were introduced in April 2015. Every household now has access to weekly food waste collection, fortnightly glass, cans, plastics, paper and cardboard recycling, fortnightly garden waste collections and fortnightly residual/non recyclable waste collection. It also meant that a dedicated trade waste collection service including recycling was rolled out to our 1500 customers.

Air quality – in order to improve air quality the Council has declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Musselburgh. The AQMA covers the main High Street from the junction with Newbigging to the Junction at Bridge Street. An air quality action plan has also been developed to help improve air quality.

Performance:

The environment and waste management



Countryside & Leisure

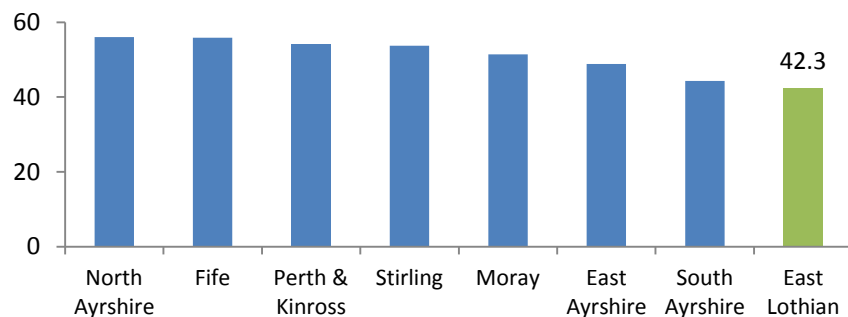


Protective services



Indicator	13/14	14/15	Target	Trend	Comparison
Number of vehicles accessing recycling centres	237,790	333,651	220,000	↑	
% of abandoned vehicles uplifted within 14 days of being reported	100%	100%	100%	-	

The % of total waste arising that is recycled, East Lothian compared to its 'family group' of similar councils, 2014



Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicators:

Indicator	12/13	13/14	Target	Trend	Comparison
Net cost per Waste collection per premises	£63.24	£70.98	-	↓	£61.32 (Scotland)
Net cost per Waste disposal per premises	£76.65	£56.75	-	↑	£91.75 (Scotland)
Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population	£13,009	£16,041	-	↓	£16,260 (Scotland)
Cleanliness Score	93.5%	96.3%	96.1%	↑	96.1% (Scotland)
Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population	£16,678	£13,802	-	↑	£18,322 (Scotland)
Cost of trading standards per 1,000 population	£5,920	£6,018	-	↓	£5,609 (Scotland)
The % of total waste arising that is recycled	45.1%	42.3%	42.2%	↓	42.2% (Scotland)
% of adults satisfied with refuse collection	94%	92%	83%	↓	83% (Scotland)
% of adults satisfied with street cleaning	87%	84%	74%	↓	74% (Scotland)

We asked, you said, we did...

Charges for Dog Waste Bags

We asked...

About people's views on charging for dog waste bags that the Council had previously provided to dog owners free of charge.



In the 2014 East Lothian Citizens' Panel winter survey, members were asked for their views on the provision of dog waste bags. Of the 659 who answered this question, 89 (14%) felt the Council should no longer provide dog waste bags, 158 (24%) felt that the Council should continue to provide dog waste bags free of charge, and 408 (62%) of respondents supported the idea of the Council continuing to provide dog waste bags, but with a nominal charge being applied to cover costs and to help fund initiatives related to responsible dog ownership.

We did:

East Lothian Council agreed to introduce a charge of £1 for a pack of 50 dog waste bags, commencing 1 April 2015. Part of the income derived will be used to cover the costs of bags, ordering, delivering and distribution.

The remainder of the income will be used to help fund initiatives related to responsible dog ownership. The charge will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Growing the capacity of our Council – to deliver excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible

Services built around people and communities

Context:

A key feature of the Council’s approach is that services should be built around people and communities; not professions and organisations. The Council is committed to, and has been developing, a range of ways in which to engage effectively with East Lothian’s people and communities in order to better develop services around their needs.

Key challenges:

Proportion of people who agree they can influence decisions – 22% of respondents to the Citizen’s Panel survey agreed that they were able to influence decisions. The result for East Lothian is similar to the Scottish average (from the Scottish Household Survey).

How we did in 2014/15:

Local Area Partnerships – six Area Partnerships have been established and have begun the work to develop Area Plans by identifying the key issues and priorities for their areas. The Area Partnerships have received devolved budgets to allocate to roads, amenity services (e.g. parks, street cleaning etc.) and other local priorities. The Council appointed four Area Managers to support the delivery of the Area Plans.

Citizens’ Panel – established in summer 2014, the East Lothian Citizens’ Panel now has in the region of 1,200 registered members who are approached twice a year to complete a Panel questionnaire. To date, members have been invited to respond to three main Panel questionnaires and have also been invited to get involved in other consultation and engagement activities. Topics covered in Panel questionnaires have involved transport, community safety, health and wellbeing, recycling and satisfaction with Council services.

Performance:

Services built around people and communities



Indicator	13/14	14/15	Target	Trend	Comparison
% of respondents who strongly agree/agree East Lothian Council keeps people well informed about the services and benefits it provides	-	61%	61	-	
% of respondents who strongly agree / agree they can influence decisions affecting their local area	-	22%		-	

Petitions Committee

The Petitions Committee discussed the following petitions during 2014/15.

Calling on East Lothian Council to remove Scots Pine trees located in the children's play area at Parsonpool, Dunbar

Residents living close to the play area raised a petition to remove trees that they felt were unsafe and causing a nuisance due to falling pine needles.

The Council Tree Officer recommended that the trees were healthy, safe and should not be felled. It was argued that trees are an important feature in a town in which there are relatively few large mature trees in public ownership.

The Committee agreed that the trees are retained as they are and the Council continue to manage them.

Calling on East Lothian Council to maintain Coo's Green indefinitely as a green space for the enjoyment of residents and visitors to North Berwick

Residents of North Berwick raised a petition to exclude Coo's Green from consideration as an option in the North Berwick Parking Strategy. The petition called instead for the land to be maintained as public green space.

Members of the Committee agreed that the petition had some merit and acknowledged the importance of taking account of residents' views rather than attempting to impose a solution without community support. Members agreed that the petition should be referred to the appropriate Cabinet Spokesperson for further consideration.

Effective, efficient and excellent services

Context:

Given the diminishing resources that are available and the growing demand for services the Council will have to increase its efforts to improve performance and provide value for money – provide better services at lower cost.

Key challenges:

Reductions in funding – Council funding will be flat (i.e. it will neither increase nor decrease) over the next few years; however, with increasing demand for services and additional burdens arising from legislation the Council will face reduced funding in real terms.

Change management – the Council will need to adapt the way in which it provides services to meet the challenges that it faces. The challenge lies in managing the necessary changes in such a way that residents of East Lothian continue to receive the services they need.

The changing way that citizens access services – people increasingly access services digitally and will expect to be able to access Council services in the same way. Providing services in this manner is often less expensive than other methods; however, it is critical that customers can also continue to access services in a way that meets their needs.

Public sector reform – the Council faces challenges arising from fundamental reforms to the structure of the public sector, including the

creation of the national Police force, the integration of Health and Social care and the drive for a more outcome focused public sector with a focus on prevention and early intervention.

How we did in 2014/15:

Call handling – the response rate to answering all calls within 20 seconds in 2014/15 was 58%, which is below our target of 70%. However, changes were made throughout the year to improve the efficiency of calls, which subsequently helped to improve the response rate. The addition of new services accessed via the Contact Centre has increased the overall volume and complexity of calls, which had an impact upon performance.

Investors in People (IIP) – the Council achieved Investors in People accreditation after being assessed in May 2014. IIP is a standard that relates to good practice in the management of people.

What our auditors think:

‘Overall... across East Lothian Council, there continue to be areas of strong performance and a number of improvement activities continue to make good progress.’

(Audit Scotland, Assurance and Improvement Plan, 2014-17)

What our auditors said:

‘The challenges faced by the Council to deliver services with less resources over the past five years have required careful management and monitoring. Public sector reform continues to gather pace against a backdrop of continuing financial pressures. The introduction of integrated health and social care partnerships, coupled with welfare reforms will require effective leadership and governance. We consider that the Council has so far progressed well in managing these changes.’

(KPMG, Annual audit report to the Members of East Lothian Council and the Controller of Audit, audit year ended 31 March 2015)

Performance:

Effective, efficient and excellent services



Indicator	13/14	14/15	Target	Trend	Comparison
Days lost per full time employee	8.6	10.3	9.2	↓	
Percentage of Council Tax due that was received by the end of the year	96.4	96.5	96.4	↑	
Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days of receipt	91.7	89.4	90	↓	
Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use	83.8	84.8	84.2	↑	

Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicators:

Indicator	12/13	13/14	Target	Trend	Comparison
Support services as a % of Total Gross expenditure	4.2%	4.11%	-	↑	5.07% (Scotland)
Cost of Democratic Core per 1,000 population	£22,479	£20,916	-	↑	£32,025 (Scotland)
The cost per dwelling of collecting Council Tax	£12.40	£12.48	£12.13	↔	£12.13 (Scotland)

Scrutiny

East Lothian Council has two committees that perform the ‘scrutiny’ function: the Audit and Governance Committee and the Policy and Performance Review Committee. Scrutiny involves examining and monitoring the activity of the Council with the aim of improving the quality of services. Scrutiny ensures that executives are held accountable for their decisions, that their decision-making process is clear and accessible to the public and that there are opportunities for the public and their representatives to influence and improve public policy.

Each Committee receives regular monitoring reports that highlight issues that might need further scrutiny. The Audit & Governance Committee receives audit reports that show the results of investigations conducted by the Council’s auditors. The Policy & Performance Review Committee receives regular performance reports that demonstrate the extent to which the Council is achieving its goals.

The following table summarises some of the issues that the Audit & Governance Committee and Policy & Performance Review Committee have reviewed during 2014/15:

Audit & Governance Committee	Policy & Performance Review Committee
<p>Self Directed Support – November 2014 The report outlines the Council’s position in relation to the findings of Audit Scotland’s investigation into the progress of Scottish councils in relation to the implementation of the Self Directed Support Strategy.</p> <p>Risk Management Strategy – January 2015 The Committee reviewed the Risk Management Strategy, which dictates how the Council manages the risks that might prevent it from delivering its services.</p> <p>Scotland’s Public Finances – March 2015 Audit Scotland’s report ‘Scotland’s Public Finances’ outlines the financial challenges that local authorities in Scotland are facing. The Committee report provides an overview of the arrangements that the Council has established to address these challenges.</p>	<p>Fly tipping – September 2014 The report provided a breakdown of fly-tipping in East Lothian. The report identified the proportion of fly-tipping that is considered to be domestic waste and the proportion that is commercial waste.</p> <p>Rent arrears – November 2014 The report explained the success of measures the Council has undertaken to address the growing problem of rent arrears.</p> <p>Delayed discharges – January 2015 The number of people whose discharge from hospital has been delayed for more than 4 weeks increased in East Lothian during 2014/15. The report discussed the reasons why people suffered a delay and highlighted the measures that are being undertaken to improve the situation.</p>

Working together to achieve agreed outcomes

Context:

The Council is committed to renewing its efforts to ensure that all its services work together to meet common goals and to develop effective partnership working with other public sector bodies, the voluntary and public sectors and most importantly the people and communities of East Lothian.

Key challenges:

The Accounts Commission reviewed community planning arrangements across Scotland ('Community Planning: Turning ambition into action', November 2014). Although the report found that aspects of community planning are improving, it noted that further work is required to target resources at priorities and shift resources towards preventative activity. The Accounts Commission found that community planning partnerships 'do not yet know what a strategic approach to prevention will look like, and in many areas the evidence base for this is underdeveloped'.

How we did in 2014/15:

Partnership self-assessment – the East Lothian Partnership conducted a self-assessment to identify their strengths and weaknesses. The results of the self-assessment have been used to inform actions that are included within the Partnership Improvement Plan. Work is also underway to develop a self-evaluation framework for the Children's Strategic Partnership

Musselburgh Total Place Pilot – the aim of the Pilot was to identify the resources and assets that the Community Planning Partners 'invest' in vulnerable families in the Musselburgh East and Carberry and Musselburgh West wards. Partners found that they needed to intervene at an early stage (e.g. ensuring that children attend school) to prevent families from suffering problems such as poor health and poverty.

What our auditors said:

'The East Lothian Plan - Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) 2013... is based on a clear, evidence based understanding of the context of East Lothian. This has been developed from the new East Lothian Profile 2013 which has six ward profiles... The profile provides a good and well researched evidence base that outlines the challenges that the council and its partners face as well the strengths, assets and opportunities available in East Lothian.'

(Audit Scotland, Assurance and Improvement Plan, 2014-17)

Tackling Poverty & Prioritising prevention and promoting equality

Context:

The Council Plan includes a commitment to early intervention and tackling inequalities: “The focus has to be on prevention and early intervention to avoid crisis intervention. Over the next five years the Council will need to re-direct resources to priorities and the development of a preventative model of service delivery.”

However, whilst the Council Plan acknowledged the significance of tackling inequalities and doing so through increased focus on prevention and early intervention it lacked a robust statistical analysis to take this commitment forward. The East Lothian Plan: Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2023 (the SOA) approved by the East Lothian Partnership in November 2013 was based on an analysis of evidence of the extent of inequalities within and across East Lothian’s communities. Drawing on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) and other national and local data sources the Profile provides substantial evidence of the levels of inequality in East Lothian.

Based on the evidence of growing levels of deprivation and relative inequality across East Lothian’s communities the SOA set one overarching priority: To reduce the inequalities across and within our Communities. The East Lothian Partnership is developing a framework for reducing inequalities through prevention and early intervention which will ensure that the Partnership focuses on this priority.

Key challenges:

There needs to be a greater focus upon the areas of prevention and early intervention that make the greatest difference, including:

- Reducing unemployment, particularly youth unemployment and improving positive outcomes for school leavers
- Raising attainment in schools, particularly for pupils from more economically ‘deprived’ areas, and providing a broader work based education experience through initiatives such as the Academies
- Reducing inequalities and ensuring the most disadvantaged groups and communities, have access to services that maximise opportunities to break the cycle of poverty or mitigate the impact of deprivation
- Supporting the capacity of communities and voluntary organisations to show community resilience and maximise social capital

How we did in 2014/15:

East Lothian Council, working with public and voluntary sector partners developed a draft Tackling Poverty Strategy along with an action plan in 2012. The Strategy aims to help people to be more financially capable and less financially excluded and ensure they have better access to welfare, money and debt advice. However, these are actions that mitigate deteriorating or negative outcomes. Whilst reducing poverty or mitigating the impact of poverty is vitally important it is even more important to try to break the cycle of poverty by helping to create the conditions and opportunities for individuals to break out of poverty by reducing unemployment in East Lothian.

The two strategic goals of the Economic Development Strategy are key to this: 1) to increase the number of businesses in East Lothian with growth potential; and 2) to increase the proportion of East Lothian residents working in and contributing to East Lothian's economy. The employability strand of the strategy is also key through contributing to providing training for people to gain work ready skills, support to find employment and suitable and sustainable job opportunities.

A key focus of the Council's approach to tackling poverty has been to mitigate the impact of welfare reform in East Lothian. Actions in 2014/15 included:

- Successful implementation of the Scottish Welfare Fund paying Community Care Grants and Crisis Grants
- Distribution of almost £500,000 in Discretionary Housing Payment to mitigate the impact of Housing Benefits under occupancy
- Collaboration between the Welfare Reform Task Group (Council and DWP group to oversee the actions to mitigate the impact of welfare reform) and the Welfare Reform Reference Group (a wider group of partners and third sector groups)
- Progress in implementing the Digital Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan to improve access to digital services for people who may be otherwise excluded (e.g. provision of broadband and access to computers in community centres and libraries)
- Continued funding of the Haddington and Musselburgh Citizens Advice Bureaux and other agencies to provide welfare and money advice services.

A draft Combined Impact Assessment toolkit has been prepared jointly with Midlothian Council, City of Edinburgh Council and NHS Lothian. Roll out of the new impact assessment will commence in autumn 2015 following further analysis of the approach.

Performance:

Prioritising prevention and promoting equality **Tackling poverty**



Indicator	13/14	14/15	Target	Trend	Comparison
Proportion of the highest paid 5% of employees that are female	51.4	51.9	50	↑	
% of people who strongly agree/agree their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together	-	91	91	-	
% of employees that are from Black or Minority Ethnic groups	-	1.1	1.7	-	
Percentage of primary school pupils eligible for free school meals	14.6	11.3	14	↑	
Percentage of secondary school pupils eligible for free school meals	10.9	8.6	10.5	↑	

The Local Government Benchmarking Framework

The Local Government Benchmarking Framework brings together a wide range of information about how all Scottish councils perform in delivering better services to local communities. The Framework includes 55 performance indicators, which are displayed throughout this report. The results provide a comparison between East Lothian and every council in Scotland.

Highlights from 2013/14

Satisfaction with services – citizens in East Lothian have a high level of satisfaction with Council services. The results for all eight satisfaction indicators fall within the top quartile.

Sickness absence – East Lothian has the 7th lowest level of sickness absence among Scotland's 32 councils. The rate of sickness absence in East Lothian has fallen from 10.1% in 2010/11 to 8.6% in 2013/14.

% of Council Tax collected – East Lothian collected 96.4% of the Council Tax it was due, compared to the Scottish average of 95.2%

Cost of support services – central support services make up a relatively low proportion of overall expenditure in East Lothian compared to the Scottish average.

Rent arrears – the Council has a relatively high level of arrears despite having some of the lowest rents in Scotland. The Council has established a range of initiatives to tackle the problem. The latest data demonstrates that the level of arrears has started to improve.

Scottish Housing Quality Standard – 71.4% of Council houses in East Lothian met the Standard in comparison to the Scottish average of 83.7%. The Council has established a modernisation programme to help meet the requirements of the Standard.

Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs – East Lothian Council took an average of 17 days to undertake a non-emergency repair compared to a Scottish average of 10 days. The Council is reviewing its procedures for undertaking repairs and aims to improve performance with the introduction of mobile working.

Benchmarking exercises

East Lothian Council is participating in several benchmarking exercises, which aim to help councils understand why their performance in relation to the Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicators differs from one another. The Council is benchmarking its performance against a 'family group' of councils that have similar geographical or social and demographic characteristics to ensure that it compares like with like. Each family group includes eight local authorities.

Benchmarking exercises that have been concluded or are currently underway include:

Subject	Findings
Roads	<p>Different operational models were identified, which might warrant further investigation. The use of decision-making matrices to target the areas of road most in need of maintenance was highlighted as being more effective than allocating funding for maintenance on a ward-by-ward basis. Road asset management planning was found to be effective in encouraging a longer-term strategy of prevention.</p> <p>The exercise identified significant differences in accounting, which undermined the comparability of the benchmarking data. The indicator on costs takes account of revenue expenditure; however, it transpired that many councils account for a large proportion of expenditure on road maintenance as capital.</p>
School leaver destinations	<p>The positive destinations pilot benchmarking exercise has been completed. Participants identified numerous different approaches to improve positive destinations; however, the exercise struggled to identify which approaches were most effective. The pilot exercise highlighted several areas in which more work needed to be done to identify and share good practice e.g. work experience programmes, school vocational programmes, partnership working etc.</p>
Charging for services	<p>The exercise identified over 1,000 different charges. In some areas the level of charge differed quite significantly between councils. The exercise highlighted several services that other councils charge for which East Lothian Council does not levy a charge. The results of the exercise were reported to the Council Management Team along with the draft Council Charging Policy and will be used by services when reviewing their charges.</p>
Council Tax	<p>The exercise is currently in progress and will focus upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self Service• Text messaging as a way of communicating• Debt recovery/Management• Channel Shift
Looked After Children	<p>The exercise is currently in progress.</p>

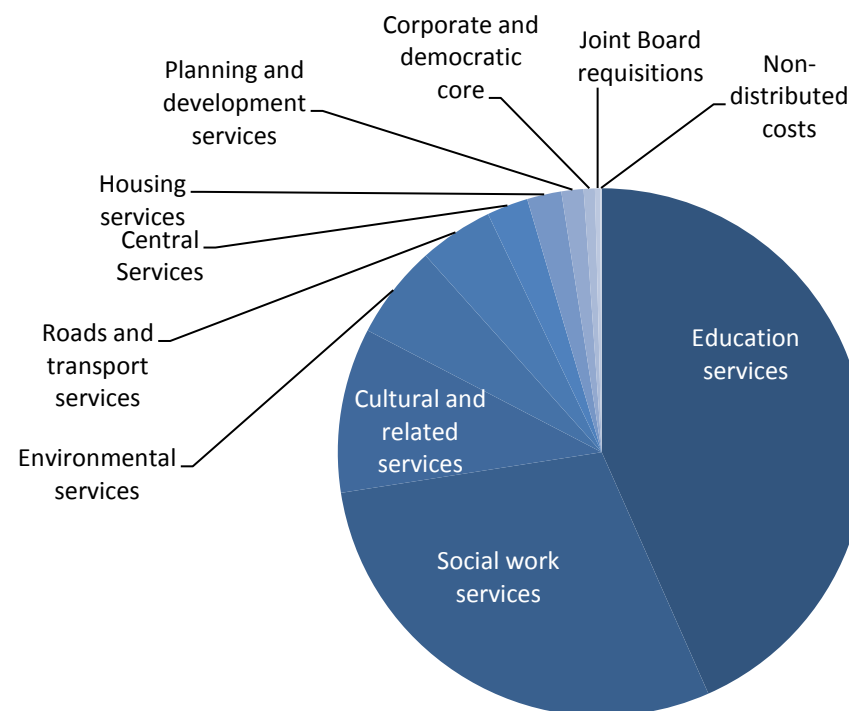
Council Finances

Where the money comes from (from 2014/15 Statement of Accounts)

	£m
Council Tax	£43,476
Non domestic rates	£25,172
Non ring-fenced government grants	£146,187
Capital grants and contributions	£20,319
Total	£235,154

Where the money goes:

Net expenditure by service (£,000s):	2013/14	2014/15
Central Services	£4,126	£5,333
Cultural and related services	£19,703	£21,235
Education services	£90,373	£91,240
Environmental services	£11,560	£12,074
Housing services	£4,064	£4,424
Joint Board requisitions	£200	£674
Local Authority Housing (Housing Revenue Account)	£3,314	(£782)
Planning and development services	£3,520	£2,849
Roads and transport services	£9,650	£9,533
Social work services	£62,855	£61,331
Corporate and democratic core	£1,326	£1,439
Non-distributed costs	£1,145	£197
Total cost of services	£211,872	£209,547
(Gains) / Losses on the disposal of non-current assets	(£1,173)	(£1,511)
Financing and investment income and expenditure (e.g. interest payable)	£19,956	£20,746
Taxation on non-specific grant income	(£224,852)	(£235,154)
(Surplus) / Deficit on the provision of services	£5,803	(£6,372)



Financial Performance for 2014/15:

Despite the challenging operating environment, the Council has delivered better than anticipated financial results for the year, with an increase in General Services usable reserves of £7.347m. This has been achieved through a combination of recurring and non-recurring savings, efficiencies or additional income including:

- Service reductions and efficiencies including efficient workforce management and a continued reduction in the cost of supplies and services;
- Non-recurring rebate relating to the 2012-13 Business Rate Incentivisation Scheme (BRIS);
- Reduction in the bad debt provision relating to outstanding Council Tax debt;
- Reduction in anticipated debt charges resulting from lower than planned capital expenditure

In keeping with recent years, the Council has continued to reduce its overall cost base through the delivery of efficiencies, including a significant programme of service reviews. In line with the Financial Strategy, the Council has developed a sustainable budget that reduces dependency on reserves to zero by 2017/18. Despite the improved results for 2014/15, the Council, in common with other public bodies, continues to face significant financial challenges with further reductions in public sector funding levels expected to continue until at least 2019/20.

Financial outlook:

In the medium term it is clear that the Council faces some very difficult financial decisions as a result of the following;

- Real terms reductions in the income it will receive from Scottish Government;
- Meeting our obligations from new legislative requirements e.g. Children and Young Persons Act and provision of Free School Meals;
- Responding to the challenges arising from recent and proposed UK benefit reforms;
- Increasing population and other demographic changes e.g. increased numbers of young and old, early years care/school rolls/elderly care;
- General price/inflationary pressures;
- Upward pressure on staff costs – particularly after a significant period of pay restraint and uncertain future pay settlements, but also arising from the likelihood of unfunded national insurance and superannuation cost increases;
- New statutory arrangements relating to the provision of Integrated Health and Social Care services;
- Political change/uncertainty – there are three back to back electoral events with Westminster, Holyrood and Local Government Elections due to take place between now and May 2017

The latest cash terms estimate of funding available to support council services is forecast to be a broadly flat-lined position from 2015-18. This funding is required to deliver a wide range of new legislative burdens as well as provide for contractual commitments including pay and pension contributions. Taking these inescapable commitments into account, in overall terms we have a real terms reduction in the resources being made available to deliver Council services.

It is therefore clear that the Council is financially challenged such that it must reduce expenditure commitments or increase income, or some combination of both. Following on from a recent national Audit Scotland report, a benchmarking exercise was undertaken that helped inform a new Fees and Charges Policy that was approved by Council in December 2014. In future, it may be possible to introduce additional sources of income that would partially mitigate against expected funding shortfalls.

Notwithstanding this, a significant share of any funding shortfall is likely to have to be met through continued application of cost containment and cost avoidance measures. As far as possible, the Council is seeking to contain costs by becoming more efficient. However, the extent of the medium-term challenge we face suggests that more significant changes in how services are managed and delivered will be required whilst providing services in accordance with the Council Plan and SOA. This includes the Council paying due regard to the statutory obligations of the Equality Act 2010. Understanding the impact of financial decisions on all those within the community will help to ensure that decisions about future provision of services meet the needs of the community effectively.

Our plans for 2015/16

The Council Plan was reviewed in 2014 taking account of the progress that had been made by the Council since the plan was first adopted in 2012. The review concluded that although the original priorities remained valid, evidence of inequality across East Lothian suggested that early intervention and tackling inequalities should be given a higher priority. The review of the Council Plan therefore highlighted the following priorities to help the Council achieve its aims over the next three years:

- Reducing unemployment, particularly youth unemployment and improving positive outcomes for school leavers, principally through the initiatives developed and supported by East Lothian works
- Raising attainment in schools, particularly for pupils from more economically 'deprived' areas, and providing a broader work based education experience through working with Edinburgh College and Queen Margaret University on initiatives such as the Academies
- Reducing inequalities and ensuring the most disadvantaged groups and communities, have access to services that maximise opportunities to break the cycle of poverty or mitigate the impact of deprivation; e.g. Children's early years initiatives and improving health and wellbeing for all age groups
- Supporting the capacity of communities and voluntary organisations to show community resilience and maximise social capital from community and social networks

Our plans for addressing the challenges outlined in the Council Plan for 2015/16 onwards are outlined below:

Growing our Economy:

The East Lothian Economic Development Strategy outlines the Council's ambitions for economic development of the area between 2012 and 2022. The aims of the Strategy are:

- To increase the number of businesses in East Lothian with growth potential
- To increase the proportion of East Lothian residents working in and contributing to East Lothian's economy
- To be the best place in Scotland to set up and grow a business
- To be Scotland's leading coastal, leisure and food and drink destination
- To build on our proximity to Edinburgh to encourage study, work and spend in East Lothian
- To provide high quality employment pathways for East Lothian's workforce
- To become Scotland's most sustainable local economy

Growing our People:

Children & Young People:

The East Lothian Inter-agency Child Protection Improvement Plan 2015-18 provides a clear focus on providing better outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and their families across East Lothian. The Improvement Plan can be found on the [East and Midlothian Public Protection Committee website](#).

The Children's Strategic Partnership is developing a new Integrated Children's Services Plan.

East Lothian and Midlothian Councils are in the process of establishing a local Child Protection Disability Forum which will aim to ensure that the work of the National Child Protection Disability Network is shared and rolled out across both areas.

Protecting Vulnerable & Older People:

The Health & Social Care Partnership has established a delayed discharge task group, which is developing priorities for investment, including:

- additional assessment capacity
- payment of the living wage in care homes
- the opening of 20 step down beds at Crookston Care Home

The East and Midlothian Adult Support and Protection Improvement Plan 2015-18 provides a clear focus on providing better outcomes for Adults at Risk of Harm and their families across East Lothian and Midlothian. The Improvement Plan can be found on the [East and Midlothian Public Protection Committee website](#).

Growing our Communities:

Transport:

Cycling – there are other improvements which are currently being worked on to improve the cycling experience for residents and visitors in East Lothian. This includes new shared-use paths on route 76 at Broxburn near Dunbar and route 196 at Crossgatehall – both part-funded by Sustrans. East Lothian Council is also reviewing and updating the Local Transport Strategy which will be followed by a Cycle Action Plan. There are also very early discussions on the construction of a bridge for cyclists and pedestrians over the A1 near Torness.

Buses – new supported bus services are being introduced across East Lothian from May 2015. Greater provision of commercially operated bus routes around the county means that supported bus service are no longer required in some areas. This has allowed resources to be deployed in other areas instead, giving the public a wider coverage and better overall access to public transport.

The Environment:

Recycling – from April 2015 every household in East Lothian has access to weekly food waste collection, fortnightly glass, cans, plastics, paper and cardboard recycling, fortnightly garden waste collections and fortnightly residual/non recyclable waste collection. The Council will also roll-out a dedicated trade waste collection service, which includes recycling, to 1500 trade customers.

Growing the capacity of our Council:

Services built around People and Communities:

Resident's Review – the Council plans to establish a mechanism to enable residents of East Lothian to review the performance of Council services. The pilot Resident's Review exercise will evaluate services relating to green spaces (e.g. grass cutting, weed control, dog fouling).

Prioritising Prevention and Promoting Equality:

Musselburgh Total Place Pilot – phase 2 of the Pilot has started. The second phase aims to identify target areas for early intervention, establish which activities make the most impact, and determine how services can be realigned to deliver better outcomes for vulnerable families.

Key actions supporting East Lothian Partnership's approach reducing inequalities include:

- Developing a greater understanding of poverty and inequality across East Lothian and through the East Lothian Profiles
- Promoting a measurable shift in resources towards policies and services which are preventative in nature or designed to take an early intervention approach
- Routine use of Integrated Impact Assessment to consider the impact of decisions, policies and practices on equalities groups, poverty and health and a requirement to report these impacts in all Partnership reports

- Monitoring the impact of policies and activities designed to reduce inequality through the scrutiny of a range of performance indicators within the SOA
- Continued use of 'Voice' and the Citizens' Panel to engage with a variety of communities across East Lothian, including those least likely to engage.

Effective, Efficient and Excellent Services:

The findings of IIP, self-evaluation exercises and external audit reports have been reviewed and will be addressed via the Council Improvement Plan. The 2015/16 Council Improvement Plan includes the following actions:

- Develop a toolkit for self-evaluation of strategic partnerships
- Provide scrutiny training for PPRC Members
- Review and revise the Improvement Framework and make more effective use of benchmarking
- Introduce the Combined Impact Assessment and process for monitoring the needs of minority and vulnerable groups
- Prepare and implement the Records Management Plan
- Work with partners to develop and implement the Children's Services inspection Improvement Plan
- Review and develop elected members' training and briefings
- Implement the action plan based on the Investors in People Improvement Plan and Workforce Development Plan
- Review and revise the staff communications plan
- Implement the Web Development strategy
- Further develop the Council's service planning process

To contact us, or tell us what you think

We always want to hear what the people of East Lothian think about our services. Was this report easy to read? Did it inform you about Council services? Did it allow you to judge out performance? How could we improve the report next year?

If you want to give us feedback on this report or would simply like further information or to make a comment about the Council, email the Policy & Performance Team at: **policy@eastlothian.gov.uk**

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Versions of this publication are available on request on audiotape, in Braille or in your own language.
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