

**REPORT TO:** Audit and Governance Committee

**MEETING DATE:** 19 January 2016

**BY:** Depute Chief Executive - Partnerships and Community Services

**SUBJECT:** 2015/16 Council Improvement Plan Monitoring Report

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To present the 2015/16 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**

The 2015/16 Council Improvement Plan was approved by Council on 25 August 2015. 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, 19 May 2015). The results of the 2015 Employee Engagement Survey were also taken into account. Although consideration was also given to the findings and recommendations contained in 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, no improvement points were identified from these reports.

- 3.1 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 2015/16 Improvement Plan will contribute to meeting 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.

3.2 The six month monitoring report (Appendix 1) outlines progress that has been made in completing the eight actions in the Improvement Plan since the Plan was adopted in August 2015. It shows that six actions have either been completed or significant progress has been made. Work on the completing the remaining two actions will begin in early 2016.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The 2015/16 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, 25 August 2015

7.2 Appendix 1: 2015/16 Council Improvement Plan Monitoring Report

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## Appendix 1: 2015/16 Council Improvement Plan Monitoring Report

### 2015/16 Council Improvement Plan

**We deliver excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible**

	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>LEAD SERVICE</b>	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>UPDATE</b>
1	Review and develop elected members' training and briefings including development issues arising from Councillors' training and development needs survey based on Audit Scotland Overview of Scottish Local Government Councillors' Checklist	Democratic Services/ Communities and Partnerships	Completed	A programme of elected members briefings in 2015/16 has been established based on the results of the elected members' survey carried out in December 2014.  An elected members' training and development needs survey will be carried out in early 2016 to inform the 2016/17 programme.
2	Review and revise the Improvement Framework and make more effective use of benchmarking, Best Value reviews and options appraisal	Communities and Partnerships	Completed	The Council's Improvement Framework has been reviewed and revised. The Council is involved in several benchmarking exercises which are informed by the Local Government Benchmarking Framework. A Best Value Review is being undertaken of a Council service. Options appraisal has been written into the projects and investment decision process that has been instigated for new capital projects.
3	Introduce the new Integrated Impact Assessment framework that has been prepared jointly with Midlothian Council, City of Edinburgh Council and NHS Lothian; including provision of guidance, training and support for services	Communities and Partnerships	March 2016	A new Integrated Impact Assessment template has been finalised, guidance has been updated, an on-line training module has been prepared. The new Integrated Impact Assessment will be launched in the new year.
4	Implement staff communications plan to ensure staff are fully informed and engaged; including	Communities and	March 2016	A review of staff communications is being carried out. Over 20 One Council Workshops

	identifying ways to recognise and celebrate excellent performance and employee achievement	Partnerships		(attended by c.750 staff) were held in 2015 to engage with staff in an interactive setting. Very positive feedback was received from staff who attended the workshops. Consideration is being given to rolling out further workshops in 2016.
5	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 – 'Channel Shift'	Communities and Partnerships	March 2016	A business case for funding from the Cost Reduction Fund to support the development of a responsive by design website which will support greater self-service on-line services has been approved. The project will commence in early 2016.  The re-development of the Council's intranet has started and will be completed in April/ May 2016.
6	Develop a process/ programme for reviewing and evaluating Council policies and strategies to ensure they are up-to-date and relevant	Communities and Partnerships	March 2016	This project will commence in early 2016.
7	Implement the revised Personal Review and Development scheme in all services	Communities and Partnerships	March 2016	The Personal Review and Development framework has been revised and a new form and procedure is being rolled out across all services.
8	Review the Council's community engagement strategy to reflect the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015	Communities and Partnerships	March 2016	This project will commence in early 2016.