

REPORT TO: East Lothian Council

MEETING DATE: 27 June 2017

BY: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: East Lothian Council Plan 2017 - 2022

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To present the Council Plan 2017-2022 for approval.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Council approves the Council Plan 2017-2022.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Council, on 28 February 2017, approved a draft Council Plan 2017-2022 and instructed the Chief Executive to present a final Council Plan 2017-2022 following the May 2017 Council elections taking account of the manifesto of the new Administration.
- 3.2 The final draft of the Council Plan brought to the Council for approval is based on the draft plan that was approved in February 2017. It is both ambitious and aspirational. It is set within the context of the continuing financial, demographic and policy challenges faced by the Council and the county. It aims to maximise the benefits from the opportunities presented by the positive platform created by previous Council Plans and more recent developments such as the City Region Deal.
- 3.3 The final draft of the Plan reflects the views of East Lothian residents as evidenced by the recent Residents' Survey. It incorporates the manifesto commitments made by the Scottish Labour Party, which formed the new Council Administration following the May 2017 Council Elections, along with many of the commitments made in the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party and Scottish National Party manifestos.
- 3.4 The Council Plan sets out the clear vision of ***'An even more prosperous, safe and sustainable East Lothian, with a dynamic and thriving economy, that enables our people and communities to flourish.'***

3.5 To achieve this, the Council Plan has an overarching objective of '*reducing inequalities within and across our communities*'. It re-affirms the previous Plan's key four objectives and establishes a new set of strategic goals:

- *Growing our Economy – reducing unemployment and improving the employability of East Lothian's workforce*
- *Growing our People – reducing the attainment gap and raising the attainment and achievement of our children and young people; and, improving the life chances of the most vulnerable in our society*
- *Growing our Communities – extending community engagement and decision making and increasing community and individual resilience*
- *Growing our Capacity – delivering transformational change and harnessing the opportunities technology offers in the provision of services.*

3.6 The Plan is based on the understanding that East Lothian Council cannot address the diverse needs of our population on its own. At the heart of the Plan is the concept that the Council and the people and communities of East Lothian can best deliver the required solutions in partnership – 'working together for a better East Lothian'. Therefore, over the next five year, the lifetime of this Plan, the Council will increasingly become:

- an enabling and empowering authority that works with its citizens and communities, the business and third sectors and other public sector partners to deliver the solutions that work best for East Lothian.
- a more entrepreneurial authority, developing new ways of ensuring services are provided in the most effective and efficient way possible;
- a 'digital' authority, fully embracing and exploiting opportunities to use technology to deliver services.

3.7 The delivery of the Plan will be reviewed annually and progress will be reported in the Council's Annual Report.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Council Plan 2017-2022 and creation of a consolidated set of priorities and commitments will assist the Council in ensuring that corporate and service planning is well founded on a clear vision and strategic direction. This will also assist the Council in delivering services in accordance with our statutory Best Value obligations.

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 An integrated impact assessment of the Draft Council Plan showed that there are no negative equalities, social and economic implications arising from the

Plan. Equalities implications arising from the actions and the various strategies and plans identified in the Council Plan will be addressed as the Plan is implemented.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial – the financial commitments made in the Plan are contained within the Council’s three-year revenue budget and five-year capital programme. Where any commitments arising from the Plan cannot be accommodated within existing approved budgets the action will be the subject of a separate report to Cabinet or Council before implementation. Future budget development work will take into account any future financial implications of the Council Plan in accordance with any more detailed implementation timetable that is developed.
- 6.2 Personnel – no direct implications on staffing associated with this report’s recommendations although implementation of the Council Plan and its actions may have staffing implications which would be the subject of separate reports.
- 6.3 Other – none.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Draft Council Plan 2017-2022; report to East Lothian Council, 28th February 2017
- 7.2 Stronger for East Lothian: east Lothian Labour Party’s Manifesto for 4 May 2017
- 7.3 East Lothian Conservative and Unionist Party Local Government Manifesto 2017
- 7.4 SNP Stronger for East Lothian: Our Manifesto for People and Communities

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EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2022

*An even more prosperous, safe and sustainable
East Lothian, with a dynamic and thriving economy,
that enables our people and communities to flourish*

June 2017

FOREWORD

Our vision is that East Lothian should be even more prosperous, safe and sustainable, with a dynamic and thriving economy that enables our people and communities to flourish. We are committed to working together with the Council's partners and the people and communities of East Lothian to achieve this ambition.

The Council Plan sets out our collective ambition for East Lothian and the commitments we make to bring the real differences that will improve the quality of life of East Lothian's residents.

It also sets out the challenges as well as the opportunities we continue to face despite the work that the Council and its partners have engaged in over the last five years to deliver the previous Council Plan and put the building blocks in place for future achievement.

The Council Plan is based on objectives and strategic goals that will have the greatest impact in improving the lives of the people of East Lothian – growing our economy, growing our people and growing our communities. The overarching objective of reducing inequalities is important as it ensures we don't lose sight of the need to breakdown the persistent cycle of poverty that blights too many families and communities.

But the Council faces unprecedented financial challenges and increasing demand for more and better services from an ever growing population and communities that quite rightly expect the highest quality of services. As demand for quality services rises and resources are restricted we need to provide best value for money – better services at lower cost.

We understand that East Lothian Council cannot do everything that is required on its own – the people and communities of East Lothian supported by the Council and other agencies can best deliver the solutions required by 'working together for a better East Lothian'. That is why the Plan clearly states that the Council will increasingly become: an enabling and empowering authority, working with its citizens and communities and partners to deliver the solutions that work best for East Lothian; a more entrepreneurial authority; and, a digital authority embracing technology to deliver services.

This is a challenging plan but also an exciting plan. We look forward to working with Council staff, with our partners and most importantly with the people and communities of East Lothian to deliver it.

Councillor Willie Innes
Council Leader

Angela Leitch
Chief Executive

EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2022

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1. The Introduction to the Council Plan

***An even more prosperous, safe and sustainable East Lothian,
with a dynamic and thriving economy,
that enables our people and communities to flourish***

The East Lothian Council Plan 2017-2022 continues the journey towards realising the East Lothian vision by building on the ambition and achievements of the previous Council Plan, taking account of the challenges and new opportunities faced by the Council.

The Plan outlines the strategy the Council will follow and details the objectives and strategic goals it has set itself over the next five years to strive to meet the vision. It then lists the key actions it plans to undertake to achieve these objectives and goals.

The themes set out in the 2012-2017 Council Plan remain relevant and will continue to be the themes and objectives of Council Plan 2017-2022:

- Growing our Economy
- Growing our People
- Growing our Communities
- Growing our Capacity

The overarching objective of '*reducing inequalities within and across our communities*' that was adopted in 2014 remains the overarching objective of the new Council Plan.

The Plan sets out the following strategic goals which will make the biggest impact in delivering these key themes and objectives.

- Reduce unemployment and improve the employability of East Lothian's workforce.
- Reduce the attainment gap and raise the attainment and achievement of our children and young people.
- Improve the life chances of the most vulnerable people in our society.
- Extend community engagement and decision making and increase community and individual resilience.
- Deliver transformational change and harness the opportunities technology offers in the provision of services.

Despite difficult financial circumstances faced by the Council, all the commitments made in the 2012-2017 Plan have either been achieved or are at advanced stages of being achieved. More still needs to be done in order to continue the drive towards

achieving our vision of an even more prosperous, safe and sustainable East Lothian, with a dynamic and thriving economy, that enables our people and communities to flourish. The overarching objective of reducing inequalities across and within our communities is still relevant. Therefore, we will endeavour to target our resources towards East Lothian residents and communities that are most affected by poverty and deprivation.

The Plan also reflects the need to invest in, or re-direct resources to, new priorities through a preventative model of service delivery; investing in prevention and early intervention to avoid more costly crisis intervention. Crucially, the Council will prioritise measures that contribute to inclusive and sustainable growth that reduces inequality and helps to break the cycle of poverty.

The Council fully supports the East Lothian Partnership's Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) 2013-2023 and is committed to working towards achieving the outcomes in the Agreement. The SOA is currently being reviewed as the basis of the new East Lothian Plan which the Partnership will adopt by October 2017. The Council Plan and East Lothian Plan will be fully aligned.

The Council is committed to maintaining high quality public services that are used and valued by all residents such as schools, services for vulnerable children, adults and older people, well maintained roads and pavements, street lighting and refuse collection services.

Council services outline their contribution both to the Council Plan and to the East Lothian Plan in their Service Plans. The detail about what services are doing and plan to do to support the themes, objectives and strategic goals set out in this Plan will be reflected in Service Plans and/ or other plans and strategies (e.g. the Local Housing Strategy).

This Council Plan 2017-2022 is both ambitious and aspirational. It is set within the context of the continuing financial, demographic and policy challenges faced by the Council and the county. It aims to maximise the benefits from the opportunities presented by the positive platform created by previous Council Plans and more recent developments such as the City Region Deal.

This Plan is based on the understanding that East Lothian Council cannot address the diverse needs of our population on its own. At the heart of the Plan is the concept that the Council and the people and communities of East Lothian can best deliver these solutions in partnership – 'working together for a better East Lothian'. Therefore, over the next five year, the lifetime of this Plan, the Council will increasingly become:

- an enabling and empowering authority that works with its citizens and communities, the business and third sectors and other public sector partners to deliver the solutions that work best for East Lothian.
- a more entrepreneurial authority, developing new ways of ensuring services are provided in the most effective and efficient way possible;

- a 'digital' authority, fully embracing and exploiting opportunities to use technology to deliver services.

The Plan is underpinned by the personal values or principles of public service that are set out in the Councillors Code of Practice to which we expect all council staff as well as elected members to follow.

- Duty
- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership
- Respect.

In addition, the Council has a well established a set of behaviours that help to drive continuous improvement towards the achievement of the Council Plan. These are known as The East Lothian Way:

- **Focus on service** – putting the customer first; providing excellent customer service; and, contributing to improvements in service.
- **Explore the bigger picture** – working together for a better East Lothian; understanding how our daily activities are linked to the Council's vision and priorities.
- **Initiate solutions** – striving for excellence; taking personal responsibility and ownership to be effective in our jobs.
- **Share knowledge** – demonstrating regular and effective team working; being open and honest.
- **Deliver outstanding results** – taking responsibility and seeing tasks through to successful completion.

The Council Plan 2017-2022 has the following structure. In the next section we have set out the context for the Plan – the challenges we face and aim to address as well the opportunities that could be exploited. The following section sets out the objectives and strategic goals that form the basis of the Plan. The commitments that the Council makes towards achieving these objective and strategic goals are set out in an appendix to the Plan.

2. The Context: Challenges and Opportunities

The Council Plan 2017-2022 is based on evidence from a strategic assessment of the East Lothian Profile that provides a vast amount of information on the demography, economy, health and other quality of life measures.

The Plan has been developed within the context of major challenges faced by the people and communities of East Lothian and by East Lothian Council.

However, the Council Plan also takes account of the opportunities presented by the platform of policies and achievements created through previous Council Plans and other developments such as the City Region Deal.

The views and experience of East Lothian's citizens have been an important factor in the development of this Plan and the results of the East Lothian Residents Survey 2017 and the East Lothian Citizens' Panel surveys as well as a wide range of other consultations have influenced the objectives and priorities set out in the Plan.

The Challenges

The Accounts Commission for Scotland has outlined the major challenges and changing local government environment faced by Scottish local authorities¹.

- Continuing resource constraints, against a backdrop of increasing demand and rising public expectations about the quality of public services.
- The implications of local government of the United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union
- The potential impact on councils of the Scottish Government's Programme for Government
- The increasing complexity of service delivery often in partnership with others.
- The integration of health and social care, which is fundamentally changing the governance arrangements for this significant area of public service delivery.
- The re-emphasis on Community Planning and the Community Empowerment Act, which has the potential to fundamentally change the relationship between councils and local communities.

These challenges have influenced the focus and priorities of the Council Plan.

Demographic Changes

East Lothian's population is projected to grow by about 1% a year over the next 20 years from just over 100,000 to over 125,000 by 2037. Significant growth is projected across all age groups but particularly among children and older people: the

¹ 'How Councils Work: Roles and Responsibilities, A Follow Up Report'; Accounts Commission, November 2016

0-16 year age group is projected to grow by almost a third; the over 75 year age group by almost 100%.

The Council has to plan for the impact this growth in population has on our public services such as:

- schools and support services for children and families
- services for older people and vulnerable adults
- demand for new infrastructure to cope with the new settlements and housing required e.g. roads, schools and community facilities
- development pressures on East Lothian's natural environment.

Financial Constraints

The Council's Financial Strategy Statement for 2017–2020, outlines the main opportunities, risks and constraints that face the Council over the next three years. The strategy forms the basis of the Council's stewardship of taxpayer's funds over a prolonged period of austerity that will likely continue as the UK's economic outlook faces a further period of uncertainty, in part driven by the UK's decision to leave the European Union. The Strategy has been influenced by four key variables:

- Scottish Government Grant funding
- Delivery of planned efficiencies/ Transformational Change Programme
- Pensions
- Accelerating growth and enabling infrastructure

- ***Scottish Government Grant funding***

Like all local authorities in Scotland, the Council continues to face substantial financial challenges. The latest Scottish Government budget provided only one-year figures relating to 2017/18, and there remains significant uncertainty around the future levels of grant. Within this one-year budget, the amount of funding available to Local Government through the core Revenue Support Grant for 2017/18 has reduced by a further £220 million, with independent forecasters suggesting that at best, future settlements will remain static in cash terms, with a high risk of further cash and real terms reductions in grant levels.

Within the 2017/18 settlement, East Lothian Council received additional 'ring-fenced' funding to be directed towards specific Government priorities, including Education and Social Work. However, the reduction in the Revenue Support Grant of £2.9m means that further savings have to be made across the Council to continue to deliver services.

- ***Delivery of planned efficiencies/ Transformational Change Programme***

The Council has always shown an ability to adapt and respond positively to the challenges posed by reductions in resources. Significant changes to how it is organised and how services are delivered have delivered around £24 million of efficiencies in recent years. These have been secured across a range of areas including: improved procurement practices, stringent workforce management measures and an ongoing review to the way in which services are managed and delivered.

In preparing the 2017 - 2020 budgets, provision to meet known contractual commitments has been made, but as in recent years, no general inflationary increase in budgets has been incorporated. Essentially, services are expected to absorb general inflationary pressures through the efficient management of the resources they have been allocated. This 'cost containment' continues to be an important element of the financial strategy.

Given the scale of further savings that will be required in future years it is vitally important that the Council maintains a disciplined approach to the implementation of its Transformational Change programme and does everything possible to deliver the financial efficiencies planned in accordance with that programme and the supporting budgets.

- ***Pensions***

The Council is a member of the Lothian Pension Scheme which administers the Local Government Pension Scheme for the Lothian region. The Council previously agreed to participate in a formal Contribution Stability Mechanism which has allowed the Fund to move towards 100% funding while at the same time remaining affordable for employers. The overall effect of this will see the Council's total employer's contribution rate frozen at existing levels for the first year of the planning period. However, it is expected that an increase in employer contributions will be required with effect from 2018/19, with a further increase expected in 2019/20.

- ***Accelerating growth and enabling infrastructure***

The Council continues to play an effective role in the development of a potential Edinburgh and South East City Region Deal. The UK Chancellor formally acknowledged in his 2016 Autumn Statement that there would be a deal and high level negotiations have been taking place between the Partnership Authorities and both UK and Scottish Governments. If successful and subject to affordability, the detailed structure of any deal will need to be more fully incorporated within our existing financial plans.

The Council has proposed a Local Development Plan (LDP) that meets the Structure Plan's requirement for an additional 10,050 homes in East Lothian by 2024. The Council's financial plans have been modified to reflect the additional enabling infrastructure costs that will fall due to the Council, in line with a revised Contribution Framework, which will be adopted in conjunction with the LDP.

The impact of the recession and other economic factors

The economic downturn in 2007 resulted in a significant increase in unemployment (measured by claimant count) in East Lothian by 225% from October 2007 to November 2011. Whilst the unemployment rate in East Lothian remained below the Scottish and UK rates the increase in the level of unemployment in this period was greater than the average increases across Scotland and the UK.

The impact of the recession was felt most acutely in the level of youth unemployment and the long term unemployed in East Lothian. Whilst these remained below the

Scottish and UK rates, the trend was running in the wrong direction and in late 2011 were increasing at faster rates.

A major challenge set out in the 2012-17 Council Plan was to reduce the long term unemployment count and in particular youth unemployment. Whilst national trends have improved and levels of unemployment have come down across the UK and Scotland, the trends in East Lothian improved faster.

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016 (SIMD 16) showed that between 2012 and 2016, the percentage of working age population counted as being 'employment derived' (claiming some form of unemployment related benefit) in East Lothian fell from 10.4% to 8.5% whilst the equivalent figure for Scotland fell from 12.8% to 11.3%

However, SIMD 16 also shows that levels of income deprivation in East Lothian (measured by the number of people on income related benefits) have not reduced at the same pace. The percentage of population counted as being 'income deprived' in East Lothian only fell from 10.6% in 2012 to 9.8% in 2016, compared to a slightly greater fall from 13.4% to 12.3% across Scotland.

Further research needs to be carried out into the causes and effects of the shift from unemployment to income deprivation, with particular consideration being given to the impact of 'In-work Poverty' - part-time work, zero hours contracts, self-employed contracted labour.

The SIMD 16 data, which shows the persistently high levels of income related benefits in parts of East Lothian, does not show the full picture of the impact of the recession and changes to welfare benefits over the last six years.

The introduction of 'full service' (digital by default) Universal Credit in East Lothian in March 2016 has had a significant negative impact on claimants. The Council has had to deploy additional staff resources to support vulnerable people to submit their on-line claims and to advise Council house tenants about the rent payments due from their Universal Credit. Despite these measures, the Council has seen an increase in rent arrears since the introduction of 'full service' Universal Credit along with increasing levels of Council Tax arrears.

East Lothian's economy will also feel the impact of the decision to leave the EU. Key sectors of East Lothian's economy – farming, food and drink and tourism – and Edinburgh's financial and Higher Education sectors, which employ a significant proportion of East Lothian's population, could be negatively impacted by 'Brexit' through loss of EU subsidies, changes in trade agreements and negative changes in currency values.

The uncertainty caused by 'Brexit' is compounded by continuing uncertainty about whether a second Independence Referendum is to be held and the economic and financial implications of a possible decision for Scotland to leave the UK which could impact on East Lothian's economy.

Housing

East Lothian is growing and will continue to grow at a fast pace with over 10,000 new homes to be built over the next 10 years. A lack of affordable housing is a significant challenge for the Council. Comprehensive assessments published in 2011 and 2015 evidence the need to increase the stock of 'affordable housing'. High house prices continue to restrict those who can access the private housing market, with house prices generally rising across East Lothian in recent years and a pick-up in market activity. The average house price to earnings ratio in East Lothian is 5.2 and ranges from 5.06 to 7.63. House prices are higher in the east of East Lothian in part due to the greater level of affluence. As elsewhere, access to mortgage finance has been, and continues to be, challenging, particularly for first time buyers.

In March 2017 there were just over 11,000 'affordable homes' in East Lothian, comprising around 24% of the total housing stock. The Council owns the majority of these homes – 8,649 homes (31 March 2017), with housing associations owning the balance. The affordable housing stock has been increasing due to significant investment in new social rented housing – over the past 5 years, 630 new affordable homes (378 council homes) have been delivered.

While the number of households on the Council's housing list has been falling, there are still 3,700 households on the list. The number of council homes available to let saw an increase over the past 5 years as a result of this new build activity and other policy interventions – typically between 500 and 600 lets per annum, however this turnover has declined within the last two years to around 425 per year.

Due to significant investment in homeless prevention activity, homeless presentations have decreased from almost 1,200 in 2010/11, to around 700 in 2016/17. Homeless prevention activity will continue to be developed, particularly in the areas of housing options and advice.

Despite the decrease in applications, around 600 households are consistently found to be homeless every year. There remains significant pressure, in particular, on temporary accommodation due to lack of sufficient supply of housing which means the length of time households have to wait before being able to access permanent accommodation is increasing. This is creating financial pressure for the Council's General Service budget which funds homelessness services. This pressure is particularly acute in the west of East Lothian with a dearth of supply of 1 bedroom properties.

Public Sector Reform and the Scottish Government's Programme for Government

The public sector in general and local government in particular is becoming increasingly complex. Public sector reform has never been higher up the public policy agenda. Whilst attempts have been made to simplify matters and create greater synergy between various public service providers (for example, through Community Planning) other policy imperatives push in the opposite direction.

East Lothian Council has embraced public sector reform over the last few years and has implemented major changes in governance around vital services. Most notably, East Lothian established a shadow Health & Social Care Partnership Board in advance of the legislative requirement. The Council has developed an innovative form of community engagement and empowerment through establishing Area Partnerships with significant funding to direct resources to local priorities. More recently the Council and the East Lothian Partnership have been managing the transfer of responsibility for Community Justice from a regional board to the Community Planning Partnership with the establishment of a new East Lothian Community Justice Partnership.

There is growing concern about centralisation, with decisions being taken at the Scottish Government level to meet national policy agendas rather than in the best interests of East Lothian. For example, the decision to close Haddington Sherriff Court against the advice and unanimous views of East Lothian Council; some key planning decisions being overturned on appeal to the reporter resulting in wind farm developments and housing developments in areas not zoned for housing in the Local Plan. The Scottish Minister went against the unanimous views of the Council and accepted the Scottish Local Government Boundary Commission's flawed and short-sighted recommendation to cut the number of elected members on East Lothian Council from 23 to 22.

The Council also is concerned about the Scottish Government's proposals for education – moving responsibilities away from local authorities to new regional bodies. This fragmentation of a core local public service flies in the face of the approach which is being developed to take a more holistic (less silo'd) approach to people and services, and the generally accepted view that diverse services and factors impact on children's readiness to learn and achieve their best – health, housing, physical activities (sport, leisure, access to the countryside) culture and the arts all contribute to a child's well-being and readiness to learn.

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 has created new duties and responsibilities on local authorities and Community Planning partners that could bring about significant change in the local government environment. However, even before these changes have been enacted, the Scottish Government is planning to carry out a major review of local government and to introduce a Local Government and Democracy Bill.

East Lothian Council acknowledges and embraces the need for change if it will lead to improved outcomes and further our goals; as is demonstrated by our implementation of changes such as Health and Social Care integration, our support for partnership working and the vision and ambition set by the Council's Transformational Change Programme and Digital Strategy.

The Opportunities

The Council and its partners in the East Lothian Partnership have delivered the commitments made in the 2012-2017 Council Plan and the Partnership's Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2023. These achievements form a solid foundation on which the new Council Plan 2017-2022 can be based.

The 2012-2017 Council Plan was underpinned by a commitment to five core principles which reflected the Council's commitment to the principles set out by the Christie Commission into public sector reform²:

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

Services built around people and communities

The Council has been committed to, and has developed, a range of ways in which it engages effectively with citizens, customers and communities in order to better develop services around the needs of people and communities. This has included support for Community Councils, Tenants and Residents Associations and Parent Councils, establishing a Citizens Panel, and working with a range of community care forums. It has also successfully engaged with our communities in relation to school consultation associated with the proposed Local Development Plan and revised/ new education policy such as the Parental Strategy, Accessibility Strategy and Play Strategy.

The Council's approach to community engagement pre-dates the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, which established new responsibilities and duties to empower local communities.

A key element of the Council's approach to community empowerment was the establishment of six Area Partnerships with the active involvement of representatives from Community Councils, Parent Councils, Tenants and Residents Associations and other local community groups. The Area Partnerships have developed detailed Area Plans that set out the local priorities for improvements. The devolution of responsibility for almost £2m of funding to the Area Partnerships has allowed them to begin to address these priorities.

The Council has also established Area Manager positions to support the Area Partnerships and act as a focus for developing a more structured, area based approach to service delivery.

The Area Partnerships and Area Managers have established a solid foundation for further development of area based services and solutions to local issues.

² Report on the Future Delivery of Public Services by the Commission chaired by Dr Campbell Christie; June 2011

Despite working with constrained budgets, investment has been made in innovative services that are focussed on meeting the needs of its citizens and communities and can form the basis for further service improvements in future years. These have included:

- East Lothian Works – a partnership approach (the Council working with Skills Development Scotland, Edinburgh College and third sector organisations) to deliver employability services aimed at increasing employment opportunities and to deliver East Lothian’s Young Workforce strategy
- Supporting the establishment of the innovative, award winning East Lothian Food and Drink Business Improvement District to provide a focus for support for this important and growing sector of East Lothian’s economy
- Academies – an innovative partnership between the Council’s Education service, Edinburgh College and Queen Margaret University which has created a suite of vocational academies providing be-spoke learning opportunities in subjects such as Tourism & Hospitality, Care and Technology and Construction
- The creation of the new communication provision at Meadowpark providing high-quality facilities and experiences for young people with additional needs
- The Hospital at Home service seeks to support the twin goals of avoiding unnecessary hospital admissions and, where an admission is necessary, to support the patient’s prompt discharge from hospital back to home. The aim is to give patients appropriate care at their home whenever possible. A multidisciplinary team addresses the needs of the patient, setting goals and implementing a care plan to reach these goals through continuous review and a monitoring and review process that takes place each day.
- The delivery of a new waste collection service covering food waste, recycled paper, plastic and metals, green garden waste and household waste, which has resulted in a significant increase in the level of recycled waste from around 44% to well over 50%
- Integration of Customer Services and Libraries and the opening of the integrated Council Office and Library facilities at Bleachingfield (Dunbar) and George Johnstone Centre (Tranent).

Working together to achieve better outcomes

As is evidenced by some of the innovative services outlined above, partnership working has been integral to the Council’s approach. The Council has taken the lead in developing the East Lothian Partnership and the Partnership’s Single Outcome Agreement. This relies on ever closer working between all the partners, based on positive relations between the Council and its key partners – Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, NHS Lothian, Edinburgh College, Queen

Margaret University, Community Councils and East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel.

A key element of joint working in East Lothian has been the establishment of the Integration Joint Board (IJB) to provide the formal governance around the integration of social care and community health services within the Health and Social Care Partnership. The IJB has developed a Strategic Plan which forms the basis for joint funding from East Lothian Council and NHS Lothian to drive forward the integration of these services.

Partnership working has been integral to the development of the Children and Young People's Service Plan by the Children's Strategic Partnership.

In addition to these formal partnerships the Council has developed significant informal partnerships. For example, it has worked closely with Midlothian Council to explore and develop joint, shared and integrated services. Examples of this partnership working with our neighbouring local authority include, joint delivery of Public Protection services; East Lothian Council providing Midlothian Council's out-of-hours contact centre service; joint working around Health and Safety; and, Midlothian Council leading on the delivery of the Trading Standards service.

Also the Council has been working with the Scottish Futures Trust and its delivery vehicle, South East Scotland HubCo to identify and make use of alternative sources of capital financing for facilities such as the Gullane health and day centre and the new Wallyford Primary School.

Prioritising prevention and promoting equality

Early intervention and tackling inequalities are key priorities for East Lothian Council and the East Lothian Partnership.

The Council and its partners recognise the need to deliver a step change in how services are provided; moving from a model of public services that focuses on crisis intervention, to a model that concentrates on preventing failure at the earliest opportunity.

The shift in emphasis towards prevention and early intervention has been underway for some years. Many activities that can be described as 'prevention' or 'early intervention' are now core activities, which are embedded in the way the Council and its partners work. Key examples of this include:

- Shifting the balance of care for older people from hospitals and care homes to services such as the Hospital at Home service (see above) and telecare that allow people to remain in their homes
- Interventions such as diversionary activities for young people to reduce anti-social behaviour
- Programmes aimed at improving skills and employability to improve positive destinations for school leavers

- Delivery of 600 hours entitlement to free early learning and childcare and support for eligible, priority 2 year olds
- Sports development, the Active Schools programme and active travel initiatives that encourage and support people to be more physically active
- Targeted home fire and home safety activity by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- Establishing a multi-agency Public Protection Unit which covers both East Lothian and Midlothian
- The new waste collection service that has increased household waste recycling to over 50%, thereby reducing our use of landfill.

The Council and key partners including the NHS, Police Scotland and third sector organisations have collaborated in the Musselburgh Total Place Project which has culminated in the establishment of a new Family Focus Service which will use an early intervention and prevention approach to working with the most vulnerable families in the Musselburgh East area.

The introduction of a new Integrated Impact Assessment process supports services to assess the equalities, socio-economic and environmental impact of policies and processes.

Effective, efficient and excellent services

Resource maximisation, performance management, continuous improvement and customer excellence are key elements of the Council's way of working and have been crucial to allowing the Council to continue to deliver high quality services at a time of budget constraint; summarised as 'delivering more for less'.

This has involved the successful implementation of a range of programmes and strategies to improve effectiveness, efficiency and deliver excellent services, including:

- Worksmart – flexible working that allows staff to work in a more agile way thereby reducing overhead costs, increasing efficiency and allowing accommodation rationalisation which resulted in significant release of space for either sale or alternative use
- Buysmart and Procurement Improvement initiatives that have generated savings in the cost of procuring some goods and services such as photocopying services
- Efficient Workforce Management, including:
 - two phases of senior management re-structuring that reduced the number of senior managers in the Council by about one-third

- service reviews which have contributed to a significant reduction in staffing costs whilst protecting services
- prudent vacancy monitoring and more creative use of resources.

The Council's external auditors, KPMG, commenting on the 2015/16 Annual Accounts in their Report to Members (September 2016), stated that, faced with financial challenges over the past few years, the Council performed well ahead of budget and has maintained financial stability whilst reducing its reliance on the use of reserves. The auditors also commented that the Council has sound and well established governance arrangements that ensure effective scrutiny and challenge.

However, as the squeeze on public sector resources intensifies, the Council recognises that a focus on efficiency alone is no longer sufficient or sustainable and that, given the scale of the financial and demographic challenges ahead, more radical and sustainable solutions are required, focussed on transformational change.

Therefore, the Council has embarked on a range of transformational activity, which currently includes the following key elements:

- Review of Council accommodation requirements and new ways of working including partnership arrangements
- The redevelopment of the Council's website and provision of on-line services. The main focus of this project to date has been the procurement of a new fully responsive Council website that will support the development of on-line services and payments
- Exploiting opportunities for income generation and reducing expenditure; for example from exploiting renewable energy sources and developing the Council's expertise in 'trading operations'
- A programme of service redesign and options appraisal, which will take into consideration the potential to work in partnership with East Lothian voluntary organisations, businesses and social enterprises and use alternative service delivery models such as arms-length external organisations, trading companies, social enterprises and strategic partnerships with other local authorities.

The Council's Digital Strategy is fundamental to the Council's Transformation Programme, making services accessible to customers/ service users wherever they choose, whilst realising operational and cost efficiencies through improved and streamlined business processes. In parallel to the redesign of services and business processes the Digital Strategy acknowledges the importance of ensuring that East Lothian residents and businesses have access to superfast broadband that will allow them to fully exploit opportunities presented by having access to the 'internet of things' such as telecare and telehealth services.

The Strategy also recognises that support to people who may be 'digitally excluded' is key to reducing poverty and inequality.

Sustainable and inclusive economic growth

Sustainable and inclusive economic growth is fundamental to achieving the Council's vision. The Council and the Sustainable Economy Partnership involving the Council, Scottish Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, Edinburgh College, Queen Margaret University and representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses have been implementing the Economic Development Strategy 2012-2022.

The Strategy has two strategic goals; to increase the number of businesses with growth potential; and, to increase the proportion of residents working in, and contributing to, East Lothian's economy – and five objectives:

- To be Scotland's leading coastal, leisure and food & 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 be the best place in Scotland to set up and grow a business
- To become Scotland's most sustainable local economy.

Whilst progress has been made with these objective, in particular the first three, it is recognised that further work still needs to be done to fully achieve the ambitious objectives and goals of the strategy.

Two major opportunities have been put in place by the Council to assist in the delivery of the Strategy through supporting sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

Local Development Plan

The proposed Local Development Plan (LDP) sets out a development strategy for the future of East Lothian to 2024 and beyond. The proposed LDP sets out where new developments should and should not occur, including housing, education, economic and retail development, new transport links and other infrastructure.

As well as identifying sites to accommodate 10,050 new homes with their associated infrastructure the LDP also identifies sites for economic development with the aim of supporting sustainable economic development and business growth.

The LDP seeks to grow East Lothian's economy by encouraging employment generating development in town centres and on existing and proposed employment and business sites. Delivery of such development is key to securing sustainable and inclusive economic growth and job creation. The Plan takes a practical and flexible approach to support a wide range of appropriate economic development uses in sustainable locations, whilst safeguarding existing business uses.

City Region Deal

The Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region (ESESCR) Deal aims to make a step change in economic growth across the region, through a wide-ranging

programme of significant investment, alongside additional freedoms and powers devolved to a more local level.

In 2014, the Council agreed to support the development of an outline business case for a City Region Deal Infrastructure Fund, in partnership with the City of Edinburgh, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian councils. Other partners involved in shaping the ESESCR Deal include universities and colleges, the private sector, the third sector and relevant public sector agencies. A more detailed proposition was submitted to the UK and Scottish Governments in September 2015, with further, iterations in December 2015, April 2016 and November 2016.

The ESESCR Deal is built upon accelerating the region's rate of economic performance with a twin focus on Innovation and Inclusion.

Innovation

Innovation proposals are shaped around four inter-connected Innovation Hubs, targeting opportunities in sectors where the region has particular strengths:

- Data Driven Innovation
- Low carbon/Energy Resilience
- Creative/Culture and Tourism
- One Health

Inclusion

Inclusive growth is at the core of the Deal. The partners want to ensure that the growth opportunities can be leveraged through scaled up investment in employer led skills and employability programmes, affordable housing (including targeting fuel poverty) in sustainable communities, public sector spend on infrastructure in targeted locations to accelerate private sector investment and ensure digital inclusion right across the region.

In addition, the Deal also includes proposals to accelerate the supply of affordable housing through innovative solutions to deliver enough new homes to meet demand and respond to the housing crisis facing the region. The Regional Housing Programme will enable the development of major strategic housing sites and the delivery of affordable housing across sites identified in strategic housing investment programmes: a revolving Housing Infrastructure Fund; additional affordable housing grant funding; and a Regional Land and Property Commission with a start-up loan fund to enable site acquisitions between partners, with loans repayable post development.

What our Citizens Say

The Council provides and supports a wide range of opportunities for East Lothian's people and communities to engage with the Council. These include through Community Councils which represent every community in East Lothian, Parent Councils, Tenants and Residents Associations, pupil councils and the East Lothian Youth Council, the Champions Board for young people with care experience and various joint planning groups and forums for health and social care services, as well as our six active and increasingly influential Area Partnerships.

East Lothian's Citizen's Panel, made up of around 1,200 local people who take part in regular surveys provides a structured formal mechanism for surveying the views of a representative sample of residents on general topics or service specific issues.

The Council has an effective customer feedback policy that enables service users to make complaints and provide comments and or compliments that help the Council improve its service provision.

The priorities in the Council Plan reflect the views of the people and communities of East Lothian as reflected through these and other consultation and engagement opportunities.

The East Lothian Partnership undertook a large scale residents survey (over 1,500 respondents) in March 2017 to provide an insight into how East Lothian residents view public services and the quality of life in East Lothian and their views on the Partnership and Council priorities.

Respondents expressed very high levels of satisfaction with living in East Lothian, with 99% agreeing that East Lothian was either a 'very good' (72%) or 'fairly good' (27%) place to live.

The majority of respondents (88%) felt very or fairly strongly that they belonged to their immediate neighbourhood.

Respondents were shown a list of factors that might help make somewhere a good place to live and asked to identify which they felt were most important - the top choices were:

- Health services – 61%
- Affordable decent house – 47%
- Primary and secondary schools – 47%
- Jobs for local people – 43%
- The level of crime – 37%

The survey found generally high levels of satisfaction with council services. The percentages of those (who expressed a view) saying they were 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' with services ranges from 94% (parks, gardens and open spaces), to 69% (road maintenance).

Almost 80% of those surveyed agreed with the statement, 'My Council does the best it can with the money available'; 72% agreed that, 'My Council provides high quality services; and 70% agreed that 'My local Council designs services around the needs of the people who use them'.

The survey clearly showed a high level of support for the priorities set out in the Council Plan. Well over 90% of those surveyed agreed that the Council's objectives are 'very important' or important:

- Growing our people – 77%, very important; 22%, important
- Reducing inequalities – 74%, very important; 24%, important
- Growing our communities – 72%, very important; 24%, important
- Growing our economy – 70%, very important; 26%, important

The survey included a list of some of the ways in which the Council could meet the growing demand for services while budgets continue to reduce. The vast majority were in agreement (or strong agreement) with all of the options listed, but strongest support was expressed for:

- ‘Focus on prevention and early intervention – taking action as soon as possible to tackle social problems before they become more difficult to turn around’ (69% strongly agreed, 28% agreed)
- ‘Focus resources on areas of East Lothian where the need is greatest (58% strongly agreed, 37% agreed).

Respondents were shown a list of characteristics and asked which most closely matched their hopes for East Lothian in the future, the most popular choices were, Prosperous (59%), Community Minded (51%), Fair (45%), Welcoming (42%).

When asked to pick just one of the options as their top priority, around 30% of respondents supported Community Minded (31%) and Prosperous (29%). The next most popular choice was Fair (13%).

2. The 2017-2022 Objectives and Strategic Goals

The East Lothian Council Plan 2017-2022 continues the journey towards realising the vision of ‘An even more prosperous, safe and sustainable East Lothian with a dynamic and thriving economy that enables our people and communities to flourish’, by building on the ambition and achievements of the 2012-2017 Plan and addressing the new challenges and opportunities faced the Council.

The key themes and objectives set out in the 2012-2017 Council Plan continue as the key themes and objectives of the new Council Plan 2017-2022.

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

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

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 Capacity – to deliver excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible within our limited resources.

Reducing inequalities within and across our communities continues to be the Council Plan’s overarching objective.

In order to meet these objectives the Council Plan sets out strategic goals which will make the biggest impact in delivering these key themes and objectives.

- Reduce unemployment and improve the employability of East Lothian’s workforce.
- Reduce the attainment gap and raise the attainment and achievement of our children and young people.
- Improve the life chances of the most vulnerable people in our society.
- Extend community engagement and decision making and increase community and individual resilience.
- Deliver transformational change and harness the opportunities that technology offers in the provision of services.

Around 50 specific commitments and actions that will support the delivery of these objectives and strategic goals are detailed in the appendix.

Reducing inequalities within and across our communities

Reducing inequalities within and across our communities is the overarching objective of both the Council Plan and the East Lothian Plan. Analysis of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD 16) shows that progress has been made towards meeting this objective over the last four years. Across most indicators used to create the index there has been a reduction in the highest levels of deprivation and a consequent reduction in stark inequality between our most and least deprived communities. For example, SIMD 16 shows that the actual proportion of the population counted as being employment deprived (not in employment) in the most deprived datazone (smallest areas for which the SIMD data is produced) in East Lothian fell from 27% in 2012 to 21% in 2016. Similarly, the proportion of the population counted as income deprived (claiming income related benefits) in the most deprived datazone fell from 35% in 2012 to 31% in 2016.

Despite these improvements it is still clear that both actual and relative levels of poverty and inequality are too high and that further work needs to be done to break the persistent cycle of poverty.

The Council established the East Lothian Poverty Commission to examine poverty in East Lothian and to identify key actions that the Council and local organisations working in partnership could undertake to help people to move out of poverty or lessen its impact.

Key issues highlighted by the Commission included:

- the need to take a human rights approach to poverty summarised as ‘the right to dignity and a decent life’
- the changing face of poverty with the growth of ‘in work’ poverty due to relatively low wages, part-time and zero hour contracts
- the impact of welfare and benefit changes, including Universal Credit
- the need to counter the stigma of poverty and too foster an understanding of poverty at all levels of decision making
- the need for policy changes at both Scottish and UK Government levels.

The report of the Poverty Commission provides the basis for an action plan that the Council and East Lothian Partnership will follow to help achieve their overarching objective of reducing inequality in East Lothian.

In order to ensure that it continues to meet its legal duties and requirements in relation to the Equality Act, and that it maintains a focus on equality the Council will deliver on the actions and commitments set out in the 2017-2022 Equalities Plan.

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

Strategic goals:

- Reduce unemployment and improve the employability of East Lothian’s workforce.

East Lothian Council remains committed to implementing the Economic Development Strategy 2012-2022 as the basis for developing sustainable and inclusive economic growth as foundation of a more prosperous East Lothian. The strategy will be reviewed and, if necessary, refreshed, to build on the success of key sectors such as Food and Drink and tourism, take advantage of new opportunities, such as the City Region Deal and the Cockenzie masterplan; and, to mitigate the impact of economic uncertainty caused by the recession, Brexit and constitutional change.

The Council will continue to support the implementation of the East Lothian Tourism Action Plan to focus investment in local tourism initiative and support for major events that increase tourist footfall across the county.

The projected growth in population needs to be matched by growth in the local economy and local job opportunities to reduce unemployment. Local jobs reduce commuting and help retain income within the county, supporting local businesses and jobs and helping to sustain local communities.

Therefore the Council will continue to promote and pursue ambitious plans that encourage and support the creation of new jobs in East Lothian through the City Region Deal, and the development of land for business growth as identified in the Local Development Plan; including consideration of the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders, if necessary.

The second strategic strand of this theme is to improve the employability of East Lothian's workforce; improving positive outcomes for school leavers and our young workforce but also ensuring that there is a match between the needs of local businesses and the skills and knowledge of the local workforce.

Improving the skills and knowledge of East Lothian's workforce, at the same time as new job opportunities are being developed will provide the best opportunity for reducing the impact of 'in-work poverty'.

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

Strategic goals:

- Reduce the attainment gap and raise the attainment and achievement of our children and young people.
- Improve the life chances of the most vulnerable people in our society.

The Council remains committed to giving our children and young people the best possible start in life. While attainment levels in our schools are mostly above the Scottish average we recognise that attainment and achievement levels could be higher, particularly among pupils from deprived areas and backgrounds. So reducing the attainment gap between the highest and lowest attaining pupils and

raising the attainment and achievement of our children and young people is a key priority.

The Council remains committed to ensuring that the additional funding provided by the Scottish Government through the Pupil Equity Fund is used as effectively and efficiently as possible to drive improvements in attainment and reduce the attainment gap in line with the priorities established by through the East Lothian Poverty Commission and Poverty Plan.

The Council's capital programme includes investment of over £97m in our schools infrastructure, including provision of a new Secondary School, new Primary schools and extensions to existing Secondary and Primary Schools to accommodate the growth in population. The capital programme also includes £5m investment in vital IT infrastructure, including schools IT.

The Integrated Children and Young People's Service Plan for 2016-2019 adopted by the East Lothian Partnership forms the basis for the Children's Strategic Partnership to improve services and outcomes for children and young people. The Council is committed to continuing to implement the 2016-2019 Integrated Children and Young People's Service Plan and to consult fully with stakeholders in reviewing and revising the Plan in 2019.

The growth of our older population means that the Council will be faced with significant increases in the cost of providing care services. The Council remains committed to providing services that give everyone the opportunity to live fulfilling, healthy, active and independent lives. The priority will be to focus resources where they are most needed, to shift the balance of care to provide enhanced quality of life for people in their own homes, and to invest in early intervention to reduce the demand for more costly crisis intervention.

Health and Social Care integration to deliver quality services and outcomes in East Lothian is being fully implemented under the leadership of the Integration Joint Board. The Board's Strategic Plan sets out how integration will be implemented to improve joint working and resource allocation between health and social care, making it easier to address health needs holistically and to ensure that resources follow people's needs for social care services.

The Council remains committed to:

- implementing the Integration Joint Board's Strategic Plan and developing fully integrated health and social care services which continue to shift the balance of care through developing community based options and maximising opportunities to live independently for as long as possible
- continuing to develop services that aim to reduce hospital admissions and delayed discharge of older people
- maximising the use of shared funding including the Integrated Care Fund to enable integrated health and care resources, such as the proposed Prestonpans community hub, to be developed.

The Council's 2017/18 budget includes additional investment of £1.8m in adult wellbeing services to bring total expenditure on these vital services to £49.4m and £147m over 3 years – to meet short terms needs and deliver sustainability in the years ahead.

Housing has a key role to play in helping to deliver East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership's Strategic Plan and close collaboration will be critical to design and deliver products and services to meet need arising from demographic change, particularly in relation to older people.

The Council and its partners in the new Community Justice Board which sits within the East Lothian Partnership has taken on duties and responsibilities in relation to community justice, which will focus on supporting offenders with the aim of reducing re-offending as detailed in the new East Lothian Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan 2017-2020.

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

Strategic goals:

- Extend community engagement and decision making and increase community and individual resilience.

Affordable housing, improved transport connectivity, roads and pavement maintenance and ensuring East Lothian's communities remain cohesive and resilient are key challenges identified in the context section of this Plan and also through the residents' survey.

The Council will make every effort to meet the need for affordable housing by maximising opportunities to increase the supply of affordable housing through the Local Development Plan.

A new East Lothian Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022 is being prepared with the key aims of increasing the supply of affordable housing, reduce homelessness and tackle fuel poverty. The Council's capital programme includes a record £144m package of investment in council housing to help to meet these aims.

An updated East Lothian Transport Strategy is being prepared to set out the Council's approach to improving transport links, including the road network, public transport and opportunities for active travel across the County. The Council's current capital programme includes investment totalling £27m over the next five years on the county's roads, plus £1.3m on parking improvements and £2.3m for protection from coastal erosion and flooding.

The Council will focus on how best we can contribute to the Scottish Government's ambitious climate change targets. Over the course of this plan, the Council will develop a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan, which will give strategic

direction to continuous improvement in relation to energy efficiency, climate adaption and sustainable transport. We cannot meet these targets alone and will work with our community planning partners and the private sector to implement low carbon plans and projects across housing, communities and the public and private sector.

The strong sense of community in every town and village is one of East Lothian's great strengths. The projected increase in population with significant housing developments being built across the county is an opportunity to strengthen and develop our communities. New settlements or significant additions to existing communities should be accompanied by good transport links and the community infrastructure that make thriving communities.

The establishment of six Area Partnerships has been key to the Council's approach to ensuring that communities have a real say in deciding priorities for their area; backed up with the devolution of funding that can be directed to meeting these local priorities. We know that what matters most to communities is feeling safe, community wellbeing, a strong sense of pride in the neighbourhood and the power to influence decisions that count for the area.

So it is even more important that community engagement and empowerment through the Area Partnerships and other mechanisms such as Community Councils and Tenants and Residents Associations continues to be supported – giving people and communities a strong voice and a real say in how their communities develop. This builds on East Lothian's proud tradition of strong and resilient communities, cooperatives and community associations. Therefore, the Council will continue to support the development of the six Area Partnerships with devolved funding to implement priorities identified in their Area Plans.

The Council also is committed to maximising the potential of East Lothian's already strong 'social capital' through supporting the volunteering ethos; strong community and neighbourhood cohesion and community assets base; community capacity building; the development of community resilience; and, the celebration of diversity across all communities in East Lothian

Common Good funds and assets can be a valuable resource for the towns that have these funds. The Council will review the use of the Common Good Funds and assets to ensure they are aligned with community and Council priorities and are used for the maximum benefit of the communities they serve.

The Council is committed to the principles of openness and accountability and transparency so therefore will continue to explore further ways in which to extend accountability. For example, it will explore the cost and practicality of web casting of Council meetings and committees; it will publish its Annual Public Performance Report in the form of an annual "State of the Council" report; and it will consider appointing external members of the Audit & Governance Committee.

The Council will review and revise its Consultation and Engagement Strategy and practices to ensure that it meets the highest standard of community engagement and consultation and its duties and responsibilities under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

Growing our Capacity – to deliver excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible within our limited resources

Strategic goals:

- Deliver transformational change and harness the opportunities technology offers in the provision of services.

In order to deliver the ambitious agenda set out in this Plan the Council the Council must continue to grow its capacity to ensure it delivers excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible.

It will continue to focus on its staff who must be capable, flexible, responsive, and performance focussed. Therefore the Council will adopt a Workforce Plan, incorporating a Workforce Development Plan that will ensure that it has the right people with the right knowledge, skills and behaviours deployed appropriately to deliver this Council Plan. In order to achieve the developments and improvements sought the Council will continue to work in partnership with the trade unions representing Council staff. This will include improving attendance management of employees to reduce the impact on services through the implementation of the Council's Managing Attendance Policy and continued support for the Healthy Working Lives agenda.

The Council will continue to take a strategic approach to its overall financial planning process through implementing the financial strategy to set balanced three-year budgets avoiding the use of reserves by the third year in order to maximise revenue funding and to invest in and fund an ambitious, appropriate capital programme

The Council will maintain the current rigorous approach to controlling expenditure, ensuring that it continues to 'live within its means' by operating as efficiently as possible. This will also ensure that investment is protected and is focused on key priority areas and protecting frontline services wherever possible.

East Lothian's Council Tax will be kept as low as is reasonably possible within the current economic climate and will only be increased where it can be demonstrated as necessary and provides protection to existing services, or introduces new ones.

The Council will continue to strive to maximise its resources and to introduce transformational change in the way it delivers services not only in order to meet ambitious savings targets but also to deliver high quality services in the digital age.

However, East Lothian Council cannot address the diverse needs of our population on its own. We recognise that due to limited resources, the changing demand for services and the increase in community and personal confidence to demand the right to participate in decision making we need to move away from the traditional model of the local authority always being the 'provider of first resort'.

The Council can no longer (if it ever could) do everything required or expected to meet the demand for public services. The development of person centred care

services, self-directed support, community right to buy and the growth of community based and social enterprises are some examples of the changes in how services are provided and individuals and communities engage with their local authority.

This Plan is based on the understanding that East Lothian Council cannot address the diverse needs of our population on its own. At the heart of the Plan is the concept that the Council and the people and communities of East Lothian can best deliver these solutions in partnership – ‘working together for a better East Lothian’. Therefore, over the next five year, the lifetime of this Plan, the Council will increasingly become:

- an enabling and empowering authority that works with its citizens and communities, the business and third sectors and other public sector partners to deliver the solutions that work best for East Lothian.
- a more entrepreneurial authority, developing new ways of ensuring services are provided in the most effective and efficient way possible;
- a ‘digital’ authority, fully embracing and exploiting opportunities to use technology to deliver services.

The Council will continue to embrace public sector reform, change and transformation if it contributes to achieving the vision for East Lothian. The Council supports the review of the governance arrangements of the East Lothian Partnership to take account of recent changes that impact on partnership arrangements such as the establishment of the Integrated Joint Board and the Community Justice Strategic Partnership.

Also, the Council fully supports the delivery of the East Lothian Partnership’s Joint Asset Strategy to maximise use of, and achieve best value from, existing resources and assets, supporting co-location of service providers and identifying assets that could be used for housing development or to support business growth.

However, the Council will continue to resist central government attempts, directly and overtly, to move responsibilities away from local control and accountability. A ‘one size fits all’ approach to reforming local government may not be in the best interests of East Lothian. A ‘one size fits all’ approach to reforming local government may not be in the best interests of East Lothian.

East Lothian has a proud tradition of standing on its own as an effective, well run, responsive and accountable local authority. Any proposal to reform local government and public services in East Lothian will be measured against the impact that change would have on its citizens and communities. Reform proposals will only be supported if they are in the best interests of East Lothian and help to achieve our vision of *‘An even more prosperous, safe and sustainable East Lothian, with a dynamic and thriving economy that enables our people and communities to flourish.’*

APPENDIX 1: Council Plan Actions

Reducing inequalities within and across communities		
1	<p>Implement the Council recommendations in the Poverty Commission Action Plan, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting and developing breakfast, after-school and summer lunch clubs in schools • working with Capital Credit Union to promote the benefits of credit unions and make the service more accessible to local residents • investing in the provision of advice services 	
Growing Our Economy – Reduce unemployment and improve the employability of East Lothian’s workforce		
2	Maximise the opportunities presented by the City Region Deal, particularly in relation to Innovation and Inclusion, and supporting new jobs and growth at the QMU Innovation Park	
3	Support the growth of East Lothian's economy, boosting the economic performance of the county, building on the success of key sectors, taking advantage of new opportunities and mitigating the impact of economic uncertainty caused by the recession and constitutional change	
4	Work with Visit Scotland and our local partners to increase investment in local tourism and support for major events, maximising the benefit from our proximity to Edinburgh	
5	Continue to support the county's farmers, rural enterprises and fishing communities through the food and drink and other initiatives and funding programmes	
6	Continue to engage pro-actively with local businesses, particularly SMEs, and potential investors in East Lothian to identify how we can support existing businesses to grow and to attract and support new businesses; including through the use of the Council's purchasing power and through an efficient planning system, better infrastructure and, where legislation allows, competitive rates	
7	Maximise the use of land identified for business growth in the Local Development Plan, exploring the use of Compulsory	

	Purchase Orders to acquire land for business use if required; and exploit opportunities for business growth and maximise opportunities for jobs and apprenticeships from sites such as the former Cockenzie power station, Blindwells and the QMU business park as well as investing in developing business units at Gateside in Haddington and expanding the Spott Rd Business and Retail Park to create more local jobs	
8	Continue to work with the community to ensure their voice is heard in developing and delivering the Cockenzie Power Station masterplan	
9	Continue to work with partners and local employers to implement East Lothian's Young Workforce Strategy and Action Plan; maximising opportunities for young people through support for craft and modern apprenticeships, and school work experience within the Council and in local businesses; and, through the continued use of Community Benefit clauses in Council contracts	
10	Develop an East Lothian Workforce Plan in order to maximise the opportunities presented by the City Region Deal; assessing the requirement to upskill our workforce to ensure we have the skills required to address skills shortages and meet the requirements of the digital economy, and empower people to move out of 'in work poverty'	
11	Continue to work with the Scottish Government and the communications sector to support the faster roll out of superfast broadband and improvements in mobile communications across the county, including the most rural parts of the county	
12	Invest in town centre regeneration and work with Area Partnerships in supporting business associations in each town and ensuring that Area Plans incorporate and support Town Centre and local economic development strategies	
13	Continue to back initiatives that support High Street retailers and increase footfall through the County, including: 'Shop Local' promotional activity to encourage residents to shop locally; Shop Watch schemes; and, taking what action we can to ensure empty shops are filled quickly	
14	Look for opportunities to expand car parking in town centres and continue to support implementation of decriminalised parking enforcement	
15	Continue to work with the voluntary sector to create and develop local social enterprises	

Growing Our People – Reduce the attainment gap and raise the attainment and achievement of our children and young people and improve the life chances of the most vulnerable people in our society		
16	Continue to prioritise improving educational attainment and achievement and reducing the attainment gap at all stages; ensuring the secondary school curriculum meets the needs of young people; recognising the importance of supporting early intervention in improving pre-school children’s readiness to learn, for example, through using the Council’s library service to provide focussed support in reading skills in pre-school children and more vulnerable children	
17	Work with the Scottish Government to enable provision of 1140 hours of early learning and childcare for all 3 and 4 year old children, by continuing to support the provision of suitable childcare and early years facilities such as the Red School in Prestonpans, and continuing to support initiatives such as Support from the Start, and the implementation of the new play strategy, within the context of the Council’s Early Learning and Childcare Strategy	
18	Meet stretching positive destinations targets and continue to develop the positive partnerships with Edinburgh College and Queen Margaret University and the business sector to further develop the senior phase and provide vocational opportunities through creating a common school day/ timetable and the development of vocational pathways and a ‘digital school’ to be based within the new secondary school	
19	Work with other local authorities to develop common approaches to improve practice and share educational resources and facilities where possible	
20	Build a new secondary school in Wallyford and new primary schools in Letham Mains, Wallyford and Craighall and extensions or upgrades at local secondary and primary schools as required	
21	Ensure that none of our small rural schools are threatened with closure.	
22	Evaluate the Musselburgh East Family Focus Service established to deliver sustained, improved life chances for the most vulnerable families; and, if successful, roll out the service model across East Lothian’s most deprived communities	
23	Take concerted action to tackle obesity in children through a multi-agency and multi-faceted approach, including improved diet and nutrition in early years, exercise and physical activity	

24	Continue to develop a strategic approach to commissioning adult and children's services, including care at home services, to ensure person centred services and value for money; piloting the Neighbourhood Networks model to encourage people with complex needs to connect with community resources and people	
25	Continue to develop technology enabled care and health services, building on the successful service already provided through the Council's Contact Centre	
26	Prioritise actions to reduce mental ill-health in our community, in particular amongst young people, and to tackle the challenges posed by Dementia and the social isolation of older people and other vulnerable groups	
27	Continue working with the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service and other partners to develop holistic, collaborative, early intervention services aimed at supporting vulnerable people from risk and harm in their homes	
28	Promote opportunities for Healthy Living throughout East Lothian by implementing the Physical Activity Strategy and maximising use of East Lothian's natural health service – the outdoors	
29	Work with NHS Lothian to ensure that local services meet the needs of our growing population e.g. through the expansion of Harbours Medical Practice in Cockenzie	
30	Protect, improve and expand care facilities for older people in East Lothian and implement the Day Centre Improvement Plan	
Growing our Communities – Extend community engagement and decision making and increase community and individual resilience		
31	Increase the supply of affordable housing, as identified through the Local Development Plan, which, over the lifetime of the Plan aims to deliver a total of 2500 new affordable homes, including 2000 council or Housing Association houses for rent	
32	Ensure that significant new housing developments have the community infrastructure they need including transport links, schools, access to local shops, and community facilities; and, continue to campaign for much needed improvements to the nationally funded trunk road, rail, water and sewerage infrastructure in East Lothian, to ensure that the county can	

	adequately cope with the levels of housing determined by national planning frameworks and the South East Scotland Structure Plan	
33	Oppose excessively high levels of housing being forced upon the county by national planning frameworks and the next South East of Scotland Structure Plan	
34	Ensure that planning decisions are sympathetic to the natural and built environment of East Lothian in order to protect and enhance our unique and beautiful landscape and settlements	
35	Continue to support the implementation of the Council's planning guidance on the siting of wind turbines	
36	<p>Explore further development of better and more effective public transport and active travel initiatives including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community transport initiatives for rural communities such as Garvald, Morham and Oldhamstocks • working with local bus providers to continue improving the local bus network including express services between Edinburgh and Port Seton/ Prestonpans/ Longniddry • supporting efforts to increase passenger capacity on rail services within East Lothian • supporting and lobbying for the opening of the new rail station at East Linton; the development of Dunbar Station, including new access from the south; and, the expansion of the station car parks at Drem, Longniddry and Dunbar • exploring the provision of more bike parking facilities and a bike hire scheme at rail stations • exploring ways to offer better parking and park & ride facilities across the county 	
37	Extend the number of local charging points for electric vehicles	
38	Continue to actively lead and support the Scottish A1 Group with a view to securing junction improvements and dualling and the badly needed upgrade at Broxburn Junction, east of Dunbar	
39	Continue to support the development of the six Area Partnerships with devolved funding to implement priorities identified in their Area Plans, delivering community participation on local spending priorities, including, where appropriate, participatory budgeting	

40	Continue to provide the maximum possible support to Community Councils, Area Partnerships and other community bodies and continue to promote and deliver greater partnership with local groups and active participation in community events supported by Council resources	
41	Support the imaginative and flexible use of, and community access to, facilities such as libraries and schools; and, where appropriate the community management of community facilities	
42	Continue to support initiatives to reduce crime and the fear of crime through a multi-agency, proactive intervention approach and taking a zero-tolerance approach to anti-social behaviour, including excessive noise	
43	Work closely with partners to meet our commitment to Climate Change targets, embedding sustainability principles into decision making and translating them into tangible actions, protecting and enhancing open spaces and habitats	
44	Increase waste recycling service provision to meet the 70% recycling target by 2025; insisting upon the best possible waste disposal and recycling facilities; working with local businesses and community groups to promote zero waste initiatives and reduce waste from takeaway packaging, and ensuring that domestic and commercial food waste does not go to landfill; and, clamping down on fly tipping and ensuring trade waste is disposed of properly	
45	Continue to encourage walking and cycling activity by both East Lothian residents and visitors and promoting green space as part of the promotion of healthy living; meeting our commitment to extending the provision of core paths, including the Drem-Gullane path	
46	Continue to work hard to reduce air pollution, including implementing the Air Quality Plan for Musselburgh	
47	Increase efforts to reduce the problems caused by dog fouling through enforcement of penalties for dog fouling, promoting the Green Dog Walkers scheme, and providing more and larger dog waste bins in car parks and parks	
48	Upgrade our first rate sports and leisure facilities, and synthetic pitches, and community facilities, including new pitches at Halhill, Dunbar; Port Seton Sports Hall; Haddington Corn Exchange; Whitecraig Community Centre; Fletcher Hall; Polson Park; Dunbar's East Beach; and, Fraser Centre in Tranent	