

REPORT TO: East Lothian Council

MEETING DATE: 22 August 2017

BY: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: 2017/18 Council Improvement Plan

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To present the 2017/18 Council Improvement Plan to the Council for approval.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Council is recommended to:
- a) note the update report on the 2016/17 Council Improvement Plan (Appendix 1)
 - b) approve the 2017/18 Council Improvement Plan (Appendix 2).

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The annual Council Improvement Plan is based on improvement actions drawn up using evidence from a range of self-evaluation activities and external audit and inspection reports including:
- the Corporate Governance Self-evaluation, (Audit & Governance Committee, 20 June 2017)
 - Audit Scotland's report: Local Government in Scotland: Performance and Challenges (Audit & Governance Committee, 20 June 2017)
 - the auditor's interim audit report (Audit & Governance Committee, 20 June 2017)
 - Audit Scotland's Local Scrutiny Plan (East Lothian Council, 27 June 2017).
- 3.2 Appendix 1 provides a monitoring report on progress in achieving the actions from the 2016/17 Council Improvement Plan. No actions have had to be carried forward into the 2017/18 Plan.

- 3.3 The Corporate Governance self-evaluation carried out by the Council Management Team (reported to Audit & Governance Committee, 20 June 2017) identified eight areas of development and improvement. These build on existing good practice and improvement actions already being implemented to support the Council's progress through continuous improvement. These actions have all been included in the 2017/18 Council Improvement Plan.
- 3.4 The Council Improvement Plan does not contain any specific actions arising from Audit Scotland's Local Government in Scotland report, the Auditors' interim audit report or the Local Scrutiny Plan. The auditors' report and the Local Scrutiny Plan both provide assurance that there are no major concerns about the council's governance and performance management arrangements.
- 3.5 The Accounts Commission has embarked on a new process for undertaking Best Value Audits of Scotland's 32 local authorities. The new process is centred around publication of Best Value Assessment Reports based on auditing of processes and procedures in line with the duty of Best Value.
- 3.6 The Local Scrutiny Plan highlighted that East Lothian Council will be subject to a Best Value Assessment Report in 2018/19. The Council's auditors will review some Best Value criteria as part of their 2016/17 local audit, following which they will scope and prepare a timetable for the additional Best Value audit work to be carried out during 2018 audit. It is expected that the Best Value Assessment Report will be published in late 2018.
- 3.7 The Council has a well-defined and established Improvement to Excellence: Continuous Improvement Framework, including self-evaluation, performance management, financial and strategic planning and improvement activity. The framework and the work that is undertaken corporately and across all services under the framework will provide a good evidence base for the Council's submission for the Best Value audit. A senior officer working group has been established to provide leadership and oversight of the various strands of this continuous improvement work.
- 3.8 The Council successfully undertook an assessment for the Quality Scotland Committed to Excellence award in March 2017. The Council Management Team has decided to follow this up with an application for the Quality Scotland Recognised for Excellence award, the next step up the ladder towards full recognition under the European Foundation for Quality Management framework. The assessment for this award will take place in March 2018
- 3.9 The preparation for the Best Value assessment and the Recognised for Excellence award have been included as actions in the Council Improvement Plan.
- 3.10 Implementation of the 2017/18 Council Improvement Plan will be assured via ongoing internal monitoring of progress on key actions points by the relevant lead officers and Depute Chief Executives. Monitoring reports on progress with implementing the Plan will be made to the Council Management Team and the Audit and Governance Committee.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 In accordance with the principles of Best Value the Council strives to pursue 'continuous improvement' and seeks to deliver services in as effective and efficient way as possible. The recommendations arising from Council's self-evaluations, review and inspection work identified above help to inform the Council's pursuit of 'continuous improvement' through the adoption and implementation of the 2017/18 Council Improvement Plan.
- 4.2 The 2017/18 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.

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial – none.
- 6.2 Personnel – none.
- 6.3 Other – none.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Appendix 1: 2016/17 Council Improvement Plan Final Monitoring Report
- 7.2 Appendix 2: 2017/18 Council Improvement Plan
- 7.3 Corporate Governance Self-Evaluation and Annual Governance Statement 2017; report to Audit & Governance Committee, 20 June 2017
- 7.4 Local Government in Scotland: Performance and Challenges 2017 (Accounts Commission, March 2017); report to Audit & Governance Committee, 20 June 2017
- 7.5 Interim Audit Report (Audit Scotland); report to Audit & Governance Committee, 20 June 2017
- 7.6 Local Scrutiny Plan 2016/17 (Audit Scotland); report to East Lothian Council, 27 June 2017

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DATE	26 July 2017

Appendix 1: 2016/17 Council Improvement Plan: Monitoring Statement (July 2017)

2016/17 Council Improvement Plan

We deliver excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible

	ACTION	LEAD	DEADLINE	UPDATE
1	Begin developing a new Council Plan for 2017 – 2022 in autumn 2016. The Draft Plan will be presented to Council in early 2017 and form the basis of the Plan to be adopted by Council in August 2017. The work to develop the Draft Plan will include review of the East Lothian Profile, challenges and opportunities facing East Lothian and East Lothian Council and a review of Council policies to ensure they are relevant and up-to-date	Service Manager Corporate Policy & Improvement	Feb 2017	Draft 2017-2022 Council Plan approved by Council in Feb 2017 Final version of 2017-2022 Council Plan approved by Council in June 2017
2	Undertake benchmarking exercises on three service areas in order to better understand the variance in East Lothian Council performance against other councils	Service Manager Corporate Policy & Improvement and relevant Service Managers	Mar 2017	The Council is participating in benchmarking exercises supported by the Improvement Service
3	Carry out a Best Value Review of at least one service during 2016/17	Service Manager Corporate Policy & Improvement and relevant Service Managers	Mar 2017	The Transformation team is supporting several service review exercises
4	Prepare an elected members' Induction Programme, including mandatory elements, a briefing on the role of elected members on partnership bodies and arms length organisations and offering the opportunity to undertake a Continuous Personal Development Programme, in consultation with elected members for council approval prior	Service Manager Democratic Services	Jan 2017	Elected member induction programme prepared and approved in March 2017 and carried out following the May 2017 elections. Further development sessions for

	to the 2017 Council elections			elected members will be programmed throughout the year.
5	Review Standing Orders including the Scheme of Administration (roles and responsibilities of Council Committees) and the Scheme of Delegation	Service Manager Democratic Services	Mar 2017	Revised Standing Orders will be presented to the August Council meeting
6	Review the Workforce Development Plan	Service Manager Corporate Policy & Improvement	Oct 2016	The Workforce Development Plan 2012-2017 is still relevant and guiding priorities for training and development. A new plan is being prepared
7	Promote greater awareness of Council policies such as the Gifts and Hospitality policy and Register of Interests	Service Manager Democratic Services	Oct 2016	Council policies including Gifts and Hospitality policy have been publicised via the new Intranet and Inform, the new staff 'e-zine'
8	Review and where appropriate, act on the recommendations of the East Lothian Poverty Commission	Service Manager Corporate Policy & Improvement	Oct 2016	The Poverty Commission report was approved in principle by Council (Oct 2016). An Action Plan based on the report's recommendations has been prepared
9	Review and where appropriate, act on the new duties and responsibilities arising the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015	Service Manager Corporate Policy & Improvement	Oct 2016	Publication of Guidance on the Act was delayed until mid-December. A report on the Act and its implications for the Council is to be considered at the September 2017 Cabinet meeting
10	The Council will follow up the review of STRIVE (the Third	Service Manager	Dec 2016	The final report of the review

	Sector interface) to further strengthen the relationship between the third sector, the Council and East Lothian Partnership	Corporate Policy & Improvement		of STRIVE was presented to East Lothian Partnership in October 2016. Following discussions on taking forward the report's recommendations a report was approved at the June 2017 Partnership meeting
11	Implement staff communications plan to ensure staff are fully informed and engaged; including identifying ways to recognise and celebrate excellent performance and employee achievement	Service manager Corporate Policy & Improvement	Oct 2016	Staff communications including publicising excellent performance and employee achievement is being developed through the staff 'e-zine'
12	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'	Service Manager Corporate Policy & Improvement	Mar 2017	The new fully responsive website which will support the development of on-line services has been procured. The new website will be on-line by late autumn 2017. Procurement of a new Customer Relations Management (CRM) system is progressing

Appendix 2: 2017/18 Council Improvement Plan

2017/18 Council Improvement Plan

We deliver excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible

	ACTION	LEAD OFFICERS	DEADLINE
1	Adopt a 2017-2022 Council Plan	Service Manager Corporate Policy & Improvement	Completed
2	Further develop staff communications and engagement, building on positive programmes such as the One Council Workshops.”	Service Manager Corporate Policy & Improvement	Sept 2017 – March 2018
3	Review the Council’s key performance indicators and targets	Service Manager Corporate Policy & Improvement	October 2017
4	Support the East Lothian Partnership to prepare and adopt a new East Lothian Plan (meeting its statutory duty to prepare a Local Outcome Improvement Plan) and review the East Lothian Partnership governance structure	Service Manager Corporate Policy & Improvement	October 2017
5	Promote the Council’s consultation and engagement strategy and opportunities for public engagement and participation, which meet the Community Empowerment Act’s statutory requirements	Service manager Corporate Policy & Improvement	November 2017
6	Prepare and adopt a Workforce Plan, incorporating a Workforce Development Plan	Service Managers HR and Corporate Policy & Improvement	November 2017
7	Review elected members’ development needs and provide an ongoing training and development programme	Service Manager Corporate Policy &	November 2017

		Improvement	
8	Develop a regulatory services charter covering all services that provide regulatory services to business	Service Manager Protective Services	March 2018
9	Using Audit Scotland's Best Value Audit Toolkits, review the performance and practice of the council's key processes.	Service Manager Corporate Policy & Improvement	March 2018
10	Take necessary actions to improve processes, performance and governance identified through action 9 and in the Quality Scotland Committed to Excellence award feedback in preparation for submitting an application for the Quality Scotland Recognised for Excellence Award. This will provide independent external validation of the Council's practice.	Service Manager Corporate Policy & Improvement	March 2018