

**REPORT TO:** Policy and Performance Review Committee

**MEETING DATE:** 9 June 2021

**BY:** Executive Director for Place

**SUBJECT:** 2020/21 Q4 and Annual Performance Report

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## **1 PURPOSE**

1.1 To provide the Committee with information regarding the performance of council services during Q4 2020/21 (Jan – Mar 2021) and Annual Performance Indicators for 2020/21.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 The Committee is asked to use the information provided in this report to consider whether any aspect of the Council's performance is in need of further analysis.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Council has an established set of Key Performance Indicators to help monitor progress towards the outcomes contained in the Council Plan and East Lothian Plan. The indicators are updated on a quarterly basis and the results are reported to the Policy & Performance Review Committee. Appendix 1 provides the results of the Key Performance Indicators for Q4 2020/21. Appendix 2 provides the results for annual measures.

3.2 The Covid-19 Coronavirus pandemic and lockdown commenced from the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020. The shutdown of non-essential services and the wider economic impact of lockdown restrictions are evident in the Q4 and annual performance results for 2020/21.

3.3 Some of the indicators that may be of particular interest to members (from the quarterly report – Appendix 1) include:

- **Homelessness** - The number of cases has fluctuated throughout the year due to Covid-19, and increased slightly to 169 in Q4.. Average number of days to re-housing from temporary accommodation has improved during Q4 to 321. Homelessness assessments completed in under 28 days is above target at 90% as a result of a new framework being implemented.
- **Recycling & Fly-tipping** – The number of vehicles accessing recycling centres has remained consistent and above the annual target despite being closed during most of the first quarter of 2020/21. Last year saw 508,309 vehicles compared to 498,881 vehicles accessing the centres in 2020/21. Flytipping incidents have decreased in recent years. There was also a drop in incidents during the first lockdown, with a low of 55 in the Q2. Since then, figures have increased to expected levels to 120 in Q4. The annual rate is at 357 compared to 352 in the previous year.
- **Business Start-ups / Jobs** – Due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, many business were closed and unable to be contacted to determine the % of Business Gateway start-ups trading after 12 months or number of new businesses. The Council has been operating under business continuity plans and has diverted resources to processing Business Support Grants.
- **Housing Benefit Claims** – The impact of Covid-19 on the economy and household incomes has led to an increase in the number of changes in Housing Benefit. The council has maintained a high level of performance during the pandemic in ensuring average time in days to process new claims and changes in Housing Benefit circumstances are processed quickly. New claims performance processing remained consistent at 21.5 days in Q4, with an annual average of 20.84 (target 26 days). Performance is within targets for processing changes in circumstances at 4.1 days in Q4 against a target of 6 days. Average for the previous year was 3.19 days and is now 5.51 days for 2020/21, although still within target processing times.
- **Invoices Paid on Time** – 81.3% of invoices were paid on time for Q4. Annual performance is under target (90%) at 83.9%. The total number of invoices paid in the year was 76,513 and the number paid on time was 64,221.
- **Attendance at sports and leisure facilities** – Attendances have been significantly impacted by the pandemic with the centres and pools being closed during both Covid-19 lockdowns in Q1 and Q4. Centres reopened from September to December but with no indoor activities due to restrictions. Outdoor activities such as golf were open from May onwards. Total attendances for the year were 70,747. The majority of these were virtual classes. Figures for indoor attendances are usually over 600,000.
- **Business Rates & Council Tax Collection (REV06 & REV07)** - The impact of the pandemic on local business was felt immediately and measures to mitigate this impact were put in place with the introduction of the Business Support Grants which our Business Rates team were heavily involved in. Software changes, which were introduced in response to COVID-related legislative changes were subject to significant delays and proved to be

challenging and created significant work for Business Rates, Systems and IT colleagues.

The focus for much of the year was primarily to support and advise anyone in need of help and the £9.3m in relief awarded to the Retail Hospitality & Leisure sectors was a significant body of work. Following the reissue of annual bills in December 2020, efforts to maximise collection over the last Quarter were admirable. A further lockdown situation in January presented further challenges. The decision not to issue recovery notices in 2020/21 also impacted on collection levels. To have achieved a collection rate of 98.16% in any normal year would be a significant achievement, therefore to have attained such a high collection rate under the circumstances is exceptional.

- **Council Tax Collection (REV06)** - East Lothian Council has maintained a high level of Council Tax collection at 95.5% by the end of 2020/21. Council services have overcome significant challenges over the last year, striking an appropriate and considered approach between supporting local residents whilst maximising Council income. The impact of the pandemic has been severe and many local residents have relied on significant and ongoing financial and welfare related guidance and support. The approach to instigating statutory debt recovery work has changed throughout the year, putting temporary suspensions in place during periods of national lockdown to provide additional support and much needed breathing space for many. However, the restarting of this debt recovery work has created a significant increase in incoming enquiries from taxpayers concerned about paying. In recent years we have seen significant property growth in East Lothian and although this growth slowed in early 2020/21, 645 new properties were added to our property base in 2020/21, all of which creates significant workload pressures for the services involved.
- **Tenant Rent Arrears** – Current rent arrears stands at £1.308M. Similar to other collections and debt recovery work, the impact of the pandemic has been severe and it has been a challenge to support Council tenants whilst maximising rental income and keeping arrears levels as low as possible. The restrictions around more advanced debt recovery work, including an eviction ban and a suspension of actions through the heritable Court have also impacted on arrears levels. The Council's Rent Income team has responded admirably to these challenges and their approach has remained fair, whilst developing working practices to ensure tenants remain engaged and supported. Joint working with Benefits colleagues to ensure Council tenants were further supported with Discretionary Housing Payments where necessary impacted extremely positively on our overall arrears levels. Although we are reporting an in-year increase at end 2020/21, the impact on rent arrears could have been far more severe.
- **Staff Absence** – levels of staff absence due to sickness continued to fall during 2020/21. The average number of sickness absence days per teacher fell from 4.92 in 2019/20 to 2.90 in 2020/21 and for non-teaching staff fell from 9.46 to 7.07.

## **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Reporting performance helps the Council demonstrate that it is achieving Best Value in regard to 'Commitment and Leadership', 'Sound Governance at a strategic, financial and operational level' and 'Accountability'.
- 4.2 The scrutiny of performance by Elected Members is part of 'Commitment and Leadership'. The Best Value Guidance explains that the scrutiny of performance means 'That members are involved in setting the strategic direction for Best Value and there is a mechanism for internal scrutiny by members of performance and service outcomes.' Reporting the performance indicators for each service every quarter is intended to aid this process.

## **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: Key Performance Indicators, Q4
- 7.2 Appendix 2: Annual Performance Indicators Report 2020/21

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


# Appendix 1 - Council Plan Quarter Performance Report - Quarter 4

Dates

31/03/2021





### Key to Icons

#### RAG status

-  Performance within target
-  Performance within tolerance levels
-  Performance outwith target / tolerance levels
-  Missing data
-  No target
-  No data or target

## Growing Our Communities

No slicers

Measure	Objective	Previous Value	Actual	Target	RAG	Trend	Comments
CH01 Number of homelessness cases	Increase community and individual resilience	139	169	200			Homeless cases have increased compared with the previous quarter, although are similar to Q4 of 2019/20. Presentations have fluctuated throughout the pandemic.
CH02 Average number of days to re-housing from temporary (homeless) to permanent accommodation	Increase community and individual resilience	354	321	300			Whilst lockdown had an impact upon the number of homeless presentations, there has been no negative impact upon the number of days to rehousing, which shows marked improvement compared with previous quarters.

Measure	Objective	Previous Value	Actual	Target	RAG	Trend	Comments
CH03 % homelessness assessments completed in under 28 days	Increase community and individual resilience	76.0	90.0	80.0	★	↕	This figure has typically remained around the target figure of 80% with limited divergence from this in recent quarters. A new framework was put in place February 2021 to ensure more efficient and effective working practices and new staff are in place, reducing pressures within the team. It is anticipated this figure will continue to show improvement from previous quarters.
CLD01 Extent to which CLD learning opportunities have a positive effect on all -round development	Increase community and individual resilience				?!	?	
EH01 % Food Hygiene high risk Inspections achieved	Increase community and individual resilience				?!	?	Food related inspections have been suspended due to Covid-19. It is likely to be September until they are re-instated
EH02 % of Food Standards high risk Inspections achieved	Increase community and individual resilience	0.0	0.0	0.0	★	→	
EH04 % food businesses broadly compliant with food hygiene law	Increase community and individual resilience				?!	?	
HSCP_CJ01 Percentage of Community Payback Orders successfully completed	Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour	85.7	78.8		!	✗	
HSCP_CJ01b Number of Community Payback Orders	Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour	46	29				
RS01 Street lighting - repairs - average time in days	Better public transport and active travel				?!	?	
RS02 Traffic lights - average time to repair failure (hours:mins)	Better public transport and active travel	17.26	9.59	48	★	↕	
SCL_AS01 Percentage of Other Waste Recycled	Increase waste recycling	100.0	100.0	90.0	★	→	

Measure	Objective	Previous Value	Actual	Target	RAG	Trend	Comments
SCL_AS02 Percentage of Green Waste & Beach Waste Recycled	Increase waste recycling	100.0	100.0	100.0	★	→	
SCL_AS03 Number of Flytipping incidences	Increase waste recycling	106	120	88	▲	↗	
T&WS11 Number of vehicles accessing recycling centres	Increase waste recycling	146210	136196	125000	★	↘	

## Growing Our Economy

Measure	Objective	Previous Value	Actual	Target	RAG	Trend	Comments
DM11 Major developments: average number of weeks to decision	Support the growth of East Lothians economy	0.0	10.9			↗✗	
DM12 Local developments: average time in weeks	Support the growth of East Lothians economy	8.0	9.2			↗✗	
DM13 All Local developments: % determined within 2 months	Support the growth of East Lothians economy	90.4	82.8			↗✗	
DM14 Householder developments: average time (weeks)	Support the growth of East Lothians economy	6.6	7.5			↗✗	
DM18 Approval Rates: Percentage of all applications granted in period	Support the growth of East Lothians economy	95.9	96.3			↕✓	
EDSI_B01 Number of Business Gateway-Start ups	Support the growth of East Lothians economy				10 ?	?	figures unavailable due to covid-19
EDSI_B02 Percentage of Business Gateway-Start ups that are trading after 12 months	Support the growth of East Lothians economy				15.0 ?	?	figures unavailable due to covid-19
EDSI_B11 Number of jobs created by start ups assisted by Business Gateway	Reduce unemployment				10 ?	?	figures unavailable due to covid-19
EDSI_ELW02 Percentage of the population claiming Out of Work Allowance (JSA / Universal Credit)	Reduce unemployment	5.0%	5.4%	6.1%	★	↗✗	3520 claimants at the end of March. The Scottish average is 6.1%. The 18 - 24 year age group is at 9.1%, whilst those 18 to 21 yrs is at 9.8%
LPS01 % spend with contracted suppliers	Support the growth of East Lothians economy	86.3			?!	?	



## Growing Our People

Measure	Objective	Previous Value	Actual	Target	RAG	Trend	Comments
HSCP_CS01 Average number of Placements for looked after children	Improve the life chances of the most vulnerable people in our society	1.7	1.8			✖	Placement stability is a key factor in positive outcomes for young people. The average number of placement moves has remained relatively stable over the year however we were unable to move placements during the first lockdown in 2020 which explains the slight dip.
HSCP_CS02 Percentage of children on Child Protection Register for more than 6 Months	Improve the life chances of the most vulnerable people in our society	20.6	10.8			✔	37 children on the child protection register, with 4 on the register for more than 6 months at the end of March 2021. There has been a significant decrease in % of children on the register for more than 6 months due to a number of large sibling groups being removed from the child protection register.
HSCP_CS03 Percentage of children who are re-registered within a 12 month period	Improve the life chances of the most vulnerable people in our society	0.3	0.0		!	n/a	

Measure	Objective	Previous Value	Actual	Target	RAG	Trend	Comments
HSCP_CS04 Rate per 1,000 children in Formal Kin Care	Improve the life chances of the most vulnerable people in our society	2.3	2.4				Formal Kinship care is when a child or young person is looked after by family or friends under a looked after statute negating the need for Foster Care or Residential Care. The total in formal kin care of 52 children/young people, continues to remain below the Scottish national average of 4.0. However we have a further 80 children and young people who we support under an informal kin care arrangement. Of those 80, there are 55 children and young people whose families have been supported to take on a residence order (section 11) to take them out of the hearing system. If these children were combined with those in formal kin care the rate per 1,000 would be more in line with the Scottish average. We are investing more resources in kinship care in line with The Promise.
HSCP_CS05 Rate per 1,000 children in Foster Care	Improve the life chances of the most vulnerable people in our society	4.1	3.8				The number of children in foster care fell during the last quarter and now stands at 81. However the challenge to recruit and retain sufficient foster carers is ongoing as the service is reliant on external placements which are more expensive. The East Lothian rate is below the Scottish average of 5.3.
HSCP_CS06 Rate per 1,000 children in Residential Care	Improve the life chances of the most vulnerable people in our society	1.8	1.7				There are 37 East Lothian young people in Residential Care. East Lothian has 12 places within two 6 bedded units. External placements are subject to regular review and scrutiny under the Prevent and Return project which is having a positive impact on the numbers and the life chances of young people. The rate per 1,000 remains above the Scottish average of 1.5.

Measure	Objective	Previous Value	Actual	Target	RAG	Trend	Comments
HSCP_CS07 Rate per 1,000 children on Home Supervision	Improve the life chances of the most vulnerable people in our society	3.2	2.9				There are 61 children/young people on a Home Supervision Order. Reviewing Officers continue to ensure plans are in place for these children at an early stage with a view to ensuring they are spending less time within the Children's Hearing system. During the early part of the pandemic the response was to extend home supervision orders for a period of 6 months. The Scottish Children's Reporters Association (SCRA) is beginning the process to resume hearings at a pre COVID levels. The rate per 1,000 is below the Scottish average of 3.7.
HSCP_AS01b Percentage of people aged 65+ with long term care needs receiving personal care at home	Reduce hospital admissions and delayed discharge of older people	59.1	58.6		!	✗	
HSCP_01 Number of delayed discharge patients waiting over 2 weeks	Reduce hospital admissions and delayed discharge of older people	1	0	0	★	✓	
SCL_SD01 Number of attendances at indoor sports and leisure facilities	Tackle obesity in children	56307	4620	130000	▲	✗	There were no attendances during both Covid-19 lockdowns in Q1 and Q4. Total figures for the year are 70,747. Attendances are usually over 600,000. It should be noted that this number is virtual classes that have been held. COVID restrictions are still in place.
SCL_SD02 Number of attendances at pools	Tackle obesity in children	36367	0	110000	▲	✗	Swimming pools closed due to COVID restrictions.

## Growing the Capacity of the Council

Measure	Object Name	Previous Value	Actual	Target	RAG	Trend	Comments
BEN01 Average time in days to process new claims in housing benefit	Provide efficient services	21.43	21.50	26.00	★	↗	New claims performance remained consistent at 21.5 days in Q4, with an annual performance of 20.84 (target 26 days).
BEN02 Average number of days to process a change of circumstances (Housing Benefit)	Provide efficient services	7.93	4.10	6.00	★	↘	The impact of Covid-19 on the economy and household incomes has led to an increase in the number of changes in Housing Benefit. The council has maintained a high level of performance during the pandemic in ensuring average time in days to process new claims and changes in Housing Benefit circumstances are processed quickly. New claims performance processing remained consistent at 21.5 days in Q4, with an annual average of 20.84 (target 26 days). Performance is within targets for processing changes in circumstances at 4.1 days in Q4 against a target of 6 days. Average for the previous year was 3.19 days and is now 5.51 days for 2020/21, although still within target processing times.
CF001 Percentage of invoices paid on time	Provide efficient services	82.8	81.3	90.0	●	↗	81.3% of invoices paid on time for the quarter. Annual figure is under target (90%) at 83.9%. Number of invoices paid for the year is 76,513 and the number paid on time 64,221.
EBS01 Percentage of first reports (for building warrants and amendments) issued within 20 days	Provide efficient services	85.7	93.8	95.0	●	↘	
EBS02 % of building warrants issued within 10 days from receipt of all satisfactory information	Provide efficient services	88.15	87.00	90.00	●	↗	

Measure	Object Name	Previous Value	Actual	Target	RAG	Trend	Comments
REV06 Business Rates in-year collection	Provide efficient services	77.1	98.2	99.0	●	↕	<p>The impact of the pandemic on local business was felt immediately and measures to mitigate this impact were put in place with the introduction of the Business Support Grants which our Business Rates team were heavily involved in. Software changes which were introduced in response to Covid-related legislative changes were subject to significant delays and proved to be challenging and created significant work for Business Rates, Systems and IT colleagues. The focus for much of the year was primarily to support and advise anyone in need of help and the £9.3m in relief awarded to the Retail Hospitality &amp; Leisure sectors was a significant body of work. Following the reissue of annual bills in December 2020, efforts to maximise collection over the last Quarter were admirable. We faced a further lockdown situation in January which again presented further challenges. The decision not to issue recovery notices in 2020/21 also impacted on collection levels. To have achieved a collection rate of 98.16% in any normal year would be a significant achievement, therefore to have attained such a high collection rate under the circumstances is exceptional.</p>

Measure	Object Name	Previous Value	Actual	Target	RAG	Trend	Comments
REV07 Council Tax in-year collection	Provide efficient services	81.1	95.5	96.8	●	↕	We are pleased to be able to report such a high collection rate at end 2020/21. We have overcome significant challenges over the last year and striking an appropriate and considered approach between supporting local residents whilst maximising Council income has been a difficult balance to get right. The impact of the pandemic has been severe and many local residents have relied on significant and ongoing financial and welfare related guidance and support. The approach to instigating statutory debt recovery work has changed throughout the year, putting temporary suspensions in place during periods of national lockdown to provide additional support and much needed breathing space for many, however the restarting of this debt recovery work has created a significant increase in incoming enquiries from taxpayers concerned about paying. In recent years we have seen significant property growth in East Lothian and although this growth slowed in early 2020/21, 645 new properties were added to our property base in 2020/21, all of which creates significant work for the team.

Measure	Object Name	Previous Value	Actual	Target	RAG	Trend	Comments
REV08 Value of current tenants rent arrears	Provide efficient services	1,356,943.2	1,308,294.1	1,289,976.7	●	↓	Similar to other collections and debt recovery teams, the impact of the pandemic has been severe and it has been a challenge to support Council tenants whilst maximising rental income and keeping arrears levels as low as possible. The restrictions around more advanced debt recovery work, including an eviction ban and a suspension of actions through the heritable Court have also impacted on arrears levels. The Council's Rent Income team has responded admirably to these challenges and their approach has remained fair, whilst developing working practices to ensure tenants remain engaged and supported. Joint working with Benefits colleagues to ensure Council tenants were further supported with Discretionary Housing Payments where necessary impacted extremely positively on our overall arrears levels. Although we are reporting an in-year increase at end 2020/21, we are delighted with the mitigating work of the team as rent arrears levels had the potential to be far more severe.

# Appendix 2 - Council Plan Annual Performance Report

2020/21

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Measure		Previous Year	Latest	Target	Comments
Improve the condition, energy efficiency and management of housing stock	CH_PM01 Average number of days taken to re-let properties in the last year	30.8	51.8		
	CH06 % reactive repairs carried out in the last year completed right first time	92.1	94.2		
	CH07 % properties that require a gas safety record which had a safety check by anniversary date	100.0	97.4	100.0	For the first six months of 2020/21 full compliance has not been achieved in the area of gas safety checks. The legal requirement is that the landlord must conduct a gas safety check within 12 months of the previous one. Due to a combination of tenants self-isolating and shielding due to Covid-19, out of time cases totalled 212 at its peak in June 2020. With easing of lockdown constraints and the suspension of shielding, and targeting of the out of time cases, all properties unable to be accessed were re-booked in accordance with HSE and Gas Safe advice.
	HSN2 CH Percentage of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids	0.5	0.6		The increased number of days council properties remained empty and associated rent loss (from previous year) are in no small part due to the impacts of Covid-19. There were various points in the year when work had to be suspended completely and other points where new standard operating practices had to be put in place that constrained how quickly tradespersons could carry out work and remain safe. The workforce was also adversely impacted by staff absences through Covid-19 related illnesses or periods of self-isolation.
	HSN3 CH Percentage of dwellings meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard	100.0	97.6	100.0	
	HSN5 CH Percentage of council dwellings that are energy efficient	99.1	99.3	100.0	
PM02 Average length of time (hrs) taken to complete emergency repairs	4.0	4.3	4.0		

	Measure	Previous Year	Latest	Target	Comments
Prevent homelessness, with appropriate support for positive health outcomes and tenancy sustainment	CH04 Average length of time (days) in temp or emergency accommodation by type (all types)				The Scottish Government is experiencing delays in analysis of data due to Covid-19 and this information will not be available until June 2021.
	CH05 % satisfied with the quality of temp or emergency accommodation (homeless in previous 12mths)				There has been no survey collection / analysis carried out due to Covid-19; home working and associated requirement to analyse results via a package which requires to be completed in the office. Plans are underway to work with Shelter in 2021/22 re a revised approach to service user engagement as part of a national project.
Equal Opportunities	> Corp3b HR Percentage of the highest paid 5% of employees who are women	56.3			
	> Corp3c HR The gender pay gap	2.3			
Provide efficient services	> Corp4 RWS Cost per dwelling of collecting Council Tax	£5.12	£6.56		There are two reasons for the increase in cost for 20/21, when compared to 19/20. Firstly, we mentioned in the 19/20 commentary that the cost of collection was low as we had staff vacancies, pending a service review. These vacancies were filled in late 20/21, resulting in an increase in staffing costs. Secondly, as result of the temporary suspension of statutory debt recovery work on two occasions during 20/21 due to COVID-19, the 10% statutory fees, which come into the Council Tax service budget to help support administration, were lower.
	> ELC Asset1 Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use	81.3	81.0	80.8	
	> ELC Asset2 Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition	89.3	88.3	88.8	
Be the best connected place in Scotland to set up and grow an innovative business	EDSI B05 Number of jobs protected through grant and loan awards	203		17	

	Measure	Previous Year	Latest	Target	Comments
Reduce unemployment	> EDSI_B11 Number of jobs created by start ups assisted by Business Gateway	271	16	46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mar 2021 figures unavailable due to covid-19</li> <li>• Dec 2020 The service is currently prioritising the business grants scheme - No data is available</li> <li>• Jun 2020 No jobs were created during April and May due to Covid-19 lockdown.</li> </ul>
Maximise opportunities to increase the supply of affordable housing	EDSI03 Number of affordable house completions and Open Market Acquisitions	279	157	261	Affordable house completions has been lower in 2020/21 due to the impact of Covid-19 on sites opening fully and then going back into lockdown.
	EDSI04 Number of affordable housing site starts	216.0	94.0	259.0	
Improve the employability of East Lothians Workforce	EDU01 % of people involved in Council operated employability programmes progressed into employment	14.4			
	EDU02 Number of people assisted into work from ELC employability programmes	68			
	EDU03 Number of people participating in EL Works operated or funded employability programmes	554			
Improve attendance management and reduce staff absence	> ELC Corp6a Average number of sickness absence days per teacher	4.92	2.90		
	> ELC Corp6b Average number of sickness absence days per local government employee	9.46	7.07		
Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour	PS01 % of cases being promoted from the anti-social behaviour case monitoring group to court		2.0		Courts have been closed during the pandemic