



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL**

**TUESDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2024  
VIA DIGITAL MEETING FACILITY**

**1a**

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**Committee Members Present:**

Provost J McMillan (Convener)  
Councillor S Akhtar  
Councillor E Allan  
Councillor R Bennett  
Councillor L Bruce  
Councillor D Collins  
Councillor F Dugdale  
Councillor J Findlay  
Councillor A Forrest  
Councillor N Gilbert  
Councillor N Hampshire

Councillor L Jardine  
Councillor C McFarlane  
Councillor C McGinn  
Councillor G McGuire  
Councillor S McIntosh  
Councillor K McLeod  
Councillor L-A Menzies  
Councillor B Ritchie  
Councillor T Trotter  
Councillor C Yorkston

**Council Officials Present:**

Ms M Patterson, Chief Executive  
Ms L Brown, Executive Director for Education and Children's Services  
Ms S Fortune, Executive Director for Council Resources  
Ms F Wilson, Director of Health and Social Care  
Ms E Dunnet, Head of Finance  
Ms M Ferguson, Head of Corporate Support  
Ms W McGuire, Head of Housing  
Mr T Reid, Head of Infrastructure  
Ms S Saunders, Head of Communities and Partnerships  
Mr S Cooper, Team Manager – Communications  
Ms R Crichton, Committees Officer  
Ms F Currie, Committees Officer  
Ms A-M Glancy, Service Manager – Corporate Accounting  
Mr C Grilli, Service Manager – Governance  
Ms B Skirrow, Service Manager – Strategy and Operations (Education)

**Visitors Present:**

None

**Clerk:**

Mrs L Gillingwater

**Apologies:**

Councillor C Cassini

Prior to the commencement of business, the Provost advised that the meeting was being held remotely, as provided for in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003; that the meeting would be recorded and live streamed; and that it would be made available via the Council's website as a webcast, in order to allow public access to the democratic process in East Lothian. He noted that the Council was the data controller under the Data Protection Act 2018; that data collected as part of the recording would be retained in accordance with the Council's policy on record retention; and that the webcast of the meeting would be publicly available for up to six months from the date of the meeting.

The clerk recorded attendance by roll call.

**Declarations of Interest:** For the purposes of transparency, Councillor Forrest declared an interest as a Council tenant. Councillor Menzies declared an interest as a Director of EnjoyLeisure; the Provost noted that this would also apply to himself, Councillor McGinn and Councillor Ritchie.

## 1. FINANCE UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources providing an update on the financial position at the end of December 2023 for the General Services and HRA Revenue and Capital budgets.

The Head of Finance, Ellie Dunnet, presented the report, drawing particular attention to the forecast overspend and planned use of reserves for the financial year. She anticipated that the IJB overspend would be met through the use of reserves – should this not be the case, then any overspend would require to be met by the Council and the NHS; this would remain an area of risk in 2024/25 and beyond. On capital expenditure, she noted a reduction in spend, largely due to the pause on spending and on the slippage of some projects. As regards treasury management activity, she had no specific concerns to report. Concerning the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), she forecast a break-even position on revenue, and on capital spending she anticipated a higher-than-expected expenditure due to a number of new-build Council house sites coming on stream; this would be offset in later years of the capital programme. Ms Dunnet reported that work on the annual audit was continuing and she anticipated this would be concluded soon. She warned that the predicted use of reserves could not be sustained, and so proposed that mitigation measures should remain in place.

Councillor Hampshire paid tribute to staff for their action in tackling the overspend, despite all areas of the Council experiencing increased demand for services. He warned that the budget decisions would put further pressure on staff and that it would be more difficult to maintain services.

Councillor Jardine pointed out that this was the most difficult fiscal environment that local authorities and other public services had faced in some time, and that it would affect staff and communities. She stressed the need to take a pragmatic approach, and suggested that the Council Plan should be reviewed to ensure there was a focus on tackling poverty and inequality, and addressing the priorities of constituents.

Councillor McGuire concurred with comments already made, noting that decisions taken at this meeting would affect everyone in East Lothian, and accepting that not everyone would be in agreement with those decisions.

The Provost moved to the roll call vote on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

## Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the outcome of the Period 9 review of financial performance against approved budgets and the significant underlying financial pressures faced by the Council;
- ii. to note the impact on the Council reserves if the projected revenue overspend materialises, and risks to financial sustainability outlined within the report;
- iii. to approve a transfer of a further £0.1 million to the Integration Joint Board to support the full costs of the 2023/24 pay award as detailed within paragraph 3.9 of the report; and
- iv. to note performance against prudential indicators, as set out in Appendix 5 to the report.

## 2. BUDGET DEVELOPMENT AND 2024/25 COUNCIL TAX AND RENT LEVELS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources, providing Council with an overview of the national funding settlement for local government and the implications of this for East Lothian; seeking to set the General Services Revenue budget and Council Tax levels for 2024/25, and agreeing strategic level budgets for 2025/26–2028/29; seeking to set the General Services Capital budgets for 2024/25–2028/29; seeking to set the Housing Revenue Account budgets for 2024/25–2028/29; and setting out the next steps towards delivering the Council's Financial Strategy for 2024/25–2028/29.

The Executive Director for Council Resources, Sarah Fortune, presented the report, highlighting the financial challenges facing the Council, especially in light of the growth taking place within East Lothian. She outlined that c. 75% of the Council's funding was provided through the national funding settlement, noting that the process for the 2024/25 financial year had not yet been concluded; therefore, the figures included in the papers for this meeting would remain in draft pending finalisation of that process. Ms Fortune accepted that delivering the required savings would be difficult to manage, stressing that the Council was at 'tipping point' in terms of financial sustainability, and that without additional funding further savings would be required. The Council would therefore need to reshape the delivery of services and align resources to support priorities. She assured Members that efforts would continue as regards seeking additional funding.

The Provost advised that Members would be asked to approve Recommendations 2.1-2.4 and 2.6, with Recommendation 2.5 to be covered through the HRA and budget proposal items on the agenda.

Responding to a question from Councillor Hampshire on additional funding being allocated to the Council as a result of the Council Tax freeze, Ellie Dunnet, Head of Finance, advised that the Council would receive a net increase in core funding of £2.157 million for 2024/25, which would equate to approximately a 3% rise in Council Tax.

Councillor Yorkston asked about the distribution mechanism for national settlement funding. Ms Fortune advised that the parameters for local government funding were set by the Scottish Minister, in conjunction with CoSLA. On the question of the 'funding floor', as raised by Councillor Bruce, Ms Fortune explained that this mechanism had been agreed between CoSLA and the Scottish Government some years ago, with a review being carried out in 2019 – she was not able to advise on how the Council (through the CoSLA Leaders' Group) had voted on that. She confirmed that she was currently a member of the Distribution Group.

Councillor Hampshire added that the Council had been a beneficiary of the ‘funding floor’ mechanism in the past. He commented that the mechanism itself was not problematic, but that the issue was with the overall funding made available for local government.

Councillor McIntosh asked about teacher/pupil ratios in East Lothian. Lesley Brown, Executive Director for Education and Children’s Services, advised that in 2023/24 East Lothian had c. 10 teachers above the census number, so the Council had met its requirements. However, she added that it would be difficult to quantify the risk for the new financial year due to recruitment issues and vacancies. She assured Members that the situation would be closely monitored but cautioned that the Education Service was required to deliver efficiencies in the same way as other services.

With reference to recent discussions with the First Minister regarding the establishment of a growth fund and changes to the Scottish Futures Trust, Councillor Akhtar asked for an update. Ms Fortune indicated that discussions on these matters were ongoing between Council officers and civil servants, and that civil servants recognised the scale of the challenge facing the Council. She assured Members that officers would continue to engage with civil servants on these matters.

The Provost moved to the roll call vote on Recommendations 2.1-2.4 and 2.6 which were approved unanimously, noting that Recommendation 2.5 would be dealt with in line with Items 2a and 2b of the agenda.

### **Decision**

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the extremely challenging context within which budget proposals for 2024/25 onwards had been developed, and the factors which had contributed to the gap between forecast income levels and expenditure demands;
- ii. to note the content of the 2024/25 local government finance order and the funding implications for East Lothian Council;
- iii. to note the key assumptions and risks within the budget projections, as set out at paragraph 3.40 of the report;
- iv. to approve a 100% council tax premium being applied for second homes from 1 April 2024; and
- v. to approve the indicative timetable for developing budget projections and closing the budget gap for 2025/26 onwards, as set out at paragraph 16.15 of the report.

### **2a. RENT PROPOSALS 2024/25 – 2028/29**

As Cabinet Spokesperson for Housing, Councillor Forrest presented the rent proposals on behalf of the Administration. He stated that the Council was in the midst of a housing crisis and that at a time of need the Scottish Government had reduced the affordable housing budget. He voiced his concern at the high costs of buying and renting privately, noting that the Council and local housing associations were seeing an increase in demand for homes, and the Council was becoming more reliant on temporary accommodation for homeless people. He also spoke of the wider demand for housing in Scotland and the increase in people losing their homes. As regards the Council’s modernisation programme, Councillor Forrest reported that 429 kitchens and 378 bathrooms had been upgraded in the past year, with a further 60 homes receiving bathroom adaptations. He also announced that 539 new

affordable homes had been built, 227 of which were Council houses. Despite this, he pointed out that changes in legislation and a reduction in funding of 26% had put more pressure on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). He called on the Council to prioritise the delivery of affordable housing, noting that homelessness had an impact on services across the Council, as well as on crime and poverty levels. His desire was that Council housing should be open and accessible to everyone who needs it. To meet the demands on the service, he proposed that a 7% rent increase was necessary, and he urged the Scottish Government to provide further support.

The rent proposals were seconded by Councillor Dugdale, who outlined the difficulties faced by some people in securing a home, and the importance of young people having a home with space to learn, play and socialise. She also spoke of the need to adapt homes to allow people to remain within their communities. She believed that the proposed rent increase would enable the Council to invest in new affordable housing, as well as modernising existing homes, and that it demonstrated the Council's commitment to tenants and those who needed a home.

Councillor Akhtar highlighted the challenges facing the Council in providing affordable housing, due to a 26% reduction in funding and the impact of growth in East Lothian. She noted that a number of organisations were calling for this funding to be reinstated.

Councillor Bruce spoke in support of the proposed rent increase as it would protect the Council's new-build and modernisation programmes. He was concerned, however, that the Council may not continue to receive capital funding in the future and that there was a risk that it could breach the financial rules on debt-to-income ratio. He suggested that the Council may need to consider higher borrowing or higher rent increases to deliver new homes in the future. He added that there was an opportunity for more affordable housing to be delivered by developers.

Councillor Trotter remarked that the current situation was a result of short-sighted decisions made in the past.

Councillor Menzies agreed that there was a housing crisis in East Lothian and in Scotland more widely. Pointing out that the Council was currently spending £2.8m per year on emergency homeless accommodation, she claimed that the Administration had chosen to allow developments of large homes, rather than more affordable and accessible homes. She suggested that the Council could set the limit for affordable homes in new developments at a higher level than 25%. Councillor Menzies also noted that Council rents remained the second lowest in Scotland, despite East Lothian being among the most expensive areas in Scotland to live. She was of the view that the Council had a responsibility as a landlord to ensure that houses were maintained at a high standard and that the proposed rent increase was necessary in order to maintain the current housing stock.

Councillor Hampshire countered remarks made by Councillor Menzies by arguing that the Council was an excellent landlord, with some of the best housing stock and lowest rents in Scotland. He spoke of the demand for Council housing in East Lothian, and of changes in legislation that had led to increased pressure on Council housing. He was uncomfortable with having to propose a 7% rent increase during a cost-of-living crisis but felt that it was necessary due to Scottish Government funding cuts.

Agreeing with comments already made, Councillor McIntosh spoke in support of the proposed 7% rent increase, whilst recognising that this would be difficult for some people. She voiced her disappointment that the Scottish Government had reduced funding for affordable housing but hoped that there would be opportunities through the Local Development Plan process for the Council to do things differently to address inequality.

Summing up, Councillor Forrest reminded Members that the 25% affordable housing [within new developments] benchmark had been set by the Scottish Government, and that the Council would have an opportunity to consider this through the new Local Development Plan process. He paid tribute to the staff in the Housing and Property Maintenance Services.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the rent proposals, which were approved unanimously.

### **Decision**

The Council agreed to approve the amendment to the rent proposals, as presented by the Administration, and to increase rent levels by 7% in 2024/25.

### **2b. BUDGET PROPOSALS ON GENERAL SERVICES**

The Provost advised that amendments had been submitted in relation to both the Capital and the General Services Revenue budgets, and he set out how these would be dealt with. He then invited Councillor Hampshire to present the General Services Capital budget proposals on behalf of the Administration.

Councillor Hampshire thanked officers for their support in developing the Administration's budget proposals. He outlined the pressures on the capital budget, which were largely due to increasing costs of equipment and borrowing, and inflation. He reported that the Administration's proposals involved capital expenditure of £364.5m, with borrowing of £116.35m.

Councillor Hampshire then outlined a number of proposed measures included in the proposals, including:

- Investment of £93.5m, plus £31.7m of external funding, in education
- Roads, lighting and assets investment of £56.2m, with an additional £22m of external funding
- £125.5m, with an additional £114m of external funding, to be used to improve open spaces
- The £36m development of the Food and Drink Innovation Hub at Queen Margaret University
- The redevelopment of the former Cockenzie power station site
- Investment in the Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme

Referring to the Conservative Group's amendment, Councillor Hampshire argued that borrowing to invest would attract additional investment via the private sector and others, thereby creating jobs and supporting the economy, but also stressed that additional funding from the Scottish Government was needed.

The proposals were seconded by Councillor McGinn, who expressed his hopes that the Scottish Government Cabinet's visit to East Lothian would yield results and that future funding settlements would reflect the growth in the county. Making reference to a number of major capital projects within East Lothian, he highlighted in particular the proposed investment in the Loch Centre, Tranent, noting that he was delighted that the Administration was committed to the full reopening of this facility.

The Provost then invited Councillor McGuire to present the Conservative Group's amendment to the General Services Capital budget.

Councillor McGuire advised Members that the current level of debt per head of population in East Lothian was £4,106, which put the Council in the top ten for debt in the UK. He believed

that one of the reasons for this was growth, imposed on the Council by the Scottish Government but not fully funded, which meant that the Council had to borrow to build new schools and community facilities. He proposed that the Council should seek to reduce its debt levels by: borrowing £6.8m less over the next five years; removing the Capital Intervention Fund (CIF) from the capital budget; cancelling the proposals for the Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme, and working with the community to seek a better solution; and removing the proposed parking charges scheme. Councillor McGuire's Group proposed additional investment of £5.5m in roads and associated infrastructure over the next five years, to the benefit of all road users and businesses. He calculated that these proposals would result in the Council paying £150,000 less per year in debt charges by Year 5.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Findlay.

Councillor Jardine opened the debate by noting that the current financial situation was less than ideal but that the Council had to ensure that it was able to provide critical infrastructure to maximise the health and wellbeing of communities. She spoke in support of the investment in the Loch Centre, but questioned the proposals set out in the Conservative Group's amendment, particularly in relation to the cancellation of the proposed Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme and parking charges. On that basis, she would support the Administration's proposals.

Councillor Menzies also welcomed the proposed investment in the Loch Centre. As regards the Conservative Group's amendment, she criticised their proposals on borrowing to provide infrastructure, and particularly in relation to parking charges, the implementation of which she believed would be beneficial to high street businesses. She declared that she would support the Administration's proposals.

Councillor Dugdale focused on investment in the school estate, with new schools being built in Blindwells, Craighall and Whitecraig, as well as the extension of several others – a total of £60m of investment in the school estate in the 2024/25. She highlighted the excellent learning environment provided by the new learning campus at Wallyford, stressing the importance of young people having space to learn and thrive. She also welcomed the proposed investment in the Loch Centre, which would provide valuable facilities and improve the health and wellbeing of the community.

Speaking in support of the Administration's capital proposals, Councillor McIntosh commented that she looked forward to keeping this under review through the cross-party working group. She stated that she would be making a strong case for investment in the Brunton Hall. She also called on the Council to be mindful of lifting people out of poverty and inequality whilst working within its means.

With reference to the Conservative Group's amendment, Councillor Akhtar cited examples of successful projects to demonstrate the value added by way of funding from the CIF, with local communities using small amounts of funding to lever in additional external funding for community projects. She pointed out that the Council had an excellent record of working with community organisations and that it was important to continue that positive relationship. She also suggested that Conservative Members should lobby the UK Government to provide funding from the HS2 budget, which could be used to improve East Lothian's roads.

The Provost countered claims made by Councillor McGuire that the Council was 'handing over a blank cheque' for the Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme, advising that the Council would have to approve the final design, that the project would be largely funded by the Scottish Government, and that the Council had to protect that community against the risk of flooding. He paid tribute to the Council's Roads Team for delivering services with reduced levels of funding, noting that the Council had received awards for its electric vehicle charging infrastructure and fleet management. He also made reference to ongoing work within town

centres to make high streets more attractive, noting that the proposed introduction of parking charges would help with parking turnover and higher footfall. He believed that the Administration's proposals took a broader view on investment, results and benefits.

Summing up, Councillor Hampshire asserted that borrowing to grow the economy and create jobs was not a bad thing, and that action had to be taken to prevent further decline. He described the Conservative Group's proposals to remove the Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme from the Capital Plan as 'dangerous', as there was no alternative proposal to prevent the town from flooding, and this would put people and businesses at risk.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the Conservative Group's amendment to the General Services Capital budget proposals:

For (4): Councillors Bruce, Collins, Findlay, McGuire  
Against (17): Councillors Akhtar, Allan, Bennett, Dugdale, Forrest, Gilbert, Hampshire, Jardine, McFarlane, McGinn, McIntosh, McLeod, McMillan, Menzies, Ritchie, Trotter, Yorkston  
Abstentions (0)

The Conservative Group's amendment fell.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the Administration's General Services Capital budget proposals:

For (17): Councillors Akhtar, Allan, Bennett, Dugdale, Forrest, Gilbert, Hampshire, Jardine, McFarlane, McGinn, McIntosh, McLeod, McMillan, Menzies, Ritchie, Trotter, Yorkston  
Against (4): Councillors Bruce, Collins, Findlay, McGuire  
Abstentions (0)

The Administration's proposals were therefore carried.

Moving to General Services Revenue and the budget projections, the Provost invited Councillor Hampshire to present the Administration's proposals:

Councillor Hampshire stated that all 32 Scottish local authority leaders had condemned the local government financial settlement for the coming year, with the CoSLA President arguing that it contravened the Verity House Agreement. For East Lothian, core revenue funding had been reduced by £63m, and that the additional funding to offset the Council Tax freeze would only equate to a 2.8% Council Tax increase. He set out the challenges facing the Council, including the existing £22m budget deficit and the continued growth within the county. He voiced his disappointment that the two main opposition groups had submitted amendments to the proposals, despite the cross-party work which had taken place.

Councillor Hampshire set out the Administration's proposals for reducing the deficit whilst allowing services to be delivered. He acknowledged that this would be difficult and stressed that he would continue to seek additional funding from the Scottish Government. He highlighted the following aspects of the Administration's proposals:

- The removal of bus passes for children who could travel on service buses using their under-22 bus passes
- A reduction in funding of £100,000 for EnjoyLeisure
- A reduction in funding of £200,000 for the Brunton Theatre Trust
- A reduction in funding of £35,000 for Area Partnerships and of £100,000 for community grants



- A reduction in funding of £180,000 this year and £120,00 next year for libraries, and a redesign of library services
- A reduction in funding of £100,000 for museums

Councillor Hampshire pointed out that the amendments proposed by the SNP and Conservative Groups would have seen further reductions in funding for a number of the above services, with the SNP proposing a £355,000 reduction in funding to the Brunton Theatre Trust over three years and a reduction in funding of £250,000 per year for four years for EnjoyLeisure; and the Conservatives proposing to abolish the Area Partnerships, proposals that he believed would have a major impact on communities.

Councillor Hampshire concluded his presentation by declaring that this budget was the most difficult he had ever been involved in, with the pressures of growth, inflation and interest rates having a significant impact on the Council. He claimed that the Scottish Government had failed to recognise the impact of growth and had not funded Scottish councils fairly. He called on the Council to support the Administration's proposals.

The proposals were seconded by Councillor McFarlane, who expressed concern at the Conservative Group's proposals to abolish Area Partnerships. She highlighted the positive work that the Area Partnerships had done in recent years, including attracting external funding for community projects. She also warned against their proposed reductions for community grants, which had funded many community groups and provided facilities across the county.

The Provost invited Councillor Jardine to present the SNP Group's amendment to the General Services Revenue and budget projection proposals.

Moving her amendment, Councillor Jardine advised that the Scottish Government had sought to mitigate austerity measures imposed by the UK Government through initiatives such as the increase in the Scottish Child Payment, free school meals for children up to five years old, expansion of the Education Maintenance Allowance, an increase in school clothing grants, investment in home energy efficiency and the fuel security fund, and the mitigation of the 'bedroom tax'. She set out a number of key proposals included in the SNP Group's amendment:

- A planned reduction in home-to-school transport, whilst retaining the statutory requirement for secondary schools and up to three miles for primary schools
- The move towards a sustainable self-funding model for the Brunton Theatre Trust and EnjoyLeisure
- A reduction in Area Partnership funding, with remaining funding to be distributed according to indicators of deprivation and inequality
- A reduction in community grant funding
- An increase in coastal car parking charges to £5 per day or £75 per year for a season ticket, with the income being reinvested in coastal parking facilities
- The closure of two recycling centres
- A review of adaptation arrangements
- An increase in Council Tax of 8% for 2025/26

She acknowledged that taking these decisions would not be easy but was of the view that the budget had to be aligned to the priorities set out in the Council Plan. She spoke against the Conservative Group's proposals to abolish Area Partnerships, which she believed would impact the areas most affected by austerity measures. She welcomed the cross-party discussions on the budget, noting that her amendment should be considered as collaborative. However, she was of the view that the Administration's proposals would not be sustainable in the longer term, and therefore called on Members to support the SNP Group's amendment.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Menzies, who remarked that she hasn't had prior sight of a number of items within the Administration's proposals and that opposition groups only had a few days to consider the proposals. She claimed that the Council had received more funding from the Scottish Government this year than it did last year, despite the Scottish Government having its funding cut by £10bn. Regarding the SNP Group's amendment, Councillor Menzies defended the proposal to increase coastal car parking charges to £5 per day on the basis that this was similar to the cost of a bus ticket. On the funding of Area Partnerships, she argued that this should be distributed with a focus on poverty and inequality. She stated that she was unable to support the Administration's proposals, and expressed her disappointment that the opportunity for collaborative working 'had been wasted'.

The Provost then invited Councillor McGuire to present the Conservative Group's amendment to the General Services Revenue and budget projection proposals.

Moving his amendment, Councillor McGuire advised that his Group's proposals prioritised protecting front-line services. He highlighted the key aspects of the amendment:

- Protection of library services
- Protection of the instrumental music service
- The retention of community police officers
- Reversing the proposals for parking charges, which would save the Council £6.5m in additional borrowing
- Protection of the roads budget
- Investment of £1.2m for literacy and numeracy initiatives to raise educational attainment
- Reducing the number of Council managers, saving £400,000 over two years, and reviewing pay scales
- Ending subsidies to landlords with empty commercial properties
- Reduce the size of the Planning Service
- Abolish Area Partnerships, and devolving power and funding to Community Councils

Councillor McGuire recognised that the Council was in a difficult position, especially as the Council Tax freeze would not be fully funded. He proposed that any new non-ringfenced funding should be used to support reserves, and that he would be pushing for the Council to get a fairer funding settlement in future years. He urged Members to support the Conservative Group's amendment.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Bruce, who suggested that the Council needs to be able to respond better to increases in fees and charges caused by inflation. On education spending, he hoped that the Learning Estate Strategy would be presented to Council in the near future. As regards the grant settlement, he was of the view that CoSLA had a role to play in the 'funding floor' mechanism, arguing that there was no evidence that CoSLA had advocated for those local authorities experiencing growth. He also called for more information on the benefits created by way of the Transformation Programme. On Area Partnerships, he did not believe that they were operating as intended and proposed that any funding for Area Partnerships must be linked to deprivation.

The Provost then moved to the debate on General Services Revenue.

In response to comments made during the presentations, Councillor Forrest sought confirmation that all information had been available to all groups during the budget-setting process. Sarah Fortune, Executive Director for Council Resources, advised that all of the budget savings lists developed by officers had been shared with all Members. Councillor Jardine claimed that the list of potential service reductions had been discussed to a certain

extent, but the Administration had then stated their intentions as to where savings would be made.

Councillor Findlay focused on his Group's proposals for raising attainment in numeracy and literacy. From the latest attainment information available, he pointed out that 33% of P4 children could not read at the appropriate level and that 28% of children had below-target maths skills. He was concerned that this could have an impact on their entire education and suggested that specialist support staff should be brought in to work with children at the early stages of their education.

Councillor McIntosh noted that local authorities had suffered from years of under-investment, made worse by the Council Tax freeze. She was disappointed that impact assessments had not been carried out on the budget proposals. However, she welcomed the cross-party work on the budget proposals and hoped that this would continue in a constructive way. She declared that she would not be supporting any of the proposals on the revenue budget as she was not in favour of the Council Tax freeze – she would have proposed raising it by 8%, thereby increasing the Council's income by £2.1m and making fewer budget reductions. Councillor McIntosh spoke in support of funding Area Partnerships and community groups as this would allow residents to influence how money was spent in their own areas. She also proposed that the Council should be looking to introduce a visitor levy and a pavement parking ban, which would generate income for the Council. In addition, she would have proposed the use of building warrant fees to decarbonise and insulate buildings.

Councillor McLeod welcomed the opportunity to take part in cross-party discussions on the budget. He advised that he had considered the proposals put forward by all the political groups, and the impact of these proposals on his own ward, and that he had decided that he would support the Administration's proposals.

Councillor Collins voiced her concern about the proposed cuts to police funding, which she believed would lead to an increase in anti-social behaviour, which in turn would have an impact on the Council's Community Safety and Social Work Services. She called on the Administration to reconsider this particular proposal.

Councillor Bennett spoke of the potential economic development opportunities created through the Food and Drink Innovation Hub and the former Cockenzie power station site. He was concerned about the SNP Group's proposed funding reduction for the Brunton Theatre Trust, believing that this would be damaging for arts and culture within East Lothian, as well as for the local economy and tourism. He made reference to the positive work carried out by Area Partnerships and third sector organisations. He assured Members that the Labour Group would do everything it could to protect services and communities.

With reference to a recent CoSLA briefing note, Councillor Yorkston expressed concern that the grant settlement for the Council had not yet been finalised and that it was not known if additional Barnett Consequentials would be passed on to local authorities. He pointed out that as one of the fastest-growing council areas in Scotland, East Lothian received the third lowest allocation of revenue funding, and that if it had been awarded the average allocation, this would equate to additional funding of £24m. In addition, the Council received the lowest level of capital funding per head of population. He therefore called on the Council to receive a fair funding settlement. He voiced his disappointment that the SNP and Conservative Groups had not shared their amendments with the Administration at an earlier stage, and observed that many of the savings proposed in those amendments would be generated through reductions in funding for community facilities and grants.

Councillor McGinn made reference to national events which were now impacting on public finances. As Cabinet Spokesperson for Community Wellbeing, he paid tribute to Council staff, community groups, third sector partners and volunteers for their commitment to their

communities. He welcomed the continued support for Area Partnerships and Community Councils, as well as funding for community groups. He spoke of the importance of maintaining the county's open spaces and countryside sites, noting that the Council had won Beautiful Scotland awards in three successive years. He was committed to the continuation of the 3G pitch replacement and pump track programmes, as well as working together with EnjoyLeisure to provide leisure facilities.

Councillor Forrest commented that he had walked a number of the home-to-school transport routes and was concerned that some of these routes were busy main roads, which children would have to cross, and that some had inadequate lighting. He also expressed concern at the SNP's proposals to cut funding for the Brunton Theatre Trust, which he believed would be devastating for the Arts Service and the local economy.

Councillor Akhtar remarked that East Lothian Council was among the worst-funded councils in Scotland in a number of areas, including social care, roads, community centres and schools, and that it had experienced a reduction of funding of 22% at a time when it was one of the fastest growing areas in Scotland. She felt that the Scottish Government had not acknowledged the situation in East Lothian, and she called for the Council to be funded fairly. She stated that she could not support the Conservative and SNP Groups' amendments, as she was not in favour of the proposed cuts in funding to Area Partnerships, EnjoyLeisure and home-to-school transport.

Councillor Dugdale reiterated previous comments regarding fairer funding for East Lothian and was critical of the Council Tax freeze, taking the view that it should be for councils to set their own tax rate. She referenced the lasting impact of COVID-19 on young people, noting that referrals to the Children's Social Work Service had increased by more than 35% in five years. She also spoke of the efforts to raise attainment and ensure that young people were on the appropriate educational pathways. She thanked staff in Education and Children's Services for their vision and innovative work at a time of increasing demand on services. Councillor Dugdale was unable to support the Conservative and SNP amendments, commenting that the Labour Group had a proud record of delivering services and supporting communities.

Councillor Ritchie asserted that both the UK and Scottish Governments needed to provide additional funding for public services, noting that whilst the Scottish Government's budget had increased, the share for local government had fallen. She was in favour of empowering local communities through the Area Partnerships, and she believed that the amendments submitted by the other political groups would decimate local services.

The Provost welcomed the cross-party working on the budget and highlighted the difficulties in setting a budget when the grant settlement had not been finalised. He expressed particular surprise at the Conservative Group's proposal to reduce the Planning Service given the importance of that service. He viewed the Administration's proposals as pragmatic and that they would enable services to be transformed to deliver value for money.

Summing up, Councillor Hampshire declared that he had been fully committed to the cross-party approach to setting the budget, noting that he would have considered ideas put forward by other groups. However, he was not in agreement with the SNP proposals to increase coastal car parking charges or to close two recycling centres, and he was concerned about their proposals for EnjoyLeisure, which he believed would impact on poorer people. Councillor Hampshire was also critical of the Conservatives' amendment, particularly the funding of police to tackle anti-social behaviour, which he felt would be better tackled by providing activities for young people, as well as the proposed cuts to the Planning Service at a time when the new Local Development Plan was being progressed. In response to Councillor McIntosh, he stated that government support would be essential to delivering projects to tackle climate change.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the amendment to the General Services Revenue budget proposals and budget projections, as submitted by the Conservative Group:

For (4): Councillors Bruce, Collins, Findlay, McGuire  
Against (17): Councillors Akhtar, Allan, Bennett, Dugdale, Forrest, Gilbert, Hampshire, Jardine, McFarlane, McGinn, McIntosh, McLeod, McMillan, Menzies, Ritchie, Trotter, Yorkston  
Abstentions (0)

The Conservative Group's amendment fell.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the amendment to the General Services Revenue budget proposals and budget projections, as submitted by the SNP Group:

For (5): Councillors Allan, Gilbert, Jardine, Menzies, Trotter  
Against (16): Councillors Akhtar, Bennett, Bruce, Collins, Dugdale, Findlay, Forrest, Hampshire, McFarlane, McGinn, McGuire, McIntosh, McLeod, McMillan, Ritchie, Yorkston  
Abstentions (0)

The SNP Group's amendment fell.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the General Services Capital, General Services Revenue budget proposals and budget projections, as presented by the Administration:

For (11): Councillors Akhtar, Bennett, Dugdale, Forrest, Hampshire, McFarlane, McGinn, McLeod, McMillan, Ritchie, Yorkston  
Against (10): Councillors Allan, Bruce, Collins, Findlay, Gilbert, Jardine, McGuire, McIntosh, Menzies, Trotter  
Abstentions (0)

The Administration's proposals were therefore carried.

The Provost announced that in approving the budget proposals, as presented by the Administration, the Council was agreeing to freeze Council Tax levels in 2024/25, with a Band D level of £1,435.62, and with indicative increases of 10% for the year 2025/26 and 5% for each subsequent year up to 2028/29.

### **Decision**

The Council agreed to approve the budget proposals as presented by the Administration and to freeze Council Tax for 2024/25 (Band D level of £1,435.62).

**Sederunt:** Councillors Gilbert and Menzies left the meeting.

### **3. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2024/25 – 2028/29**

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources seeking approval of the Treasury Management and Investment Strategies for 2024/25 to 2028/29.

The Service Manager – Corporate Accounting, Ann-Marie Glancy, presented the report, reminding Members of the purpose of the Treasury Management Strategy and the need for the Council to approve the Strategy in advance of each new financial year. She advised that

the full Strategy had been lodged in the Members' Library (Ref: 21/24, February 2024 Bulletin). She drew attention to the key aspects of the report, as set out in Sections 3.6-3.22, noting that a mid-year report on treasury management would be submitted to the Audit & Governance Committee.

Councillor Hampshire sought confirmation that the Council could afford the borrowing as proposed in the budget proposals, which had just been approved by the Council. Ms Glancy confirmed this to be the case and that due diligence had been undertaken to ensure that the proposals met the prudential indicators set by the Council.

Councillor McIntosh asked about consideration given to ethical investments. As regards Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) investments, Ms Glancy explained that the Council relied on its treasury advisers to provide high credit-rated deposits. Her team participated in webinars so they were kept up-to-date with potential ethical investments, and they also considered ethical investments with Investec during discussions on Common Good and Trust funds. She assured Councillor McIntosh that ESG investments had a very good rating as regards ethical investments, but because there was no set standard currently, the Council could only follow the advice given. Such standards would need to be set by the markets, but they had not yet been developed. She confirmed that the Council did not seek investments which were not ethical. She undertook to provide Members with further information on this matter.

On the Council's level of debt, Councillor Akhtar asked how much of this was down to population growth. Ms Glancy reported that a lot of the debt was based on decisions taken over many years, and that the borrowing was based on the capital programme alone. The ratio calculations were based on Band D equivalent and HRA homes, rather than population numbers. She undertook to provide Members with further information on this.

Councillor Hampshire asked about the borrowing period for the building of new homes, and questioned if this could be extended. Ms Glancy explained that the timescale set for new Council dwellings was currently 60 years, in accordance with legislation, and that she would not be comfortable lengthening this borrowing period. She added that the Council's borrowing was based on need, and not for specific projects.

Responding to a question from Councillor Jardine on how the Council's Treasury Management Strategy was aligned with UK and Scottish Government strategies, Ms Glancy assured her that the Council's Strategy sat within parameters set by CIPFA and professional frameworks. She suggested that a Members' briefing could be arranged to explain treasury management in more detail. Sarah Fortune, Executive Director for Council Resources, added that in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice, the Council had to ensure that the Council's treasury management arrangements were prudent, sustainable and affordable in the long term.

The Provost asked how officers kept up to date on treasury management and the markets. Ms Glancy indicated that she had a strong team of officers who were required to undertake regular continuous professional development and that they were in close contact with treasury advisers and Investec to ensure that decisions made were in the best interests of the Council. Ms Fortune undertook to arrange a briefing for Members to provide more detail on this complex area of work.

The Provost moved to the roll call vote on the recommendations:

For (18):	Councillors Akhtar, Allan, Bennett, Bruce, Collins, Dugdale, Findlay, Forrest, Hampshire, Jardine, McFarlane, McGuire, McGinn, McLeod, McMillan, Ritchie, Trotter, Yorkston
Against (1):	Councillor McIntosh

Abstentions (0)

**Decision**

The Council agreed:

- i. to approve the Treasury Management Strategy, referenced within Sections 3.5 to 3.19 of the report;
- ii. to approve the Investment Strategy, referenced within Sections 3.20 to 3.22 of the report;
- iii. to approve the repayment of loans fund advances using the methodology detailed in Section 3.7 of the report;
- iv. to approve the operational boundaries for external debt, as detailed in Section 3.15 of the report;
- v. to approve the authorised limits for external debt, as detailed in Section 3.16 of the report;
- vi. to approve the delegation of authority to the Chief Finance Officer in conjunction with the Head of Finance to effect movement between external borrowing and other long-term liabilities, as detailed in Section 3.18 of the report; and
- vii. to note the detailed Treasury Management Strategy Statement, available in the Members' Library (Ref: 21/24, February 2024 Bulletin).

Signed .....

Provost John McMillan  
Convener of the Council







**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL**

**TUESDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2024  
VIA DIGITAL MEETING FACILITY**

**1b**

**Committee Members Present:**

Provost J McMillan (Convener)  
Councillor S Akhtar  
Councillor E Allan  
Councillor R Bennett  
Councillor C Cassini  
Councillor D Collins  
Councillor F Dugdale  
Councillor J Findlay  
Councillor A Forrest  
Councillor N Gilbert

Councillor N Hampshire  
Councillor C McFarlane  
Councillor C McGinn  
Councillor G McGuire  
Councillor S McIntosh  
Councillor K McLeod  
Councillor L-A Menzies  
Councillor B Ritchie  
Councillor C Yorkston

**Council Officials Present:**

Ms M Patterson, Chief Executive  
Ms L Brown, Executive Director for Education and Children's Services  
Ms S Fortune, Executive Director for Council Resources  
Ms L Byrne, Head of Children's Services  
Ms E Dunnet, Head of Finance  
Ms M Ferguson, Head of Corporate Support  
Ms N McDowell, Head of Education  
Ms W McGuire, Head of Housing  
Mr T Reid, Head of Infrastructure  
Ms S Saunders, Head of Communities  
Mr S Cooper, Team Manager – Communications  
Ms R Crichton, Committees Officer  
Mr K Dingwall, Service Manager – Planning  
Mr P Forsyth, Project Manager – Growth and Sustainability  
Ms A-M Glancy, Service Manager – Corporate Accounting  
Mr C Grilli, Service Manager – Governance  
Ms M Scott, Committees Officer  
Mr P Vestri, Service Manager – Policy, Improvement and Partnerships

**Visitors Present:**

None

**Clerk:**

Mrs L Gillingwater

**Apologies:**

Councillor L Bruce  
Councillor L Jardine  
Councillor T Trotter

**Declarations of Interest:**

None

The Provost advised that the meeting was being held remotely, as provided for in legislation; that the meeting would be recorded and live streamed; and that it would be made available via the Council's website as a webcast, in order to allow public access to the democratic process in East Lothian. He noted that the Council was the data controller under the Data Protection Act 2018; that data collected as part of the recording would be retained in accordance with the Council's policy on record retention; and that the webcast of the meeting would be publicly available for up to six months from the date of the meeting.

The clerk recorded attendance by roll call.

**1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL**

The minutes of the following meeting were approved, subject to the changes set out below:

a. East Lothian Council, 12 December 2023

p. 3, para. 5: delete wording 'Ellie to provide letter to Members'

p. 4, para. 1: delete wording 'which could provide additional funding for education and health and social care'

p. 6, para. 4: replace penultimate sentence with 'She argued that local authorities throughout Scotland, not just East Lothian, were experiencing financial challenges, noting that the funding issues stemmed from austerity and the Scottish Government not being properly funded.'

b. Special East Lothian Council, 23 January 2024

**2. EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL'S 2023 'STATE OF THE COUNCIL' AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing the Council with the 2023 'State of the Council' and Annual Performance Report, and seeking approval for new Council Plan priorities and to sign up to the East Lothian Community Wealth Building Charter.

Paolo Vestri, Service Manager for Policy, Improvement and Partnerships, presented the report. He highlighted the key aspects, including the proposed re-prioritisation of Council Plan objectives, the review of the Council Plan Action Plan, and the introduction of Community Wealth Building (CWB). He also drew attention to the Annual Performance Report, attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

In response to questions from Councillor McIntosh, Mr Vestri explained that it was appropriate to include CWB within this report because it was one of the actions contained within the Council Plan Action Plan and it would also fit with the Council's new priorities. On tackling climate change, Mr Vestri assured her that this remained a priority and that all services had to take climate change into account when developing service plans. He added that the Climate Change Strategy would be reviewed within the next year, which would give the Council an opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to tackling climate change. As regards collaboration between Members and officers, Mr Vestri used the example of the cross-party working groups on the budget and climate change/sustainability as collaborative working, and that he would be engaging with Members in the coming months as regards updating the Council Plan.

Councillor Forrest asked if partners and other organisations were engaging with the Council on CWB. Mr Vestri advised that NHS Lothian had committed to being an Anchor Institution and to work with the Council to develop a charter and action plan; City Region Deal partners were also committed to CWB, as were a number of smaller businesses in the community. He hoped that Edinburgh College and Queen Margaret University would also join the working group to take this forward. The Provost referred to a recent meeting of the Connected Communities Group, attended by a number of partner organisations and businesses, and that the feedback on the meeting had been very positive. On community engagement more generally, Mr Vestri reported that through meetings and the recent Residents' Survey, there was general support for the Council's vision; he undertook to continue working with communities and the third sector to get support for the Council's vision and objectives.

Councillor McLeod asked about the Council's ability to maximise external funding. Sarah Fortune, Executive Director for Council Resources, advised that maximising income was included within the Financial Strategy, and that officers would always make every effort to secure additional funding in order to delivery on priorities. She made reference to the Council's successful bid for Levelling Up funding, as an example. The Provost added that the Council would work with Area Partnerships to secure additional external funding.

Councillor Dugdale expressed concern about the increase in child poverty rates, noting that the latest data was from 2021/22. Mr Vestri informed Members that officers were currently working on a new poverty profile, which would provide the most up-to-date information available. He advised that child poverty was a national indicator and that the next report would be published in June. He anticipated that there may be an increase in child poverty figures due to the cost-of-living crisis, increased inflation and austerity. However, this increase may be partly offset by falling unemployment levels, the increased Child Payment and other measures put in place to mitigate against poverty. He undertook to provide further information to Members once it was available.

Responding to a question from Councillor Akhtar on early intervention and prevention measures, Mr Vestri stated that this was a key component in tackling poverty and inequality, as set out in the 2022/23 Poverty Plan, and that ensuring people had access to advice and were able to secure better jobs were important aspects of this.

Councillor McGinn asked how information was gathered as regards volunteering within communities. Mr Vestri was unable to advise on the number of volunteering hours undertaken, as the data only included Community Councils, Area Partnerships and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. However, he noted that Volunteer Centre East Lothian (VCEL) collected data on volunteering through the third sector, and that he would consider how this information could be provided to Members.

Opening the debate, Councillor Hampshire stressed the importance of updating the Council Plan in light of the financial challenges facing the Council and the increasing pressure on services. On housing, he noted that although the Council was providing additional homes, it could not meet the demand. He also spoke of the need to support people who were struggling financially and to grow the economy and create jobs, and he touched on other priorities, including raising education attainment and tackling climate change, which would be difficult to achieve and would require new ways of working.

Councillor Menzies welcomed the updating of Council priorities, with a focus on the wellbeing of residents and sustainability of businesses and services, as well as helping the most vulnerable people in the community.

The Provost spoke of the positive relationship between Members and officers. He also believed that tackling climate change should feature in everything the Council does.

Councillor McGinn paid tribute to volunteers, and to those who participated in the work of the Area Partnerships, Community Councils and Community and Police Partnerships (CAPPs). He stressed the Council's commitment to supporting volunteers and enabling funding for community groups.

Councillor McIntosh indicated that she had considered abstaining from the vote on this item, but as a result of Mr Vestri's contributions and the discussion she was now minded to vote in favour of the recommendations. She believed that the Council should be more ambitious on diverting funding away from areas that were damaging to the environment, and she was encouraged to hear support for climate change being the 'golden thread' that would run through the Council's work.

Councillor Dugdale welcomed the improvements in closing the poverty-related attainment gap and the increasing participation rates for 16-19-year-olds.

On partnership working, Councillor Akhtar looked forward to seeing more information from Anchor Institutions on their outcomes, in particular how NHS Lothian would support East Lothian, and on how CWB benefits would be measured.

Councillor Yorkston voiced his concern about the impact that continued population growth would have on the Council when funding was not keeping pace with that growth. He welcomed the recent visit by the Scottish Government Cabinet and hoped that they would consider establishing a growth fund.

The Provost moved to the roll call vote on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

## **Decision**

The Council agreed:

- i. to approve the 2023 'State of the Council' and Annual Performance Report (attached as Appendix 1 to the report);
- ii. to approve the proposal to re-prioritise the Council Plan (as set out in paragraphs 3.10-3.14 of the report);
- iii. to note that a further report recommending a new Council Plan Action Plan based on the new priorities and Council budget would be presented to the Council meeting in June 2023; and
- iv. to agree that the Council should sign up to, and adopt, the Community Wealth Building Charter (attached as Appendix 2 to the report).

## **3. 2024 COUNCIL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive presenting the 2024 Council Improvement Plan for approval by the Council.

Paolo Vestri, Service Manager for Policy, Improvement and Partnerships, presented the report, highlighting the progress made on the previous Council Improvement Plan and drawing attention to the actions included in the 2024 Plan. Mr Vestri also advised of a new self-evaluation framework (Public Service Improvement Framework – PSIF), recently piloted by the Council Management Team, which had resulted in seventeen recommended actions, ten of which had already been completed and five of which were due to complete by June 2024.

Councillor Akhtar requested an update on the review of Trust Funds. Ellie Dunnet, Head of Finance, reported that some progress had been made and a report would be presented to Council in June on this matter. She pointed out that this review had not been prioritised due to competing priorities.

Councillor McLeod asked if PSIF was considered a better self-evaluation tool than the previous model. Mr Vestri indicated that PSIF had now been adopted by most local authorities in Scotland, and that it was supported by the Improvement Service. Following the pilot with the CMT, it would now be rolled out across all services over the next few years.

Councillor McIntosh observed that there was no specific mention of climate change in the Improvement Plan. Mr Vestri explained that the Plan was based on governance, leadership and accountability and looked at the Council's processes and procedures rather than policies. Therefore, climate change would be covered by the 'State of the Council' and performance reports.

On PSIF, the Provost asked if this was the only self-evaluation tool being used by the Council, and asked if Members could be provided with further information on it. Mr Vestri informed him that PSIF was based on the EFQM framework and was also part of the continuous improvement framework. In addition to PSIF, the Council was also subject to evaluation by way of a series of key performance indicators, the Annual Audit Report, the 'State of the Council' report, and various inspectorate reports.

Councillor Menzies welcomed the report and spoke of the importance of self-evaluation in order to improve performance. She also welcomed the opportunity to be involved in the process in order to ensure that the Council had robust governance procedures.

Councillor Forrest thanked Ms Dunnet for her work on ensuring that people could access the Dr Bruce Fund.

Councillor Hampshire suggested that 'Council and Community Improvement Plan' would be a better title for this Plan as the Council required community engagement in order to achieve change. He noted that the Council would have to change how it works, but he was confident that this change could be delivered.

Although she did not disagree with the actions in the plan, or the explanation provided by Mr Vestri, Councillor McIntosh stated that she could not support a corporate strategy document that did not have climate change embedded in it, as this was, in her view, the biggest risk facing the Council. In response to these comments, Councillor Hampshire proposed that an additional action should be included in the Improvement Plan regarding how the Council was tackling climate change. Councillor McIntosh welcomed this proposal and suggested that the wording of this additional action could be discussed at the next meeting of the Climate Change and Sustainability Working Group. As Convener of the Audit & Governance Committee, Councillor Menzies offered to discuss this further with Councillor McIntosh and officers with a view to including climate change within audit and governance procedures.

Councillor Hampshire then moved an amendment to the recommendations, seconded by Councillor McIntosh, to the effect that 'under the leadership of the Council Leader and with [support from the] membership from other parties, the Council will consider the inclusion of a proposal on climate challenge and change in the Council Improvement Plan'.

The Provost moved to the roll call vote on the amendment, as proposed by Councillor Hampshire and seconded by Councillor McIntosh which was approved unanimously.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the recommendations, as amended, which was approved unanimously.

## Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. that, under the leadership of the Council Leader and with [support from the] membership of other parties, it would consider the inclusion of a proposal on climate challenge and change in the Council Improvement Plan; and
- ii. to approve the 2024 Council Improvement Plan (attached as Appendix 1 to the report), as amended to reflect the inclusion of an action on tackling climate change, as set out in (i) above.

### **4. UPDATE REPORT ON THE PARKING MANAGEMENT TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER FOR NORTH BERWICK**

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Place updating the Council on the status of the North Berwick Parking Management Traffic Regulation Order, and recommending next steps and a proposal to accelerate the programme for delivery.

The Provost advised that an amendment to the report recommendations had been submitted by Councillors Findlay and Collins, which had been circulated to Members.

The Project Manager – Growth and Sustainability, Peter Forsyth, presented the report. He set out the aims of the proposals, namely, to reduce inappropriate and indiscriminate parking, incentivise the use of more sustainable transport methods, and reduce safety concerns. He made reference to the high number of responses to the Order, which covered a variety of issues, and suggested that some people may have misinterpreted the proposals. He proposed that the current Order be withdrawn and that work on a new Order be commenced.

Responding to a number of questions from Councillor Findlay, Mr Forsyth believed that businesses would benefit from the proposals as there would be a more frequent turnover of parking spaces on the High Street, and he expected that visitors would use the car parks if they were staying in the town for a longer period. He added that the proposals would encourage people to walk or cycle rather than take their car into the town centre. He also noted that the first 45 minutes of parking on the High Street would remain free of charge. Sarah Fortune, Executive Director for Council Resources, advised that income targets had been included in the Council budget, approved on 20 February 2024, a proportion of which was expected to come from car parking charges – in the event that these income targets could not be achieved, it would be reported to Council. She confirmed that the budget approved by Council had been competent, adding that that officers were now looking at ways to deliver the £500,000 income target.

Councillor Collins asked how much had been spent on this project to date. Mr Forsyth indicated that c. £136,000 had been spent to date, but that he couldn't advise on the total cost as the procurement process had not yet been completed. He anticipated that income in the region of £1m per annum could be achieved.

In response to questions from Councillor McIntosh, Mr Forsyth explained that, according to Transport Scotland, 5km was deemed to be a local journey, and that 51% of vehicles were currently making very short journeys. On the concerns of business owners, Mr Forsyth advised that a comparison had been drawn with the introduction of parking charges in Berwick-upon-Tweed; however, he pointed out that there were a number of underlying factors that had impacted businesses in that town, such as it being an area of deprivation and having experienced a reduced economy. In seeking to address the concerns raised, he proposed that the Order should be divided into its component parts and this would allow for officers to respond to each part individually.

Councillor Hampshire asked if there was a point when North Berwick town centre would become unsafe. Mr Forsyth explained that officers were trying to manage the situation so that there would be greater access to spaces and that the supply would meet the demand. With continued growth in East Lothian, he believed that without action, the town centre parking situation would become unmanageable within a few years.

Mr Forsyth noted that the data provided by Transport Scotland was four years old and had been determined by way of survey work and then applied across Scotland – he offered to get further information on this data for Members, once it was available. On the matter of ‘misinterpreting the proposals’, he advised that there had been some miscommunication on some issues, such as the proposals for motorhome parking, and he hoped that by separating the proposals into various parts, this would make the proposals clearer.

The Provost invited Councillor Findlay to present his amendment, which sought to replace the report recommendations as follows:

[Council is recommended to:]

1. note the responses received to the original Traffic Regulation Order and objections made, and, in light of the public’s clear opposition to the key themes of introducing park charges and controlled parking zones, withdraw the current Order.
2. note the high level of responses and objections to the Council opposing the introduction of parking charges in North Berwick to the consultation on the Traffic Regulation Order with 659 recorded responses and a petition of over 4,000 signatures on parking charges, and note the significant opposition from the North Berwick Business Association.
3. note the objections to the proposed Residents Parking Permits and zoned parking restrictions in the town centre from local town centre residents, as residents believe these would seriously impact the ability of residents, especially the elderly, to park near to their homes.
4. note that in paragraph 4.8 of this report the ELC Local Parking Strategy states: “Medium and long-stay parking will be accommodated in off-street car parks, but these are more likely to be at the edge of the town centre”; however, in North Berwick, apart from the limited facilities at existing town centre car parks, these options do not readily exist.
5. decide not to proceed with parking charges in any East Lothian towns and decide that £500k from the Transformation Fund should be reallocated to protect and sustain frontline services in East Lothian.

Councillor Findlay asserted that the view of North Berwick residents was that no new TRO should be promoted, noting that 659 responses had been received to the Order, with a further 4,000 people signing a petition against the Order. He believed that it would be a waste of money and officer time to proceed. He also noted that the work at the east end of the High Street would address safety issues, and that, other than the loss of parking spaces, businesses were generally supportive of this work being carried out. He suggested that the promotion of this TRO was seen as a way for the Council to generate income, and North Berwick High Street businesses believed it would damage trade. He added that residents were also opposed to the Order because it would restrict their ability to park near their homes, and older people and women would feel less safe walking to their homes at night; residents outwith the control zones believed that visitors would park outside their homes, thus restricting their ability to park. He claimed that the Order would not have a positive impact on the environment, and he anticipated that the revised Order would generate a similar number of responses. In moving his amendment, Councillor Findlay called on the Council to use the money allocated for this project to fund early years’ education and to tackle anti-social behaviour.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Collins. She argued that, contrary to comments from Mr Forsyth, the residents of North Berwick had fully understood the proposals. She was concerned about the costs of implementing the scheme, claiming that it would take a long time to recoup what had already been spent and that this money could be better spent on other services. She also noted that it had taken businesses in the town two years to recover from the effects of COVID-19 on their trade, and that it would be unwise to roll out parking charges to other towns where high streets were also suffering; shoppers would choose to go to out-of-town retail parks where they could park for free. Councillor Collins believed that parking charges would have a detrimental impact on high street businesses and people who used their cars to go shopping and socialise in town centres.

In relation to point (5) of the amendment, Councillor Menzies asked if the £500k of Transformation funding could be reallocated to support frontline services if not used for this project. Sarah Fortune, Executive Director of Council Resources, advised that this funding was intended to support one-off transformation projects and was non-recurring.

As a resident of North Berwick town centre, Councillor McFarlane stressed that there was a parking problem in the town, and that the proposed measures would make the town centre safer, especially for children, older people and those with disabilities.

Councillor Hampshire spoke in favour of the proposals. With the ongoing significant growth across East Lothian, he claimed that it was becoming more difficult to access town centres, and that there were safety issues associated with this that the Council was obliged to address. He also believed that visitors would choose not to come to the towns if they could not get parked. In addition, he argued that residents of North Berwick were experiencing difficulties in getting parked close to their homes. He stated that town centres had not been designed to cope with this increased level of traffic and that without action being taken, the town centres would be destroyed.

Councillor Menzies remarked that she believed that not all members of the Conservative Group were in agreement with the amendment, but that they had to support it due to their party's national policy decisions. She believed that the proposals would provide sufficient parking spaces whilst discouraging the use of cars for short journeys, which would help tackle climate change. She accepted that parking charges would not be popular, but that they would stop all-day parking in town centres and provide better access. She spoke of the particular situation in Tranent, where people parked in the town centre and then took the bus to Edinburgh, which was having an impact on people trying to access the high street.

Councillor McIntosh argued that there was no evidence to suggest that the introduction of parking charges would have a negative impact on high street businesses, and that 25 Scottish local authorities had already introduced parking charges. She asserted that a reduction in vehicular traffic would benefit people's health and wellbeing, as well as reducing accidents and crime. She also argued that the provision of land for free parking equated to providing a subsidy to the most damaging form of transport – the car. She urged people to use active transport or public transport wherever possible. In response to comments made by Councillor Collins regarding out-of-town retail developments, she noted that Councillor Collins had recently approved a planning application for such a development in Dunbar. She also suggested that the next Local Development Plan should take account of public transport routes. She was not supportive of the amendment.

Councillor Forrest argued that parking management within town centres was necessary in order to stop indiscriminate parking and people using town centres as park and ride facilities. He urged the Council to work with local businesses to reinvigorate high streets.

On the points made about tackling climate change, Councillor McGuire argued that by providing a greater turnover of spaces this would encourage more cars into the towns and would, in turn, have an adverse impact on climate change.



Councillor McGinn noted that the issues with parking across the county were varied and each town would have to be looked at individually. He acknowledged that parking management measures would not be popular with everyone but that this issue required to be addressed in order for high streets to thrive.

The Provost moved to the roll call vote on the amendment as proposed by Councillor Findlay and seconded by Councillor Collins:

For (3): Councillors Collins, Findlay and McGuire  
Against (16): Councillors Akhtar, Allan, Bennett, Cassini, Dugdale, Forrest, Gilbert, Hampshire, McFarlane, McGinn, McIntosh, McLeod, McMillan, Menzies, Ritchie, Yorkston  
Abstentions (0):

The amendment therefore fell.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the report recommendations:

For (16): Councillors Akhtar, Allan, Bennett, Cassini, Dugdale, Forrest, Gilbert, Hampshire, McFarlane, McGinn, McIntosh, McLeod, McMillan, Menzies, Ritchie, Yorkston  
Against (3): Councillors Collins, Findlay and McGuire  
Abstentions (0):

## **Decision**

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the responses received to the original Traffic Regulation Order and objections made, and, in light of the misinterpretation of key themes by the public, withdraw the current Order;
- ii. to approve the commencement of work to promote new Traffic Regulation Orders, to simplify the proposals and to take cognisance of the objections made to further modify the proposed scheme; and
- iii. to note the intention to accelerate the parking management review, consult on the five remaining towns concurrently, and draft and publish Orders introducing parking restrictions in due course.

**Sederunt:** Councillors Gilbert and McLeod left the meeting.

## **5. APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER**

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources seeking formal approval of the appointment of Lindsey Byrne as the Council's Chief Social Work Officer.

The Head of Corporate Support, Morag Ferguson, presented the report, advising of the requirement for the Council to formally appoint Ms Byrne to the statutory post of Chief Social Work Officer. Ms Ferguson reminded Members that Ms Byrne had been appointed to the post of Head of Children's Services in May 2023 and had been acting as Chief Social Work Officer since then. Ms Ferguson also advised Members of the recent appointments of Caroline Rodgers as Acting Head of Communities, and Ray Montgomery as Acting Head of Development, noting that the Chief Executive had made these appointments under her delegated powers.

The Provost congratulated Ms Byrne, Ms Rodgers and Mr Montgomery on their appointments. He also paid tribute to Sharon Saunders, who would be retiring as Head of Communities in April, noting that there would be an opportunity at a later date to thank her for her contribution to the Council.

Councillor Menzies made reference to positive changes that Ms Byrne had already implemented within social work services.

Echoing these comments, Councillor Dugdale commented on the breadth and depth of the role of Chief Social Work Officer, and she had no doubt that Ms Byrne would ensure that the highest standards of social work practices were met.

Councillor Ahktar also welcomed Ms Byrne's appointment, noting that she was sure that Ms Byrne would succeed in delivering services in this complex and challenging area for both the Council and the Integration Joint Board.

The Provost moved to the roll call vote on the recommendation, which was approved unanimously.

### **Decision**

The Council agreed to approve the appointment of Lindsey Byrne to the statutory post of Chief Social Work Officer.

## **6. AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS**

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources seeking approval to Standing Orders to require that proposed consultation responses in respect of applications made under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 are reported to the Council's Committee Expedited List, thereby giving Members the opportunity to call proposed responses off the List, for a decision of Planning Committee; to give the Head of Development further powers in relation to the variation, modification and discharging of planning obligations; and to amend the powers relating to Section 193 (signing powers for notices and orders) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

The Head of Corporate Support, Morag Ferguson, presented the report, advising of the proposal to make two changes to the Standing Orders (Scheme of Delegation) relating to planning matters, and a further change concerning the signing power of officers in order to provide greater flexibility, when required.

On the planning-related changes, Keith Dingwall, Service Manager – Planning, advised that the first was concerned with consultation responses to energy-related development. He provided an explanation of the current arrangements before explaining the proposed change (as set out in Section 3.7 of the report). He also set out proposed changes to planning obligations, outlined in Sections 3.9-3.11 of the report, which would result in greater flexibility and efficiency.

Councillor Hampshire spoke in support of the proposed changes to the planning process. He asked if current applications for energy storage would be considered in accordance with the proposed new procedures. Mr Dingwall confirmed the proposed changes to applications made under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 would come into effect on the date of this meeting. He added that the proposed change set out at Section 3.9 of the report (concerning decisions in relation to the variation, modification or discharge of planning obligations) would come into effect on 1 April 2024.

Councillor McIntosh welcomed the opportunity for the Planning Committee to consider responses to consultations regarding energy storage. As regards interest from the public in energy storage applications, Mr Dingwall explained that residents could write to the Energy Consents Unit directly, or alternatively write to Members or the Planning Authority, who would take account of the views and information submitted before determining the matter.

The Provost moved to the roll call vote on the recommendation, which was approved unanimously.

## **Decision**

The Council agreed to approve the proposed new processes and associated changes to the Scheme of Delegation (as set out in paragraphs 3.7, 3.9 and 3.19 of the report).

## **7. NOTICE OF MOTION: CALLING FOR A CEASEFIRE IN GAZA AND FOR THE UK GOVERNMENT TO REINSTATE UNRWA FUNDING**

A motion was submitted by Councillors McIntosh and Menzies:

East Lothian Council notes the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza, with 28,000 civilians dead and 2 million people now at risk of starvation as a result of Israeli military action. More than half of the population of Gaza is aged under 18.  
East Lothian Council:

- Condemns the Hamas attack of October 7<sup>th</sup> and calls for the immediate release of all hostages;
- Equally, condemns the indiscriminate bombardment of Gaza by the Israeli Defence Force;
- Stands in solidarity with all victims of this violence and urges an immediate ceasefire to avoid further suffering.

Council notes that the UK is among several major donors to the UNRWA who have unilaterally suspended funding to this agency because of unverified reports that a small number of their staff may have been involved in the Hamas attack. This Council notes that 152 UNRWA staff have been killed while working in Gaza since October 7<sup>th</sup> 2023, and that a recent statement from 28 aid agencies warns that the withdrawal of funding for UNRWA threatens a complete collapse of the already restricted humanitarian response in Gaza.

Council further notes that the interim verdict of the International Court for Justice in the case brought by South Africa against Israel, places six binding actions on Israel, including to do all it can to prevent genocide, refraining from harming or killing Palestinians, urgently getting basic aid to Gaza, and to punish any incitement to genocide.

This Council condemns genocide and considers that the Court ruling places obligations on UK institutions, including government at all levels, to ensure they are avoiding any action which may directly or indirectly support genocide.

Accordingly, Council:

- asks the Leader of the Council to write to the First Minister, asking him to do everything within devolved powers to stop the supply of weapons and components from Scotland to Israel (and its allies); and to ask the FM for an update on the progress of the commitment he made during First Minister's Questions on November 16<sup>th</sup>, when he undertook to examine what more could

- be done to exclude companies who profit from the illegal occupation of the West Bank from public procurement contracts in Scotland
- also asks the Leader of the Council to write to the Foreign Secretary, welcoming his recent indication that he is considering recognising Palestine as a state, but also urging him to immediately reinstate the UK's funding for UNRWA and to join the list of nations supporting South Africa's case against Israel in the International Court of Justice.

Making reference to an amendment submitted by Councillors McMillan and Forrest, Councillor McIntosh welcomed the collaborative approach to this issue, and was supportive of the amendment; however, she wished to put forward the points included in her motion. She recognised that the Council could do little to change the current situation in Gaza, but she felt it important that the Council should use its voice to reflect the views of constituents. She pointed out that almost 30,000 people had now been killed in the conflict, 70% of whom were women and children. She accepted that the events of 7 October 2023 should constitute a war crime, but believed there was no justification for the subsequent action taken, that it amounted to an 'attempted eradication of a people', and was therefore not acceptable. She argued that the current situation was a political choice, enabled by other countries. She also warned of the prospect of Palestinians starving, partly due to a shortage of UN funding. She called on the Council to review its procurement arrangements to ensure that it was not using companies who are funding the arms trade. On the proposal within the amendment to call for a ceasefire, she stressed that a distinction must be made between Hamas and the Palestinian people.

Seconding the motion, and also speaking in support of the amendment, Councillor Menzies welcomed the collaboration on this matter with other Members. She noted that the problems in Israel/Palestine pre-dated 1948, and that Palestinians should not be held responsible for the actions of Hamas, a recognised terrorist organisation, nor should Benjamin Netanyahu be seen to represent all Israelis. She spoke of the horror of the current situation and of the human cost, with 12,000 children killed and 17,000 more left without living relatives. She thanked Councillor McIntosh for bringing the motion forward.

The Provost advised that the amendment to the motion, submitted by himself and Councillor Forrest, sought to replace the motion with the following wording:

East Lothian Council notes the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza, with 28,000 civilians dead and 2 million people now at risk of starvation as a result of Israeli military action, with 10,000 Palestinian prisoners, including 250 children in Israeli jails (noting that more than half of the population of Gaza is under 18) and over 100 hostages still in captivity from the Hamas terror attack on 7 October.

East Lothian Council:

- Condemns the Hamas terror attack of 7 October and calls for the immediate release of all hostages and for internationally supervised and agreed release of prisoners and inspection of their welfare conditions;
- Equally, condemns the indiscriminate bombardment of Gaza by the Israeli Defence Force;
- Stands in solidarity with all victims of this violence and urges an immediate ceasefire to avoid further suffering;
- Notes that the UNRWA Commissioner-General recently warned that the entire aid operation in Gaza is at risk of collapse and that Medecins Sans Frontieres has declared there to be no functioning health care system in Gaza;
- Condemns the rise of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in our communities;
- Recognises that any response must fall within the bounds of international humanitarian law.

- Recognises that for a ceasefire to be successful and sustained, both sides must comply.
- Notes that the House of Commons voted to call for an immediate and lasting humanitarian ceasefire on 21 February 2024, and that the Scottish Parliament voted for a ceasefire on 21 November 2023; and
- Notes and echoes the International Court of Justice's call for Israel to take all measures to prevent genocidal acts in Gaza.

Accordingly, Council asks the Provost of East Lothian Council to write to the First Minister and the Foreign Secretary to ask them to:

- Act upon the call of both parliaments to call for a ceasefire and build a lasting peace process;
- Do all within their diplomatic powers to contribute to the call from around the international community for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire;
- Urge the international community to reinstate humanitarian aid to be allowed into all affected areas and work together to rebuild and restore communities; and
- Call for a two-state solution, including security for Israel and justice for Palestine, recognising the statehood of both and the desire for long-lasting peace and understanding in the region.

Presenting his amendment, the Provost felt that as civic head of the Council he should take the lead on this issue. He acknowledged the sentiments of the motion, and called on Members to focus on the following aspects: lasting peace, recognising humanitarian law, and ceasefire. He welcomed the support of Councillor McIntosh for the amendment, which he advised sought to depoliticise the issue, and he hoped that a consensus could be reached. He also hoped that people would come together to restore peace and understanding in the region.

Councillor Forrest seconded the amendment.

Councillor McGuire commented that although no one wanted to see the conflict continue, and that the death of innocent people could not be justified, as an individual and a local councillor he felt that this situation should be dealt with by higher powers. He would therefore be abstaining.

Councillor Collins spoke of the complexities around the conflict, which had led to many people disconnecting from the situation. She felt that the wording of the amendment was more engaging.

Summing up, Councillor McIntosh welcomed the contributions made by other members and agreed that the wording of the amendment was more wide-ranging and inclusive, so she would be happy to accept it. Councillor Menzies also indicated that she would be happy to support the amendment.

The Provost moved to the roll call vote on the amendment:

For (16): Councillors Akhtar, Allan, Bennett, Cassini, Collins, Dugdale, Findlay, Forrest, Hampshire, McFarlane, McGinn, McIntosh, McMillan, Menzies, Ritchie, Yorkston

Against (0):

Abstentions (1): Councillor McGuire

The amendment was therefore carried.

**Decision**

The Council agreed that the Provost should write to the First Minister and the Foreign Secretary to ask them to:

- i. Act upon the call of both parliaments to call for a ceasefire and build a lasting peace process;
- ii. Do all within their diplomatic powers to contribute to the call from around the international community for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire;
- iii. Urge the international community to reinstate humanitarian aid to be allowed into all affected areas and work together to rebuild and restore communities; and
- iv. Call for a two-state solution, including security for Israel and justice for Palestine, recognising the statehood of both and the desire for long-lasting peace and understanding in the region.

**8. SUBMISSIONS TO THE MEMBERS’ LIBRARY SERVICE, 27 NOVEMBER 2023 – 11 FEBRUARY 2024**

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources noting the reports submitted to the Members’ Library since the meeting of the Council in December 2023.

Councillor Akhtar highlighted item 10/24 on the bulletin, which was concerned with a review of the East Lothian Poverty Plan. She welcomed the ongoing work to tackle poverty and the partnership working between the Council and other organisations.

**Decision**

The Council agreed to note the reports submitted to the Members’ Library Service between 27 November 2023 and 11 February 2024, as listed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Signed .....

Provost John McMillan  
Convener of the Council

# East Lothian Council

## 2022/23 Annual Audit Report



Prepared for the Members of East Lothian Council and the Controller of Audit  
March 2024

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# Key messages

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## 2022/23 annual accounts

- 1 Our audit opinions on the annual accounts of East Lothian Council (the Council), its group and the section 106 charity administered by the Council are unmodified, i.e. the financial statements and related reports are free from material misstatement.
- 2 The management commentary, annual governance statement and remuneration report were all consistent with the financial statements and properly prepared in accordance with the relevant regulations and guidance.
- 3 Adjustments have been made to the annual accounts as a result of the audit process as detailed in Exhibit 2 of the report.

## Financial management and sustainability

- 4 The Council reported deficit on the provision of services of £16.154 million. The outturn position included planned use of reserves and the underlying overspend for the year was £5.986 million. The Council faces financial challenges through inflationary pressures on pay and non-pay costs, demand on services and supporting a growing population.
- 5 The Council has appropriate budget setting and monitoring arrangements in place but continues to face significant challenges to identify and agree the required future savings to balance its budget.
- 6 The Council should review the underlying reasons for reprofiling of the capital programmes to identify opportunities to improve the project management and budget setting procedures in place. Where the capital programme has been paused as a result of mitigation measures the Council should assess the affordability of delivering the current capital programme.
- 7 The Council faces unprecedented financial challenges, many of which are external and demand factors aligned to a growing population. While the Council recognise the scale of the financial pressures further work is required to find comprehensive plans to address these and deliver a financially sustainable operating model. It is important for the Council to focus on financial resilience including key indicators and measures.
- 8 The Council should continue to review the level of earmarked and uncommitted reserves to ensure these provide sufficient contingency and

continue to support financial sustainability over the short, medium, and long term.

- 9 The Council recognises that to remain financially sustainable and resilient it faces difficult decisions around the services it provides in the future. The Council should continue to identify where it can progress transformational change in how services are delivered to address the longer-term financial pressures it faces.
- 10 The Council needs to prioritise where it can invest in digital services to deliver savings in the longer term. The Council needs to strengthen their digital strategy, cyber security, business continuity management and associated policies to address prior year audit recommendations.

## Best Value

- 11 The Council's leadership has been effective in setting out a clear vision and priorities in the Council Plan 2022-27. The Council has set clear priorities but recognises that decisions need to be made urgently to ensure a sustainable approach to delivering those priorities.
- 12 A Best Value Assurance Report on East Lothian Council was published in November 2018, containing nine improvement recommendations. The Council has made good progress in prioritising and implementing what they believe are the key improvement actions. The Council should set a clear timescale for implementing the remaining actions.

## Vision, leadership, and governance

- 13 Governance arrangements are well established and are appropriate. The council should ensure that it reviews the effectiveness of working relationships between members and officers to ensure these remain effective.
- 14 The Council demonstrates its commitment to leadership development including ongoing investment in a leadership development programme.
- 15 Climate emergency is one of the overarching objectives within the Council Plan. It is too early to conclude whether the Council is on track to achieve its Net Zero ambition.

## Use of resources to improve outcomes

- 16 The Council's vision is aligned to the community plan priorities with community empowerment a key principle within the Council Plan.
- 17 Maintaining oversight of performance is challenging across the range of council services. A new set of Top 50 indicators has been produced to reflect the new Council Plan. Currently 34 of these 50 measures have stated targets.

The Council needs to develop measures for the remaining indicators to clearly monitor the performance it wants to achieve in its priority areas.

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# Introduction

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1. This report summarises the findings from the 2022/23 annual audit of East Lothian Council (the Council). The scope of the audit was set out in an annual audit plan presented to 13 June 2023 meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee. This Annual Audit Report comprises:

- significant matters arising from an audit of the Council's annual accounts
- conclusions on the Council's performance in meeting its Best Value duties
- conclusions on the following wider scope areas that frame public audit as set out in the [Code of Audit Practice 2021](#):
  - Financial Management
  - Financial Sustainability
  - Vision, Leadership, and Governance
  - Use of Resources to Improve Outcomes.

2. This report is addressed to the Council and the Controller of Audit and will be published on Audit Scotland's website [www.audit-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk) in due course.

## Audit appointment from 2022/23

3. I, John Boyd, have been appointed by the Accounts Commission as auditor of the Council for the period from 2022/23 until 2026/27. The 2022/23 financial year was the first of my five-year appointment. My appointment coincides with the new [Code of Audit Practice](#) which was introduced for financial years commencing on or after 1 April 2022.

4. My team and I would like to thank councillors, audit committee members, senior management, and other staff, particularly those in finance, for their cooperation and assistance in this year and we look forward to working together constructively over the course of the five-year appointment.

## Responsibilities and reporting

5. The Council has primary responsibility for ensuring the proper financial stewardship of public funds. This includes preparing annual accounts that are in accordance with proper accounting practices. The Council is also responsible for compliance with legislation, and putting arrangements in place for governance and propriety that enable it to successfully deliver its objectives.

6. The responsibilities of the independent auditor are established by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and the [Code of Audit Practice 2021](#), and supplementary guidance and International Standards on Auditing in the UK.

**7.** Weaknesses or risks identified are only those which have come to our attention during our normal audit work and may not be all that exist. Communicating these does not absolve management of the Council from its responsibility to address the issues we raise and to maintain adequate systems of control.

**8.** This report contains an agreed action plan at [Appendix 1](#). It sets out specific recommendations, the responsible officers, and dates for implementation.

## **Auditor Independence**

**9.** We can confirm that we comply with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard. We can also confirm that we have not undertaken any non-audit related services and therefore the 2022/23 audit fee of £291,020 (including £1,000 in respect of Charitable Trusts) as set out in our 2022/23 Annual Audit Plan remains unchanged. We are not aware of any relationships that could compromise our objectivity and independence.

**10.** We add value to the Council by:

- identifying and providing insight on significant risks, and making clear and relevant recommendations
- providing clear and focused conclusions on the appropriateness, effectiveness and impact of corporate governance, arrangements to ensure the best use of resources and financial sustainability
- sharing intelligence and good practice identified.

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# 1. Audit of 2022/23 annual accounts

Public bodies are required to prepare annual accounts comprising financial statements and other related reports. These are principal means of accounting for the stewardship public funds.

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## Main judgements

Our audit opinions on the annual accounts of East Lothian Council (the Council), its group and the section 106 charity administered by the Council are unmodified, i.e. the financial statements and related reports are free from material misstatement.

The management commentary, annual governance statement and remuneration report were all consistent with the financial statements and properly prepared in accordance with the relevant regulations and guidance.

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## Audit opinions on the annual accounts are unmodified

**11.** The Council approved the annual accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 on 20 March 2024. In addition to the Council's financial results, the group accounts consolidate the financial results of the Council and its subsidiaries and its investments in associates and interests in joint ventures. These include: East Lothian Land Ltd, East Lothian Mid-Market Homes LLP, Trust Funds and Common Good Funds, East Lothian Investments, Enjoy East Lothian Ltd., Brunton Theatre Trust, Lothian Valuation Joint Board and East Lothian Integration Joint Board.

**12.** As reported in the independent auditor's report, in my opinion as the appointed auditor:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view and were properly prepared in accordance with the financial reporting framework
- the audited part of the remuneration report was prepared in accordance with the financial reporting framework
- the management commentary and annual governance statement were consistent with the financial statements and properly prepared in accordance with the applicable requirements.

## Overall group materiality was assessed as £9.2 million

**13.** Broadly, the concept of materiality is applied by auditors to determine whether misstatements identified during the audit could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users of the financial statements, and hence impact their opinion set out in the independent auditor's report. Auditors set a monetary threshold when considering materiality, although some issues may be considered material by their nature. It is ultimately a matter of the auditor's professional judgement.

**14.** Our initial assessment of materiality was carried out during the risk assessment and planning phase of the audit. This was reviewed and revised on receipt of the unaudited annual accounts and is summarised in [Exhibit 1](#).

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### Exhibit 1 Materiality values

Materiality level	Council	Group
Overall materiality	£8.6 million	£9.2 million
Performance materiality	£6.5 million	£6.9 million
Reporting threshold	£250,000	£250,000

**Source: Audit Scotland**

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**15.** The overall materiality threshold was set with reference to gross expenditure, which we judged as the figure most relevant to the users of the financial statements.

**16.** Performance materiality is used by auditors when undertaking work on individual areas of the financial statements. It is a lower materiality threshold, set to reduce the probability of aggregated misstatements exceeding overall materiality. We have used our professional judgement and set performance materiality at 75 per cent of overall materiality.

**17.** It is our responsibility to request that all misstatements, other than those below our reporting threshold, are corrected, although the final decision on making the correction lies with those charged with governance.

## Significant findings and key audit matters

**18.** Under International Standard on Auditing (UK) 260 we communicate significant findings from the audit to the council, including our view about the qualitative aspects of the body's accounting practices.

**19.** The Code of Audit Practice also requires all audits to communicate key audit matters within the annual audit report under International Standard on Auditing (UK) 701. These are matters that we judged to be of most significance

in our audit of the financial statements. The significant findings and key audit matters are summarised in [Exhibit 2](#).

## Exhibit 2

### Significant findings and key audit matters from the audit of the annual accounts

Issue	Resolution
<p><b>1. Pension ceiling asset</b></p> <p>The unaudited accounts recognised the Council's share of its local government pension scheme assets and liabilities as at the balance sheet date. IFRIC 14 limits the measurement of the net defined benefit asset to the present value of economic benefits available in the form of refunds from the plan or reductions in future contributions to the plan. In accordance with IFRIC 14, the pension asset derived through IAS 19 valuation should be capped in accordance with IFRIC 14 at the pension asset ceiling. This represents the economic benefit available as a reduction in future contributions.</p> <p>The Council engaged with the actuary, Hymans Robertson, to provide an actuarial valuation of the net pension asset ceiling (cap) in accordance with IFRIC 14.</p> <p>The unaudited accounts do not disclose a separate liability in respect of the unfunded pension obligations. Per the IAS 19 Results Schedule, the present value of the unfunded obligations at 31 March 2023 is £12.194 million. This is split £7.532 million in respect of LGPS unfunded pensions and £4.662 million in respect of Teachers' unfunded pensions. The following adjustment has been reflected within the unaudited accounts:</p> <p>Dr Unusable Reserves £12.194 million</p> <p>Cr Pension liability £12.194 million</p> <p>Narrative disclosures are also required in Note 31 - Defined Benefit Pension Schemes to explain that the pension liability is in respect of unfunded obligations.</p>	<p>The audit team have reviewed the actuarial assumptions applied and basis of calculation and satisfied that this is appropriate and that the net pension asset ceiling has been appropriately capped in accordance with IFRIC 14.</p>
<p><b>2. Revaluation of operational assets</b></p> <p>As part of the 2022/23 audit it was identified that the external valuer was using the incorrect floor space data for the valuation of around 200 operational assets.</p>	<p>The audit team have reviewed the updated calculations and workbooks provided by the external valuer to support the revised figures and are satisfied that the financial statements properly reflect the amended figures and</p>



Issue	Resolution
<p>The discrepancy in the use of the data dated back to 2021 when the tender documentation was provided as part of the procurement exercise.</p> <p>The estates department has worked with the external valuer to provide revised data to reflect the correct floor space for the operational assets held by the Council as at 31 March 2023.</p> <p>The external valuer has undertaken an updated revaluation exercise during December 2023-February 2024 to provide revised valuation figures.</p> <p>This has resulted in the following adjustments, which have been reflected within the updated accounts:</p> <p><b>Prior year restatement</b></p> <p>Dr Property, Plant and Equipment: £10.294 million</p> <p>Cr Revaluation Reserve: £10.294 million</p> <p><b>Current year restatement</b></p> <p>Dr Property, Plant and Equipment: £21.191 million</p> <p>Cr Revaluation Reserve: £18.737 million</p> <p>Cr Capital Adjustment Account £2.454 million</p>	<p>the value of the operational assets are fairly stated.</p>

Source: Audit Scotland

## Our audit work responded to the risks of material misstatement we identified in the annual accounts

**20.** We have obtained audit assurances over the identified significant risks of material misstatement in the annual accounts. [Exhibit 3](#) sets out the significant risks of material misstatement to the financial statements we identified in our 2022/23 Annual Audit Plan. It also summarises the further audit procedures we performed during the year to obtain assurances over these risks and the conclusions from the work completed.

### Exhibit 3

#### Significant risks of material misstatement in the annual accounts

Audit risk	Assurance procedure	Results and conclusions
<p><b>1. Risk of material misstatement due to fraud caused by management override of controls</b></p> <p>As stated in International Standard on Auditing (UK)</p>	<p>Assessed the design and implementation of controls over journal entry processing.</p> <p>Made inquiries of individuals involved in the financial reporting process about</p>	<p><b>Results:</b> We found no instances of material misstatement due to fraud caused by management override of controls.</p>

Audit risk	Assurance procedure	Results and conclusions
<p>240, management is in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of management's ability to override controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively.</p>	<p>inappropriate or unusual activity relating to the processing of journal entries and other adjustments.</p> <p>Tested journals at the year-end and post-closing entries and focus on significant risk areas.</p> <p>Considered the need to test journal entries and other adjustments during the period.</p> <p>Evaluated significant transactions outside the normal course of business.</p> <p>Assessed the adequacy of controls in place for identifying and disclosing related party relationship and transactions in the financial statements.</p> <p>Assessed any changes to the methods and underlying assumptions used to prepare accounting estimates compared to the prior year.</p>	
<p><b>2. Estimation in the valuation of land and buildings.</b></p> <p>There is a significant degree of subjectivity in the valuation of land and buildings. Valuations are based on specialist and management assumptions and changes in these can result in material changes to valuations.</p> <p>All non-current assets are revalued on a five-year rolling basis. Values may also change year on year, and it is important that ELC ensures the financial statements accurately reflect the value of the land and buildings.</p>	<p>Review the information provided to the external valuer to assess for completeness.</p> <p>Evaluate the competence, capabilities, and objectivity of external professional valuers.</p> <p>Obtain an understanding of the management's involvement in the valuation process to assess if appropriate oversight has occurred.</p> <p>Critically assess the approach East Lothian Council has adopted to assess the risk that assets not subject to valuation are materially misstated and</p>	<p><b>Results:</b> Assurance has been gained that there are no material misstatements in the carrying value of land and buildings.</p> <p>The Council should consider their approach to the valuation of land and buildings to ensure this is appropriate to assess whether asset values have moved materially in year and as at 31 March.</p>

Audit risk	Assurance procedure	Results and conclusions
	<p>consider the robustness of that approach.</p> <p>Challenge management's assessment of why it considers that the land and buildings not revalued in 2022/23 are not materially misstated. We will critically assess the appropriateness of any assumptions.</p> <p>Critically assess the adequacy of the accounting disclosures regarding the assumptions in relation to the valuation of land and buildings.</p>	

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**Source: Audit Scotland**

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**21.** In addition, we identified “areas of audit focus” in our 2022/23 Annual Audit Plan where we considered there to be risks of material misstatement to the financial statements. These areas of specific audit focus were:

- Pension liability:** The pension liability valuation due to the material value and significant assumptions used in the calculation of the liability. We will utilise the work of PwC as auditor expert in assessing the reasonableness of the methodology used and assumptions made by the Council's actuary, Hymans Robertson LLP, in arriving at the IAS 19 pension valuation as at 31 March 2023. See [Exhibit 2](#) above for details of adjustment.
- Common Good assets:** The ongoing review of Common Good assets to identify those assets held by the Council but which are properly owned by the Common Good to ensure these are appropriately disclosed in the accounts. A full review of all Common Good assets has been undertaken and a register has been established and published on the Council website. As a consequence of the review, a number of land sites previously recorded on East Lothian Council's general services balance sheet were transferred to Common Good Fund balance sheets. Where a building is on such a site but is being occupied and used by the Council for the provision of public taxpayer-funded services the building is still recorded on the Council's general services balance sheet on the basis that the use is equivalent to a finance lease.

## There was unadjusted misstatement above our reporting threshold not reflected within the financial statements

**22.** There were misstatements above our reporting threshold which were not adjusted by management in the audited accounts, however none of these are above performance materiality as detailed below

- **Non pay expenditure:** audit work identified 10 items of expenditure that had been fully charged to the financial year 2022/23 that included costs that related to 2023/24. The total value of 2023/24 expenditure is £1.227 million. The Council did a further analysis of non-pay expenditure and confirmed that an additional £0.6 million of 2023/24 expenditure had been incorrectly recognised within 2022/23. The policy of annualising annual expenditure means the net impact on the accounts is likely to be immaterial.

**23.** As the difference is below Performance Materiality of £6.9 million the Council has not adjusted the updated accounts to reflect these misstatements. A summary of the adjusted and unadjusted misstatements is detailed in [Appendix 2](#).

## The unaudited annual accounts were received in line with the agreed audit timetable

**24.** The unaudited annual accounts were received in line with our agreed audit timetable on 27 June 2023. As a result of external audit resource challenges the start of the statutory audit was delayed which resulted in the statutory deadline of 30 September 2023 being missed.

## Our audit opinions on the Section 106 charity are unmodified

**25.** Due to the interaction of section 106 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 1973 with the charities legislation, a separate independent auditor's report is required for the statement of accounts of each registered charity where members of the Council are sole trustees, irrespective of the size of the charity.

**26.** The Council has one section 106 charity known as the Dr Bruce Fund which was set up to provide relief for the poor of Musselburgh. The Fund conducts minimal charitable activity; since 2016/17 the Dr Bruce Fund has provided a small award to the same two individuals. In 2022/23 a total of £80 was awarded (2021/22 and 2020/21 £70; 2019/20, 2018/19 and 2017/18: £60, 2016/17: £50).

**27.** The Council is conducting a review of its charitable trust funds including the Dr Bruce Fund. In June 2023 the Council considered a report setting out potential options arising from that review. Members agreed in principle to explore the transfer of stewardship and administration of the trust funds to a specialist third party. Some funds, particularly those with property assets, may be retained within the Council's stewardship.

**28.** If the Council retains stewardship and administration of the trust funds, it could consider the external appointment of a trustee to the Dr Bruce Fund. This would remove the Section 106 requirement for an audit and reduce the scrutiny

requirement to an independent examination of the accounts and accounting records.

**29.** Our audit opinions on the Section 106 charity are unmodified. Under the current arrangements there is a continuing risk that the Dr Bruce Fund is not fully meeting its charitable objectives and that the trustees are not discharging their duties correctly. This is an issue that has been raised in previous years and is included again under 'follow up of prior year recommendations' in the Action Plan in [Appendix 1](#).

### **The Council continues to progress prior year recommendations**

**30.** The Council continues to progress the audit recommendations identified by the Council's previous external auditor in line with their original deadlines due to the prioritisation of resources. For actions not yet implemented, revised responses and timescales have been agreed with management, and are set out in [Appendix 1](#).

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## 2. Financial management

Financial management means having sound budgetary processes, and the ability to understand the financial environment and whether internal controls are operating effectively.

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### Main judgements

The Council reported deficit on the provision of services of £16.154 million. The outturn position included planned use of reserves and the underlying overspend for the year was £5.986 million. The Council faces financial challenges through inflationary pressures on pay and non-pay costs, demand on services and supporting a growing population.

The Council has appropriate budget setting and monitoring arrangements in place but continues to face significant challenges to identify and agree the required future savings to balance its budget.

The Council should review the underlying reasons for reprofiling of the capital programmes to identify opportunities to improve the project management and budget setting procedures in place. Where the capital programme has been paused as a result of mitigation measures the Council should assess the affordability of delivering the current capital programme.

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### The Council reported a deficit for 2022/23

**31.** The Council reported deficit on the provision of services of £16.154 million. The outturn position included planned use of reserves and the underlying overspend for the year was £5.986 million. The Council has reported that the overspend was due to a wide range of external financial pressures including: high inflation and contractual costs; funding for public sector pay awards; high interest rates; and significant increased demand for Council services aligned to cost of living pressures and a growing population.

**32.** Officers provided regular updates to the budget position through revenue budget monitoring reports presented to the Council throughout the year. These reports contained a good level of detail on the forecast outturn position. The Council had estimated recurring in year expenditure pressures of £12.537 million and took actions to mitigate the impact of these in the year. The more significant savings and mitigations are summarised in [Exhibit 4](#).

**Exhibit 4****Summary of significant savings and mitigations against budget**

Area	£m
<b>Savings / mitigation measures</b>	
Use of loans fund repayment holiday	6.400
1140 hours surplus flexibility	1.750
Additional funding for teachers pay	0.779
Other service underspends	0.777
School strike action	0.840

**Source: East Lothian Council 2022/23 Annual Accounts**

### **A deficit of £2.548 million was reported against the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget**

**33.** The Council is required by legislation to maintain a separate housing revenue account and to ensure that rents are set a level which will at least cover the costs of its social housing provision.

**34.** The Council reported a deficit £2.548 million against the HRA budget for 2022/23 (2021/22: £2.740 surplus). The change reflects significant council dwelling revaluation gains in 2021/22 which were not repeated to the same extent in 2022/23. Additionally an increase in impairment provision charges for outstanding rent debtors arose. These changes were partially offset by an increase in capital grants received. The net impact was to reduce the Housing Revenue Reserve from £1.748 million in 2021/22 to £1.487 million in 2022/23.

### **The Council has appropriate budget setting and monitoring arrangement in place but continues to face significant challenges to identify and agree the required future savings to balance its budget**

**35.** The Council's budget and savings plans are aligned to the Council's objectives, priorities, and strategic goals, as set out in the 2022-2027 Council Plan.

**36.** The full council receives regular revenue and capital monitoring reports and, from a governance perspective, conducts detailed scrutiny of financial performance. From our review of these reports, and attendance at council meetings throughout the year, we concluded that these reports provide an overall picture of the budget position at service level. The reports contain good explanations for significant variances against budget to allow both members and officers to carry out scrutiny of the Council's finances. The Council

continues to face significant challenges to identify and agree the required future savings to balance its budget.

**The level of General Fund reserves has increased. However the majority of these are earmarked for specific priorities leaving the Council with limited unearmarked reserves to meet unforeseen costs or spending pressures**

**37.** One of the key measures of the financial health of a body is the level of reserves held. The General Fund is the largest usable reserve and is used to fund the delivery of services. It provides a contingency fund to meet unexpected expenditure and a working balance to help cushion the impact of such expenditure.

**38.** The Scottish Government's 2022 Resource Spending Review contained details of a Service Concession Arrangement (SCA) flexibility that related to the council's PPP schools. The flexibility permits councils to undertake internal accounting changes that extend the period over which the principal repayment of the unitary charge can be made, resulting in a one-off credit to the General Fund (shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement) and ongoing annual savings for a period of time. The Council will apply this for the 2023/24 financial year.

**39.** The level of usable reserves increased from £38.720 million in 2021/22 to £45.192 million in 2022/23 [exhibit 5](#). The General Fund balance is £26.414 million, however £19.214 million has been earmarked for a specific priority which leaves a residual £7.2 million of uncommitted general reserves. Against an expenditure budget of £328 million for 2022/2023, this unearmarked element represents a 2.1 per cent reserve.

**40.** The Council financial strategy sets the minimum unallocated balance at £7.2 million. However the updated financial strategy presented to the Council in December 2023 advised that given the current risk environment, along with the projected in year overspend it is appropriate as part of the financial strategy to work towards increasing the minimum unallocated balance on the general fund over the medium term.

**41.** As the Council moved out of the pandemic the Covid-19 opening reserve balance of £5.479 million was repurposed and fully utilised in 2022/23.

## Exhibit 5

### East Lothian Council usable reserves

Reserve	31 March 2021 £'million	31 March 2022 £'million	31 March 2023 £'million
General fund	28.328	29.685	26.414
Housing revenue account	2.009	1.748	1.487
Capital fund	2.446	4.603	14.607



Insurance fund	2.306	2.684	2.684
<b>Total usable reserves</b>	<b>35.089</b>	<b>38.720</b>	<b>45.192</b>

Source: East Lothian Council annual accounts 2020/21 to 2022/23

**42.** We are satisfied that reserves are being regularly reviewed to confirm that they remain at an appropriate level. However, there are ongoing sustainability challenges of using reserves to fund recurring expenditure. Difficult decisions will need to be taken in the future, with a clear plan and effective management of the Council's reserves key to maintaining financial sustainability. This is considered further at paragraphs 73-78 below.

### **The Council should assess the affordability of delivering the current capital programme**

**43.** The Council approved the 2022/23 capital programmes on 1 March 2022. The general services programme for 2022/2023 originally totalled £94.759 million, with the housing capital programme amounting to £42.179 million.

**44.** At each Council meeting, capital programme monitoring reports are presented to members. Throughout the year these reports detailed the various movements in the general services programme budget. Revisions were made to the general services programme resulting in a revised budget of £111.310 million.

**45.** At the June 2023 Council meeting, the general services outturn capital programme spend was reported as £84.341 million for 2022/23, representing a slippage of 25 per cent against the revised budget. The underspend reflects mitigation measures agreed by the Council in November 2022 as well as a variation from the expected timing of spend across a number of projects within multi-year programmes, which have been reprofiled into 2023/24.

**46.** The housing capital programme outturn was reported as £40.350 million for 2022/23, against the budget of £42.179 million. Whilst capital spend at the year-end was in line with forecast there remain challenges in delivering the programme due to a shortage of labour resources, uncertainty in the housing market due to the current economic situation and challenges in awarding and mobilisation of contracts.

**47.** Capital programmes can be delayed through their complexity, pressing demands and involvement of third parties, however slippage in the capital investment programme increases the risk to the Council. Delayed investment can lead to inefficiencies in the existing estate with adverse impact on service delivery.

## **Recommendation 1**

The Council should review the underlying reasons for reprofiling of the capital programmes to identify opportunities to improve the project management and

budget setting procedures in place. Where the capital programme has been paused as a result of mitigation measures the Council should assess the affordability of delivering the current capital programme.

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### **The Council is continuing to undertake a review of its estate to identify any buildings containing Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete**

**48.** Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) was widely used in the construction of floors and roofs from the 1950s to early 1990s. Recent investigations have identified that leaks or water exposure could lead to the deterioration of RAAC planks.

**49.** The Scottish Government are working in partnership with the UK Government on research into the extent of the use of RAAC in public buildings and public bodies, including the Council, have been advised to check as a matter of urgency whether any buildings in their estates have roofs, floors, cladding, or walls made of RAAC.

**50.** During 2022/23 the Council commenced a review of the structural integrity of its property portfolio in relation to the use and condition of RAAC. The Council has been proactive in completing surveys of its property estate to determine the existence of RAAC. RAAC has been identified within two secondary schools but remedial works undertaken mean that no impairment is required for these assets. Uncertainty remains concerning a potential impairment to one asset within the group property portfolio. Work to determine this is ongoing and a conclusion regarding this is anticipated over the coming months.

**51.** Future impairment due to RAAC may arise, and the resolution of RAAC issues may affect future capital spending priorities. The Council has been engaging with SG officials to clarify future funding arrangements.

### **Our management report highlighted key control weaknesses identified during our interim audit work**

**52.** Our responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice requires us to assess the system of internal control put in place by management. We seek to gain assurance that the Council:

- has systems of recording and processing transactions which provide a sound basis for the preparation of the financial statements
- has systems of internal control which provide an adequate means of preventing and detecting error, fraud, or corruption
- complies with established policies, procedures, laws, and regulations.

**53.** Our work included initial system reviews of the main financial systems to determine the extent to which we can rely on key internal controls to gain assurance over the processes and systems used in preparing the annual

accounts. We consider the results of this work when determining our approach to the audit of the 2022/23 annual accounts.

**54.** We identified several internal control weaknesses as summarised in our [2022-23 ELC Management Report](#). As a result we did not place reliance on these internal controls for our audit of the 2022/23 annual accounts. Instead, we increased our substantive audit testing of income and non-pay expenditure to obtain the required assurance to support our audit opinion.

**55.** An action plan, with our key findings, our recommendations and management actions and responses were agreed with officers together with a timetable for resolution. These will be followed up as part of our 2023/24 audit.

### **Standards of conduct and arrangements for the prevention and detection of fraud and error were appropriate**

**56.** The Council is responsible for establishing arrangements for the prevention and detection of fraud, error and irregularities, bribery, and corruption. Furthermore, it is responsible for ensuring that its affairs are managed in accordance with proper standards of conduct by putting effective arrangements in place.

**57.** The Council has a range of established procedures for preventing and detecting fraud and irregularity including a whistleblowing policy, counter fraud strategy and codes of conduct for members and officers. We assessed these to ensure that they were appropriate, readily available to staff and are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain relevant and current.

**58.** We have concluded that the Council has appropriate arrangements in place for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption.

### **National Fraud Initiative**

**59.** The Council continues to participate in the National Fraud Initiative (NFI). This is a counter-fraud exercise across the UK public sector which aims to prevent and detect fraud. The Revised Internal Audit Plan 2023/24 was presented to the Audit and Governance Committee in September 2023. The Plan confirmed that time has been allocated to carry out work on the 2022/23 National Fraud Initiative (NFI) exercise, a Counter Fraud Officer has recently been recruited and will assist in progressing the matches provided through NFI.

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# 3. Financial sustainability

Financial Sustainability means being able to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

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## Main judgements

The Council faces unprecedented financial challenges, many of which are external and demand factors aligned to a growing population. While the Council recognise the scale of the financial pressures further work is required to find comprehensive plans to address these and deliver a financially sustainable operating model. It is important for the Council to focus on financial resilience including key indicators and measures.

The Council should continue to review the level of earmarked and uncommitted reserves to ensure these provide sufficient contingency and continue to support financial sustainability over the short, medium, and long term.

The Council recognises that to remain financially sustainable and resilient it faces difficult decisions around the services it provides in the future. The Council should continue to identify where it can progress transformational change in how services are delivered to address the longer-term financial pressures it faces.

The Council needs to prioritise where it can invest in digital services to deliver savings in the longer term. The Council needs to strengthen their digital strategy, cyber security, business continuity management and associated policies to address prior year audit recommendations.

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## **We have obtained audit assurances over the wider audit dimension risks relating to Financial Sustainability identified in our 2022/23 Annual Audit Plan**

60. [Exhibit 6](#) sets out the wider scope risks relating to Financial Sustainability we identified in our 2022/23 Annual Audit Plan. It summarises the audit procedures we performed during the year to obtain assurances over these risks and the conclusions from the work completed.

## Exhibit 6

### Risks identified from the auditor's wider responsibility under the Code of Audit Practice

Audit risk	Assurance procedure	Results and conclusions
<p><b>Financial Sustainability</b></p> <p>The highest risk in the corporate risk register is that the council is operating in an increasingly complex financial environment and faces significant financial and demand pressures. The Council's Financial Strategy 2023-2028 scenario planning identifies a funding gap of £41-63 million over the 5-year period, inclusive of delivering existing approved savings.</p> <p>It is likely that the Council will face difficult decisions around service offering and performance if it is to remain within its resource constraints and achieve its planned priority outcomes.</p>	<p>Review and assess the Council's financial planning and reporting and progress on achievement of planned savings.</p> <p>Consider the decision-making that will be needed if the Council is to remain within its resource constraints and achieve its planned priority outcomes.</p>	<p><b>Results and conclusion:</b></p> <p>The Council recognises the financial challenges facing the organisation but measures have still to be put in place to achieve financial sustainability over the medium to longer term.</p>

### Medium and longer-term financial plans reflect the Council's strategic priorities and outcomes

**61.** At the Council meeting in December 2023 management advised that before any corporate solutions, there is an estimated recurring financial gap in excess of £70 million over the next five years, which is equivalent to a quarter of the Council's annual running costs.

**62.** It was also reported that as at the end of period six, before applying the planned use of reserves there is a forecast overspend for the year of £20.2 million, which represents an improvement of £2.0 million since the period five report. The main reasons for the improvement include a reduction of:

- £0.6 million in the IJB overspend following a review of unused care commitments and improvements in the income forecast
- £1.1 million in the deficit on the property maintenance trading account following an increase to the schedule of rates to reflect the difference in underlying inflation and the national schedule of rates, and the pay award for 2023/24
- £0.3 million in forecast spend for education, linked to lower than anticipated spend on funded early learning and childcare.

**63.** The planned use of reserves for 2023/24 is £12 million includes:

- Transformational Fund and other ring-fenced funds - £1.6 million
- Health & Social Care (IJB delegated services), £0.7 million
- Capital Funding for Pay Award relating to 2022/23 - £2.3 million
- General Fund reserve – £7.378 million.

**64.** The Council's unplanned overspend, after applying the planned use of reserves is currently forecast to be £8.2 million for 2023/24. The Council recognises that an overspend of this level cannot be met within the unallocated general fund reserve. Without further measures being taken by the Council, this overspend would result in a reduction in earmarked reserves which are aligned to supporting critical transformational activities with a view to deliver recurring savings.

**65.** The current forecast overspend is a significant risk to the financial sustainability of the Council and the delivery of the outcomes within the Council Plan. These estimations are being refreshed as part of the ongoing exercise and members will be updated later in the financial year. The current budget gap across the coming years is summarised below: 2023/24 to 2027/28 of £71.320 million, [exhibit 7](#).

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## Exhibit 7

Identified budget gap 2023/24 to 2027/28

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Total
<b>Budget gap £'million</b>	11.593	27.124	£12.046	£8.749	£11.808	<b>£71.320</b>

Source: East Lothian Council: Financial Strategy update – December 2023

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**66.** The Council should continue to identify where it can progress transformational change in how its services are delivered. The Council needs to address the immediate financial pressures while ensuring that it delivers a financially resilient operating model. This will require difficult decisions around the prioritisation of Council resources. It is important that the Council identify where recurring savings, rather than temporary solutions, can be made together with proposals to reduce costs. This, combined with robust longer-term financial plans, will be key to maintaining financial sustainability.

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## Recommendation 2

The Council should continue to identify where it can progress transformational change in how services are delivered to address the longer-term financial pressures it faces.

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## **The Council is revisiting its options for financially sustainable service delivery given the ongoing significant financial challenges**

**67.** The Council is keeping its delivery options under review given the ongoing financial pressures. The Finance Update report presented to the Council in December 2023 reiterated the mitigating actions being taken to deliver further savings to address an estimated £8.2 million funding gap in the current 2023/24 financial year and the temporary nature of these actions. The estimated recurring funding gap is now £71.320 million from 2023/24 to 2027/28. The Council approved temporary mitigation measures including controlling recruitment, reviewing operational assets to minimise costs, and pausing some capital projects. More radical measures are needed for financial sustainability in the longer term. The Council must exercise strong leadership to make strategic decisions which are difficult and politically unpopular.

## **The Council needs to invest in digital technology to transform its services but financial constraints are driving very difficult choices**

**68.** The Council has identified the need to invest in digital technology to drive transformation and this was reflected in the Financial Strategy considered by the Council in December 2022. There are many council systems which are older and have been identified as due for replacement. The use of new technology would increase efficiency of workflow, provide automation of administrative processes and reporting and free up staff resource. By way of example, the council financial ledger currently requires extensive manual intervention to ensure data flows correctly from the various feeder systems (e.g. payroll, accounts payable and accounts receivable) into the Council's financial records which is time consuming and increases the risk of error or fraud.

**69.** The Council has a Digital Strategy, approved in January 2023, structured around the key themes of the Council Plan (Growing our People, Growing our Communities, Growing our Economy and Growing our Capacity). The Digital Strategy outlines sixteen digital principles which form a framework for the development of Digital Services. Principle 4 states that "When designing a new service or transforming existing ones we will design them to be digital by default".

**70.** The Digital Transformation Board has been established to oversee performance against the Digital Strategy and provide the governance, prioritisation, and allocation of resources. The Board is chaired by the Executive Director for Council Resources, and the Head of Finance is a member, to ensure funding is an integral part of decision making. The Board reports to the Transformation Executive Team.

**71.** A Digital Transformation Work Plan is to be prepared annually with progress against the work plan monitored by the Digital Transformation Board and reported to the Transformation Executive Team. The first work plan is due in October 2023.

**72.** As part of our 2021/22 audit, the Council agreed to take part in an ICT pilot. This involved obtaining an overview of service delivery management and provision, and an understanding of the general IT control environment. Findings, recommendations, and actions were shared with the Council who agreed to review these during 2022/23. As part of our follow up officers confirmed that little progress has been made since our 2021/22 report was issued.

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### Recommendation 3

The Council needs to prioritise where it can invest in digital services to deliver savings in the longer term. The Council needs to strengthen their digital strategy, cyber security, business continuity management and associated policies to address prior year audit recommendations.

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**The Council faces unprecedented financial challenges. While the Council recognises the scale of the financial pressures further work is required to find comprehensive plans to address these and deliver a financially sustainable operating model. It is important for the Council to focus on financial resilience including key indicators and measures**

**73.** The Council recognises the financial challenges it faces in the coming years. As detailed in [exhibit 5](#), as at 31 March 2023, the Council had a total General Fund balance of £26.414 million with £7.073 million of uncommitted general reserves.

**74.** The Council's level of uncommitted general reserves as a percentage of overall budget was below the Scottish average as at 31 March 2022 of 3.48 per cent (LGBF financial sustainability indicators). We recognise that the level of unearmarked reserves is dependent on councils' approach to earmarking funds. However, as at 31 March 2022, the Council's overall total useable reserves as a percentage of budget was 8.05 per cent compared to the Scottish average of 24.44 per cent.

**75.** The Council faces significant challenges in 2023/24 onwards with inflationary pressures anticipated to continue. Changes in interest rates are also expected to affect the future borrowing costs of the Council for new and replacement debt.

**76.** Alongside these external challenges, the Council is facing a significant funding gap to meet the growing infrastructure and service requirements aligned to rapid population growth. Future service revenue expenditure and capital expenditure plans will need to address these challenges, but given the scale and size of the challenge, this will require some very difficult decisions in order to support the delivery of a balanced budget.

**77.** Improving the Council's financial sustainability, especially moving towards balancing recurring expenditure and recurring income, must now be a priority objective for the financial governance of the Council.



**78.** Looking forward, over the medium to longer term, the level of financial challenge facing the Council is unprecedented. The Council has effective financial planning and monitoring arrangements in place, with regular reporting throughout the year. However, given the scale of the challenges there is an opportunity to enhance its focus on financial resilience, including greater emphasis on its reserves position; clear financial resilience indicators and measures; and alignment to risks ensuring there is a clear financial strategy to support a resilient council.

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#### **Recommendation 4**

Given the scale of the financial challenges facing the Council it should ensure that in developing its financial strategy and annual budget there is a clear consideration around its financial resilience, including the level of reserves to allow the Council to meet unforeseen costs and pressures. The Council should also enhance the level of monitoring around financial resilience indicators and risks.

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## 4. Best Value

Councils have a statutory duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the performance of their functions.

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### Main judgements

The Council's leadership have been effective in setting out a clear vision and priorities in the Council Plan 2022-27. The Council has set clear priorities but recognises that decisions need to be made urgently to ensure a sustainable approach to delivering those priorities.

A Best Value Assurance Report on East Lothian Council was published in November 2018, containing nine improvement recommendations. The Council has made good progress in prioritising and implementing what they believe are the key improvement actions. The Council should set a clear timescale for implementing the remaining actions.

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### Best Value work in 2022/23

**79.** For 2022/23 the scope of Best Value work included conclusions on:

- Leadership of the development of new local strategic priorities (2022/23 thematic work)
- Council service performance improvement
- Effectiveness of council performance reporting
- Progress made against Best Value improvement actions made in previous years.

**80.** As set out in the [Code of Audit Practice 2021](#), Best Value audit is integrated with other wider-scope annual audit work. Therefore, in addition to the work set out in the remainder of this section, Best Value work has informed the content and conclusions set out in parts 3 to 6 of this annual audit report.

**81.** Annual thematic Best Value work is set by the Accounts Commission. The results of this work were reported to elected members at the Audit and Governance Committee on 19 December 2023. This report will be published on the Audit Scotland website in due course.

**82.** The audit recommendations from the thematic report, together with the management responses, are included in [Appendix 1](#) of this report.

## Leadership of the development of new local strategic priorities

**83.** For the 2022/23 financial year, auditors were asked to focus on the councils' leadership of the development of new local strategic priorities. The key findings in this report are:

- The Council has set clear priorities but recognises that decisions need to be made urgently to ensure a sustainable approach to delivering those priorities.
- The Council's leadership have been effective in setting out a clear vision and priorities in the Council Plan 2022-27.
- The Council faces unprecedented financial challenges which is likely to require difficult decision making around priority services. The Council recognises the need to engage with members and the wider public to ensure that decisions are driven by the needs and priorities of the people of East Lothian. This is reflected through the cross-party budget working group and acknowledged in the latest financial strategy and plans.
- Community engagement and working with local communities is a key element of the Council's vision. The Council drew on existing community engagement when developing its vision and priorities rather than consulting separately on its' Council Plan.
- The Council priorities clearly reflect the need to reduce inequalities and climate change. It is too early to assess if the strategic plans will successfully deliver these objectives.
- The Council has set out its Top 50 performance indicators to monitor delivery of its priorities. Not all performance indicators have specific targets set. It is important the Council is clear on the level of performance outcomes it aims to achieve. It is important that the indicators monitored continue to reflect strategic priority areas and risks.
- The Council is a complex organisation and has a range of plans and strategies which underpin the Council Plan. Its financial, workforce, asset and digital plans are aligned with the Council's priorities, but the Council is revisiting its delivery plans to address the increasing financial challenges it faces.
- There is evidence of collaborative working between members and with members and officers. However, this is an area for improvement. It is essential for members to work together to make strategic decisions when the Council faces increasingly hard choices to ensure financially sustainable service delivery.
- The Council has a clear commitment to leadership development to empower officers to make informed decisions.

## Best Value improvement recommendations from the 2018 Best Value Assurance Report have not been fully addressed

**84.** The [Best Value Assurance Report](#) (BVAR) was issued in November 2018. The BVAR contained nine improvement recommendations, across three areas:

- Ensure that performance reporting arrangements are more coherent and better aligned to demonstrate the delivery of the council's vision, supporting objectives, service performance and savings plans
- Develop more detailed plans linked to its longer-term financial strategy and to delivering the savings required
- Continue to focus on working with communities.

**85.** In the 2021/22 AAR, the previous external audit team reported that the "2021-22 Improvement Plan incorporates outstanding actions from the BVAR report. However, limited progress has been made against improvement actions, as the Council has continued to operate in business continuity mode throughout 2020 and 2021. Actions not deemed critical activity have been put on hold. Revised timescales and deadlines have been given to all the actions to be completed in 2022."

**86.** The Council has now made good progress in prioritising and implementing what they believe are the key improvement actions with three actions categorised as 'ongoing'. The Council should set a clear timescale for implementing the remaining actions.

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# 5. Vision, leadership, and governance

Public sector bodies must have a clear vision and strategy and set priorities for improvement within this vision and strategy. They work together with partners and communities to improve outcomes and foster a culture of innovation.

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## Main judgements

Governance arrangements are well established and are appropriate. The council should ensure that it reviews the effectiveness of working relationships between members and officers to ensure these remain effective.

The Council demonstrates its commitment to leadership development including ongoing investment in a leadership development programme.

Climate emergency is one of the overarching objectives within the Council Plan. It is too early to conclude whether the Council is on track to achieve its Net Zero ambition.

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**87.** Effective leadership from councillors, chief executives, and senior officers, is key to councils achieving their objectives and providing clear strategic direction. Councillors and officers must be clear on their roles in setting the vision and planning for its delivery.

**88.** Leaders should demonstrate behaviours and working relationships that foster a culture of cooperation, and a commitment to continuous improvement and innovation. Good conduct and behaviours when working together are crucial. Working relationships between members and between members and officers should be constructive and productive.

## The Council has set out a clear vision and priorities in the Council Plan 2022-27

**89.** The Council Plan 2022-2027 was approved by the Council on 23 August 2022. This has clear objectives and builds on the previous Council plan and the Recovery and Renewal Plan approved in 2021.

**90.** There are 3 overarching objectives:

- **Recovery and renewal** – recovering from the COVID pandemic by investing in regeneration and a sustainable future

- **Reduce poverty and inequality** - supporting our communities to deal with the growing levels of poverty and inequality
- **Respond to the climate emergency** - meeting our net zero climate change targets.

**91.** In response to the systemic long-term challenges it faces, the Council set out four thematic objectives continued from the previous Council plan:

- **Grow our economy** – increase sustainable and inclusive growth as the basis for a more prosperous East Lothian
- **Grow our people** - give our children the best start in life and protect vulnerable and older people
- **Grow our communities** - give people a real say in the decisions that matter most and provide communities with the services, infrastructure and environment that will allow them to flourish
- **Grow our capacity** - deliver excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible within our limited resources.

**92.** The outline Council Plan was agreed in March 2022 before the local council elections and the final plan was approved in August 2022. Officers reviewed all political parties' election manifestos to incorporate key elements into the Council Plan.

**93.** The new Council Plan was communicated to the public through press releases and social media; the Local Area Partnerships and was communicated in the staff newsletter '*Inform*' and in team meetings as well as being part of new employees' induction programmes. Partners were advised through discussion at meetings such as the East Lothian Partnership Governance Group.

### **Collaborative working between members and officers could be reviewed to identify where improvements can be made**

**94.** There is evidence of some effective collaborative working between members and with members and officers. There are cross-party working groups including the Budget Working Group and the Climate Change and Sustainability Forum. These foster cross-party discussion and exploration of options for priority areas in advance of formal decision making at council meetings. Officers engage with members on a one-to-one basis and directorates meet with relevant cabinet spokespersons on a regular basis. However, there is an opportunity to continue to develop collaborative working as not all members are engaged in these discussions and it is currently unclear how effectively the arrangements are working.

**95.** It is essential for elected members to work together as a collective body to make strategic decisions when facing increasingly difficult choices to ensure the Council's future financial sustainability.

## **Governance arrangements are well established but scrutiny arrangements could be improved**

**96.** The Council's governance arrangements have been set out in the annual governance statement in the annual accounts. We have reviewed these arrangements and concluded that they are appropriate.

**97.** The Council has appropriate governance arrangement in place which support effective scrutiny, challenge and decision making. Officers are responsive to elected members' requests for information. Briefings are regularly provided to give more detailed explanations than is possible in a formal Council meeting. Officers and members are mindful of the need to balance private briefings with public scrutiny and decision making.

**98.** We have concluded that overall, the Council has well established governance arrangements. However effective scrutiny, challenge and decision making arrangements could be improved to ensure audit recommendations are implemented in a timely manner.

## **The Council demonstrates a clear commitment to continue to develop and strengthen its leadership**

**99.** In 2022, East Lothian Council embarked on a leadership development programme for both the Corporate and Senior Management teams. The purpose of this programme was *'to further develop the Council as an enabling and empowering authority, where employees are able to use their initiative, take responsibility for their own learning and actions and have a real say in decisions and in the future work of the Council.'*

**100.** The Council was also keen to strengthen the collective leadership's capability and capacity and to demonstrate effective leadership behaviours and build a culture of continuous improvement. The Council Management team worked together to define leadership behaviours which reflected the values of the East Lothian Way.

**101.** The Corporate Management team and the Senior Management team (57 people) participated in 360 feedback and a series of 1:1 coaching sessions which explored the feedback and focused on the behaviours. The Council used behavioural science and change techniques and training with the aim of improving individual and team performance, processes/systems and manage change.

**102.** The Council has reported that this has led to several improvements and ongoing work, for example in improving communication and engagement with elected members, managing workloads and approaches to core learning and support for staff.

**103.** The next phase of the programme for 2024 – 2025 will roll out the programme to the next level of leaders at the Council below the senior leadership team.

**104.** The Council has reviewed and refreshed its Workforce Plan. The 2023-27 Workforce Plan supports new ways of working including hybrid working and improved digital skills. As part of the Best Value thematic work for 2023/24 the topic will be looking at **Workforce Innovation - how councils are responding to workforce challenges.**

## Tackling Climate change

**105.** The Scottish Parliament has set a legally binding target of becoming net zero by 2045 and has interim targets including a 75% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. The public sector in Scotland has a key role to play in ensuring these targets are met and in adapting to the impacts of climate change.

**106.** The Scottish Government has recently published guidance on public sector leadership on the global climate emergency to help public bodies in leading climate action. Addressing the climate emergency and setting actions to achieve net zero will need to be a key element of councils' recovery and renewal from the pandemic.

**107.** The Climate Change Act 2019 committed Scotland to Net Zero by 2045. The Public Bodies Climate Change Reporting Duties place a legal requirement on public bodies to set target dates for zero direct emissions and indirect emission reductions. They must also report on how spending and resources will contribute to these targets, and report on the body's contribution to Scotland's Climate Change Adaptation Programme.

## Climate emergency is one of the overarching objectives within the Council Plan. It is too early to conclude whether the Council is on track to achieve its Net Zero ambition

**108.** The Council Plan overarching objective to 'Respond to the climate emergency' is underpinned by the Climate Change Strategy 2020-25. This strategy sets out the Council's commitment to tackling the Climate Emergency at a local level, both internally as a 'Net Zero Council' and across the county as a 'Carbon Neutral East Lothian'. It links with other relevant strategies (e.g. local housing strategy, economic development strategy) and sets out specific outcomes, key priority areas and actions over an initial five-year period towards achieving the longer-term overall aims. There is a cross-party Climate Change and Sustainability Forum.

**109.** There have been three annual updates on progress against the Climate Change Strategy; the latest was in March 2023. This sets out some of the key annual achievements including a 15.2 per cent year on year reduction in the Council's carbon emissions, an increase from 86 per cent to 90 per cent achievement of the energy efficiency standard for social housing and making certified training in Carbon Literacy available to all Council staff.

**110.** Not all the actions in the Climate Change Strategy include specific targets for improvement. While it may not be relevant to set a SMART target in all cases; providing targets or additional context makes it easier to assess whether the reported progress against the strategy is enough to deliver the strategic



aims. It is too early to tell whether the Council's actions will deliver its strategic aim to achieve Net Zero.

**111.** The Council's Climate Change Strategy also links to partners and the local community. The annual update highlighted that the Sustainability and Climate Change officer was working closely with community groups and was in regular contact with Local Area Partnerships and Community Councils.

**112.** The Auditor General and Accounts Commission are developing a programme of work on climate change. This involves a blend of climate change-specific outputs that focus on key issues and challenges as well as moving towards integrating climate change considerations into all aspects of audit work.

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# 6. Use of resources to improve outcomes

Public sector bodies need to make best use of their resources to meet stated outcomes and improvement objectives, through effective planning and working with strategic partners and communities.

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## Conclusions

The Council's vision is aligned to the community plan priorities with community empowerment a key principle within the Council Plan.

Maintaining oversight of performance is challenging across the range of council services. A new set of **Top 50 indicators** has been produced to reflect the new Council Plan. Currently 34 of these 50 measures have stated targets. The Council needs to develop measures for the remaining indicators to clearly monitor the performance it wants to achieve in its priority areas.

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**113.** Making the best use of public resources is at the heart of delivering Best Value. With clear plans and strategies in place, and with sound governance and strong leadership, a council will be well placed to ensure that all its resources are deployed to achieve its strategic priorities, meet the needs of its communities, and deliver continuous improvement.

**114.** Recovery from the pandemic requires councils to work alongside their local communities. Councils, with their community planning partners, have a responsibility to ensure that people and communities can be fully involved in the decisions that affect their everyday lives.

**115.** Early and meaningful engagement and effective collaboration with communities should be a core part of determining a council's vision and priorities. This is essential both to identify and understand local needs, and to inform decisions that affect the planning and delivery of services.

## The Council's vision is aligned to the community plan priorities

**116.** The Council's objectives are aligned to the priorities set out in the East Lothian Plan 2017-2027 (the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan) prepared by the East Lothian Partnership. The Council has a significant role in delivering these priorities given the range of services it provides. The new Council Plan goes further than the East Lothian Plan in explicitly referencing climate change.

**117.** The three key themes of the East Lothian Plan are

- ‘Prosperous, Community-minded, and Fair,’ focused on ‘Reducing inequalities across our area
- Tackling poverty;
- Working to prevent problems - and acting quickly when problems start’.

**118.** The Council is a key community planning partner in the East Lothian Partnership. Each partner should have its priorities aligned to the East Lothian Plan, but each partner has a different role in delivering the partnership’s priorities. Partners were not directly involved in the development of the Council Plan but the vision, objectives and key priorities were shared through the East Lothian Partnership and in discussions with the Integration Joint Board.

**119.** Some key plans including the Recovery and Renewal Plan and East Lothian Poverty Plan have been adopted by both the Council and East Lothian Partnership, with governance of the Recovery and Renewal Plan overseen by the East Lothian Partnership Governance Group. Key partners have been engaged through the development of these to ensure partners help shape and inform council planning.

**120.** The East Lothian Plan was due to be reviewed but this work was delayed by the pandemic. A review of the East Lothian Plan is now due to take place later in 2023 following an update on the Strategic Needs Assessment that is underway and will inform the review work.

## **Community empowerment is a key principle within the Council Plan 2022-27**

**121.** The Council Plan and its underlying plans and strategies set out community empowerment as a key principle of the Council’s vision.

**122.** The Connected Communities Service has a key role in delivering the Council’s community empowerment objectives, encompassing the Community Learning and Development Service, support for Local Area Partnerships, Community Councils, and grant funding for community organisations. There are six locally based Connected Communities teams with a significant focus on taking a place-based approach.

**123.** There are six Local Area Partnerships in East Lothian. These are chaired by local residents and supported by the Council via Connected Communities managers. Elected members from the relevant wards attend the partnerships but recognise the partnerships’ independence. The partnerships foster good engagement and communication between local communities and the Council.

**124.** The Council has delegated a £200,000 budget to each partnership (Musselburgh £250,000) and the partnerships can also seek external funding. The Area Partnership can allocate:

- £50,000 on general projects in the area (£100,000 in Musselburgh)
- £50,000 of the Roads Service budget for the area

- £100,000 of the Amenity Services budget for the area.

**125.** Communities had the opportunity to put forward their views on Council priorities through public consultation for the 2023/24 budget. Further community engagement will be needed so that local citizens understand the difficult decisions needed to ensure financial sustainability of public services.

### **Existing community consultation was used to inform the Council Plan rather than a separate consultation exercise**

**126.** The Council did not carry out a separate public consultation specifically on the Council Plan but used existing consultations for other relevant plans including the Poverty Plan to obtain public views on strategic priority areas. Ongoing council engagement with community groups and Local Area Partnerships also provided local input.

**127.** Public consultation to inform the Local Development Plan 2 and other strategies is ongoing and this should give valuable information from local citizens and community groups on priority areas.

### **The Council's Covid-19 recovery and renewal plans support those most affected and address inequalities**

**128.** Following the pandemic the concept of community wealth building has gained momentum and received support from the Scottish Government and COSLA as a model for local economic development.

**129.** The Council's overarching objective to 'reduce poverty and inequality' is supported by a range of plans including the Poverty Plan 2021-23 and the Equality Plan. The need to consider the equalities impact of policies and council decisions is embedded in the policy- and decision-making process. The Council's latest Mainstreaming Equalities report is due to be published in Autumn 2023.

**130.** The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated and deepened existing inequalities in Scotland and the Recovery and Renewal Plan 2021 recognises this. Its action plan includes:

- support our communities to tackle inequality and social exclusion
- support business, employment and promote inclusive economic growth
- help our children and young people achieve their full potential
- invest in regeneration and a sustainable future
- develop our people and future ways of working
- maintain and develop resilient and sustainable services
- deliver improved connectivity & digital innovation to ensure the effective use of resources

- climate and ecological emergency.

**131.** The Recovery and Renewal Plan action tracker of performance indicators is reported to elected members; the latest version was provided to members in February 2023. A single set of poverty and equality performance indicators was approved in September 2023 by the Policy and Performance Review Committee.

**132.** The Fairer Scotland Duty requires councils to consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage. The Poverty Plan was drawn up by a multi-agency group and is based on a prevention and early intervention approach to tackling poverty. Local Area Partnerships also identify tackling poverty as a local priority.

**133.** The Poverty Plan 2021-23 is now due for review and renewal. The consultation to inform the Local Development Plan 2 will cover this and other areas. A series of joint consultation events on related subjects were held across East Lothian in June 2023 for residents and partners to find out more about preparations for the Council's Local Development Plan 2, Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy, Poverty Plan, Local Economy Strategy and Forestry Woodland Draft Strategy. Online consultation and paper consultation surveys are also available.

**134.** The Accounts Commissions [Local Government in Scotland: Overview 2022](#) highlights that those experiencing inequality have felt the impacts of both the pandemic and service disruption most strongly over the past two years. Initiatives such as CWB are recognised as being a good example of new ways in which councils can support local economic development and tackle poverty.

### **Maintaining oversight of performance is challenging across the range of council services. The Council needs to clearly set out the performance it wants to achieve in its priority areas**

**135.** The Council is a complex organisation which delivers a wide range of services. Delivery of the Council Plan and its objectives is carried out through key strategies and plans. The Council has a range of 18 plans and strategies underpinning the Council Plan's vision and objectives. These include the Recovery and Renewal Plan, the Poverty Plan, the Equality Plan, the Climate Change Strategy, the Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan, and the Economic Development Strategy.

**136.** The number of actions involved (290 actions in the first four plans alone) make it challenging for members to obtain oversight of the overall performance. A Council Plan Action Plan containing 68 actions was approved in October 2022 and includes the implementation of each of the relevant strategies/plans as single actions.

**137.** Monitoring and reporting on the Action Plan is through existing reporting mechanisms for the relevant key strategies and plans. The 'State of the Council' report presented to Council at end of each year provides a summary of progress against the Action Plan and a review of the Plan's performance indicators.

**138.** A new set of Top 50 indicators has been produced to reflect the new Council Plan including Covid-19 recovery and renewal and climate change. Currently 34 of these 50 measures have stated targets. The indicators were reported to the Policy and Performance Review Committee and approved by Council in February 2023.

**139.** As reported last year, the Council has effective performance management arrangements in place. The Policy and Performance Review Committee receives quarterly performance reports. The report on key performance indicators is grouped under the Council's four key objectives. The 2022/23 Quarter 4 Performance Report, the 2022/23 Top 50 Council Plan indicators Report, the 2022/23 Council Plan Annual Indicators Report and the 2021/22 Local Government Benchmarking Framework performance report were considered at the June 2023 Policy and Performance Review Committee meeting.

**140.** Given the financial challenges the Council faces it needs to set clear performance outcomes targets for each of its priority areas to ensure resources are allocated appropriately. As resources are aligned to the priority areas, the Council also needs to be clear on what is an acceptable level of performance in non-priority areas.

### **The Council's overall performance per national benchmarking has declined slightly compared to its prior year results**

**141.** The Council participates in the [Local Government Benchmarking Framework](#) (LGBF). The framework brings together a wide range of information about how all Scottish councils perform in delivering services, including the cost of services and how satisfied citizens are with them. The Council notes that the use of the LGBF allows it to self-assess its performance across years, and to compare performance with peers against an agreed suite of performance indicators, which will assist in achieving best practice and efficiencies.

**142.** The most recent [National Benchmarking Overview Report 2021-22](#) ([improvementservice.org.uk](http://improvementservice.org.uk)) by the Improvement Service was submitted to the Council's Policy and Performance Review Committee in June 2023. When comparing the indicator's reported, the Council's overall performance has declined with its own prior year performance.

**143.** Across the 90 reported indicators in 2021/22, the Council's performance has improved against 26, declined against 32 and remained static against 32. In terms of the Council's figures relative to the Scottish average, performance was better than Scottish average for 45 indicators. Overall, 54 per cent of the Council's indicators are in quartile 1 and 2 compared to 57 per cent in 2020/21.

### **Service performance is not being fully reported in line with the expectations of the statutory performance indicators (SPIs)**

**144.** The Accounts Commission issued a new [Statutory Performance Information Direction](#) in December 2021 which applies for the three years from 2022/23. It requires a council to report its:

- performance in improving local public services (including those provided with its partners and communities), and progress against agreed desired outcomes (SPI 1). The Commission expects this reporting to allow comparison both over time and with other similar bodies (drawing on Local Government Benchmarking Framework and/or other benchmarking activities)
- own assessment and audit, scrutiny, and inspection body assessments of how it is performing against its duty of Best Value, and how it has responded to these assessments (SPI 2).

**145.** Our work in 2022/23 has reviewed the Council's performance reporting arrangements. The Council's website covers all the requirements set out in the SPI direction issued by the Accounts Commission. As detailed above only 34 of the Council's new Top 50 measures have stated targets. We will continue to monitor this in future years.

# Appendix 1. Action plan 2022/23

## 2022/23 recommendations

Issue/risk	Recommendation	Agreed management action/timing
<p><b>1. Capital programme</b></p> <p>At the June 2023 Council meeting, the general services outturn capital programme spend was reported as £84.341 million for 2022/23, against a revised in year budget of £111.310 million representing a slippage of 25 per cent.</p> <p><b>Risk</b> – Delayed investment can lead to inefficiencies in the existing estate with adverse impact on service delivery.</p>	<p>The Council should review the underlying reasons for reprofiling of the capital programmes to identify opportunities to improve the project management and budget setting procedures in place. Where the capital programme has been paused as a result of mitigation measures the Council should assess the affordability of delivering the current capital programme.</p> <p><a href="#">Paragraph 47</a></p>	<p><b>Management Response:</b></p> <p>This recommendation has now been completed, and the affordability of the capital programme will be subject to ongoing review.</p> <p><b>Responsible officer:</b></p> <p>Head of Finance / Executive Director for Council Resources</p> <p><b>Agreed date:</b></p> <p>Complete.</p>
<p><b>2. Transformational change</b></p> <p>The Council should continue to identify where it can progress transformational change in how its services are delivered. This should identify where recurring savings, rather than temporary solutions, can be made together with proposals to reduce costs.</p>	<p>The Council should continue to identify where it can progress transformational change in how services are delivered to address the longer-term financial pressures it faces.</p> <p><a href="#">Paragraph 66</a></p>	<p><b>Management Response:</b></p> <p>The Council is currently undertaking a review of its Transformational priorities, and this is set in the context of the Financial Strategy and Council Plan. The Transformation Strategy is due to be reported to Cabinet in May.</p> <p><b>Responsible officer:</b></p> <p>Executive Management Team</p> <p><b>Agreed date:</b></p> <p>May 2024</p>
<p><b>3. Information and Communication Technology (ICT)</b></p>	<p>The Council needs to prioritise where it can invest in digital services to deliver</p>	<p><b>Management Response:</b></p> <p>A digital pipeline prioritisation project remains on-going and</p>



Issue/risk	Recommendation	Agreed management action/timing
<p>Public sector bodies are increasingly dependent on ICT systems for the provision of services and management information. The Council has identified the need to invest in digital technology to drive transformation.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> There is a risk of key policies and processing not keeping pace with internal demands and external risks and digital services do not deliver required savings.</p>	<p>savings in the longer term. The Council needs to strengthen their digital strategy, cyber security, business continuity management and associated policies to address prior year audit recommendations.</p> <p><a href="#">Paragraph 72</a></p>	<p>will be determined through Digital Transformation Board.</p> <p><b>Responsible officer:</b> Executive Director for Council Resources / IT Service Manager</p> <p><b>Agreed date:</b> Ongoing</p>
<p><b>4. Financial resilience</b></p> <p>Given the scale of the challenges there is an opportunity to enhance its focus on financial resilience, including greater emphasis on its reserves position; clear financial resilience indicators and measures; and alignment to risks ensuring there is a clear financial strategy to support a resilient council.</p>	<p>Given the scale of the financial challenges facing the Council it should ensure that in developing its financial strategy and annual budget there is a clear consideration around its financial resilience, including the level of reserves to allow the Council to meet unforeseen costs and pressures. The Council should also enhance the level of monitoring around financial resilience indicators and risks.</p> <p><a href="#">Paragraph 78</a></p>	<p><b>Management Response:</b> Agreed</p> <p><b>Responsible officer:</b> Head of Finance / Executive Director for Council Resources (Chief Financial Officer)</p> <p><b>Agreed date:</b> Ongoing</p>

## 2022/23 recommendations from the BV thematic report

Issue/risk	Recommendation	Agreed management action/timing
<p><b>1. Performance monitoring targets</b></p> <p>The Council has not set targets for all of its Top 50 performance indicators (or for all of the performance measures in its delivery plans). This makes it difficult to assess whether the</p>	<p>The Council should be clear on the level of performance outcomes it aims to achieve against its priorities. It should also be clear on acceptable reductions in performance in non-priority areas as resources are aligned to priorities.</p>	<p><b>Management Response:</b> Agreed. A number of the indicators were new this year and take time for the council to embed and set realistic, measurable targets. The Council aim to have these in place for the Top 50 performance indicators by</p>

Issue/risk	Recommendation	Agreed management action/timing
<p>Council is on track to deliver its strategic priorities.</p>		<p>December 2023. The Service Management Policy, Performance and Organisational Development will work with Services to have the remainder in place by June 2024.</p> <p><b>Responsible Officer:</b> Service Manager Policy, Performance and Organisational Development</p> <p><b>Target date:</b> June 2024.</p>
<p><b>2. Financial planning to address increasing challenges</b></p> <p>The Council faces uncertainty over future funding and increasing financial pressures. Radical solutions are needed to deliver sustainable services and robust long term financial planning is needed to support strategic decision making.</p>	<p>The Council should develop its longer-term financial planning including scenario planning using a range of assumptions to identify service delivery options as future funding remains uncertain.</p>	<p><b>Management Response:</b></p> <p>Agreed. The Council already sets out medium term scenario planning to support financial planning. This is set out annually in the Financial Strategy and updated regularly to Council. Officers will keep this 'live' during the year and give further consideration to extending this beyond the 5 year period.</p> <p><b>Responsible Officer:</b></p> <p>Executive Director for Council Resources (CFO) + Head of Finance</p> <p><b>Target date:</b> Complete</p>
<p><b>3. Investment needed to deliver sustainable services</b></p> <p>The Council has identified the need to invest in digital technology to drive transformation. There are many council systems which are older and identified as due for replacement but the resources to fund this are not available. Difficult decisions are needed to prioritise where</p>	<p>The Council should review and prioritise the investment needed to support sustainable service delivery into the future. Investment in new technologies needs to be well managed and requires well planned investment as pressures to cut costs could lead to failure and increased costs in the longer term.</p>	<p><b>Management Response:</b></p> <p>Agreed. A review of current Transformational Priorities is on-going and includes Digital pipeline and prioritisation work. The Council has agreed an updated Reserves strategy which includes Digital support as a key enabler to support transformational change. The Digital Strategy Board is chaired by the Exec Director for Council Resources and</p>

Issue/risk	Recommendation	Agreed management action/timing
investment will have the greatest benefit.		<p>will consider and prioritise critical digital investment and future plans.</p> <p><b>Responsible Officer:</b></p> <p>Executive Director for Council Resources (CFO) + Head of Finance</p> <p><b>Target date:</b> Ongoing</p>

## Follow-up of prior year recommendations 2021/22 and 2020/21

Issue/risk	Recommendation	Agreed management action/timing
<p><b>1. Information and Communication Technology (ICT)</b></p> <p>Public sector bodies are increasingly dependent on ICT systems for the provision of services and management information.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> There is a risk of key policies and processing not keeping pace with internal demands and external risks.</p>	<p>We have highlighted a number of improvements that could be made to strengthen the digital strategy, cyber security, business continuity management and associated policies.</p>	<p><b>Management response:</b> Officers are currently considering all recommendations, and progress has been made with updating strategies and relevant policies.</p> <p><b>Responsible officer:</b></p> <p>Service Manager - IT</p> <p><b>Agreed date:</b></p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p><b>See recommendation 1 for 2022/23</b></p>
<p><b>2. Dr Bruce Fund</b></p> <p>Minimal payments are being paid out of the Fund.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> There is a continuing risk that the trust fund is not operating effectively to meet its objectives (e.g. lack of provision of grants annually) and the trustees are not discharging their duties correctly.</p>	<p>The Council and the Dr Bruce Fund Trustees should work together to ensure the Fund is being actively managed and used for the purposes intended.</p>	<p><b>Management response and revised action:</b></p> <p>The Council considered a Trust Funds Review report in June 2023. Members agreed in principle to explore the transfer of stewardship and administration of the trust funds, including the Dr Bruce Fund, to a specialist third party.</p> <p><b>Responsible officer:</b></p> <p>Executive Director for Council Resources / Head of Finance</p> <p><b>Revised date:</b></p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Issue/risk	Recommendation	Agreed management action/timing
<p><b>3. Common Good (CG) review</b></p> <p>Following a review by the council's legal team, a significant number of council assets (land and buildings) have now been identified as belonging to the common good. This was despite an annual corporate review arrangement and the council's formal five year valuation cycle both of which were intended to identify common good assets.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> There is a continuing risk that not all common good assets have been identified.</p>	<p>Processes for identifying and confirming assets held should be reviewed and amended. The formal valuation cycle itself is insufficient to gain the appropriate assurances that assets are classified correctly. The council should continue to progress the CG review. Having recognised that the council is using common good assets for the provision of council services, the council should ensure that suitable financial recharging for use by Council Services should be set-up.</p>	<p><b>Management response and revised action:</b></p> <p>Although limitations due to business continuity arrangements, including specifically Finance and Legal services continued, a report on the progress of the Common Good review was submitted to the Council on 23 August 2022.</p> <p><b>Responsible officer:</b></p> <p>Executive Director for Council Resources / Service Manager – Governance</p> <p><b>Revised date:</b></p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p><b>4. Trust funds review</b></p>	<p>We repeat our recommendation that the Council should progress and conclude on their review of common good and trust funds including an exercise to consider whether there is scope to consolidate any/all of the 46 trusts.</p> <p>This should include a review of the method(s) used to promote the Dr Bruce Fund and other charitable trusts to ensure that the potential availability of these funds is known to the wider community.</p>	<p><b>Management response and revised action:</b></p> <p>The Council considered a Trust Funds Review report in June 2023. Members agreed in principle to explore the transfer of stewardship and administration of the trust funds to a specialist third party. Some funds, particularly those with property assets, may be retained within the Council's stewardship.</p> <p><b>Responsible officer:</b></p> <p>Executive Director for Council Resources / Head of Finance</p> <p><b>Revised date:</b></p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p><b>5. Reporting outcomes against improvement actions</b></p> <p>The Council monitors performance through its annual Corporate</p>	<p>The Council's reporting and monitoring against its improvement plan could be further improved to update members on what has been achieved</p>	<p><b>Management response and revised action:</b></p> <p>The Council considered and approved the East Lothian Council 2021 Annual Performance and 'State of the</p>

Issue/risk	Recommendation	Agreed management action/timing
<p>Governance Self-evaluation and Annual Governance Statement (CGSAGS) with the most recent report presented to the Audit and Governance Committee in June 2020.</p> <p>The corporate governance self-evaluation tends to list policy documents or assurance frameworks, rather than evaluate evidence of their effectiveness of delivering against improvement actions.</p> <p>The report contains comprehensive detail on what the Council does / has in place, without evidencing what results have been achieved.</p> <p>The report against the Council's improvement action plan focuses more on the number of actions completed, rather than the improved ways of working or delivery of services through improvement actions, such as implementation of the Council's workforce plan.</p>	<p>through its improvement actions.</p>	<p>Council' report, How Good Is Your Council in December 2021.</p> <p>In March 2022, the Outline of the Council Plan 2022-27 was approved and included an update on progress with strategic goals, commitments and actions set out in the 2017-2022 Council Plan.</p> <p>In June 2022, the Audit and Governance Committee considered the progress in achieving the Council Improvement Plan 2021-2022. Subsequently in August 2022, the Council approved the 2022-2027 Council Plan.</p> <p>A detailed Action Plan supporting implementation of the new Council Plan 2022-2027 will be presented to East Lothian Council on 25 October 2022.</p> <p>Work is in progress to review the Council Plan's Top 50 Performance Indicators, taking account of the recently approved Council Plan, and these will be presented to the Policy and Performance Review Committee for consideration before coming to full Council for approval in the coming months.</p> <p>The Annual State of the Council 2022 report, which is presented to Council at the end of each year, will provide a summary of progress of the Council Plan 2022-2027, Action Plan, and review Council Plan Performance Indicators.</p> <p><b>Responsible officer:</b></p> <p>Council Management Team / Service Manager Policy, Improvement &amp; Partnership</p> <p><b>Revised date:</b></p>

Issue/risk	Recommendation	Agreed management action/timing
		Complete

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# Appendix 2. Summary of corrected and uncorrected misstatements

We report all corrected and uncorrected misstatements in the annual accounts that are individually greater than our reporting threshold of £250,000.

The table below summarises misstatements that were **corrected** in the financial statements.

Narrative	Account areas	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		Balance Sheet	
		Dr	Cr	Dr	Cr
Single Entity		£000	£000	£000	£000
Pension – unfunded liability adjustments.	Pension reserve			12,194	
	Pension liability				12,194
Prior year revaluation/uplift of operational assets.	Property, plant, and equipment			10,294	
	Revaluation Reserve				10,294
Current year revaluation/uplift of operational assets.	Property, plant, and equipment			21,191	
	Revaluation Reserve				18,737
	Capital Adjustment Account				2,454

The table below summarises misstatements that were **uncorrected** within the financial statements.

Narrative	Account areas	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		Balance Sheet	
		Dr	Cr	Dr	Cr
Single Entity		£000	£000	£000	£000
Non pay expenditure	Non pay expenditure		1,827		
	Prepayments			1,827	
Group		£000	£000	£000	£000
Lothian Valuation Joint Board	Pension reserve			781	
	Pension assets				781



# East Lothian Council

## 2022/23 Annual Audit Report

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**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Council  
**MEETING DATE:** 23 April 2024  
**BY:** Executive Director for Council Resources  
**SUBJECT:** Finance Update

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**3**

## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To provide an update on the 2024/25 budget, specifically the additional funding allocation announced following the Chancellor's Spring Budget announcement on 6 March.
- 1.2 To provide an update on budget mitigation measures agreed by Council in August 2023.
- 1.3 To provide an update on the work of the external auditor for financial year 2022/23.
- 1.4 To outline the process for setting the financial strategy and budgets for 2025/26 onwards.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Council is recommended to:
  - Note the messages set out within the Deputy First Minister's letter of 7 March 2024 and estimated implications for the council, as set out in paragraph 3.3;
  - Agree that any additional unringfenced funding will be used as set out in paragraph 3.9;
  - Note that the mitigation measure to pause non-committed capital expenditure ceased to be in place from 1 April 2024, following the adoption of the updated capital programme for 2024/25 onwards by Council on 20 February 2024;

- Agree that all other mitigation measures shall remain in place until the provisional outturn for 2023/24 is considered by Council, in June 2024;
- Note that the statutory audit of the 2022/23 accounts for the Council and group has now concluded, with an unqualified audit opinion being issued on 20 March 2024.
- Agree the indicative timetable for setting the budget for 2025/26 onwards, outlined in paragraph 3.19.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

#### 2024/25 Budget Update

- 3.1 The budget for 2024/25 onwards was agreed by Council on 20 February 2024, and reflected the following:
- Council tax freeze in 2024/25, supported by £3.4m funding
  - Revenue savings of £16.5m over the next 5 years, including £9.75m to be delivered in the next financial year
  - Use of £1m reserves, to be repaid in 2025/26
  - Capital investment (general services) of £364m over the next 5 years.
- 3.2 The budget was developed on the basis of the draft local government finance settlement, which was finalised on 28 February 2024. On 21 February, the Deputy First Minister wrote to Council Leaders confirming that, subject to the overall funding position improving following the UK Government's Spring Budget on 6 March, the Scottish Government would pass through to local government £45 million of anticipated consequentials and increase the local government General Revenue Grant by a further £17.7 million, reflecting a total uplift of £62.7m.
- 3.3 Following the subsequent UK Government Spring Budget announcement on 6 March, the Deputy First Minister confirmed that additional unringfenced funding of £62.7m would be allocated to Scottish councils who had elected to freeze council tax in 2024/25. As notified to Council in setting its budget on 20 February 2024, East Lothian Council will therefore receive a share of the additional funding.
- 3.4 The Council has not yet received confirmation of its respective share of this additional funding; however, at this stage it is estimated that this may be in the region of £1.2m.
- 3.5 In addition to the additional £62.7 million, the letters confirmed the Deputy First Minister's commitment to pass on any consequentials received for increased teacher pension contributions, which is consistent with the assumptions within the budget agreed by Council on 20 February.

- 3.6 The budget agreed for 2024/25 reflects a significant degree of risk across a number of areas including delivery of planned savings & income, reserve levels, pay, funding, interest rates, demand management, population growth and legislative changes.
- 3.7 Since the budget meeting, officers have been working to develop detailed plans to support the delivery of agreed savings, and there remain some significant risks to achieving all of this within the next financial year. Commitment remains to delivering these aligned to the decision made by Council, but any delays will be likely to cause overspends during 2024/25. Progress will be reported to Council at regular intervals throughout the year as part of the quarterly budget monitoring process.
- 3.8 In light of the Council's critically low level of reserves within the general fund, it is vital that action is taken to avoid further unplanned use of reserves as a consequence of in-year overspends. If this is not achieved, then the Council will face a genuine risk to its capacity to meet its expenditure obligations over the medium term.
- 3.9 Taking these factors into account, it is strongly recommended that the additional funding is used as follows, which aligns to the principles set out within the February Council report:
- To mitigate the risks of overspends which arise from delays to delivering agreed savings
  - To reduce the planned use of reserves in 2024/25
  - To offset wider and emerging risks throughout the next financial year.
- 3.10 Use of the additional funding in this way will help to protect the general fund and support financial resilience.

#### 2023/24 – Update on mitigation measures

- 3.11 In response to the severity of the financial position facing the Council, and the forecast overspend for the 2023/24 financial year, Council approved the following mitigation measures in August 2023:
- All Council managers must operate within approved budget levels to deliver their service commitments, including preserving existing underspends. Where a service is overspent or at risk of overspending, urgent financial recovery actions will be required in order to bring spending in line with approved budget levels.
  - Further targeted controls will be put in place to review and control recruitment and enhanced review existing vacancies. This temporary targeted action will mean that some facilities may have to be closed and that service delivery will be directly affected. This may also result in further service business continuity plans being

invoked. These additional targeted controls will include the following areas:

- Any post which has been vacant for longer than 6 months will be subject to an enhanced review, and where possible deleted.
- The Council will implement a temporary recruitment freeze, with the following prioritised exceptions:
  - posts aligned to the delivery of essential statutory functions;
  - Posts that will have a direct impact on life and limb;
  - Posts supporting key critical enablers of transformational change;
  - Posts which are fully externally funded.
- All posts being considered for recruitment must be vacant and supported by a clear business plan, and signed off by relevant Head of Service. Deviation from this approach will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and must have Head of Service / Executive Team approval.
- The Council will implement further controls in the use of agency spend and overtime, with any request authorised in advance by Head of Service, and must be aligned to supporting the delivery of essential statutory functions. Managers are expected to make use of framework providers unless there is a clear justification not to do so.
- The Council will implement a delay to the current recruitment process, with posts progressing to recruitment being considered every 2 weeks.
- Council officers will work with partner bodies, including the Integration Joint Board, to ensure that appropriate recovery actions are in place to mitigate the overspending.
- Council officers will continue to progress a review of operational assets, with a view to optimise usage in cost terms including minimising energy and maintenance costs and where possible bring forward capital receipts to offset net borrowing requirements. This will also include mothballing buildings with particular focus on assets where utilisation/demand remains low, costs remain high and/or where staffing levels are not adequate to safely open the building to the public.

3.12 These measures were designed to be temporary and do not represent a sustainable solution to the Council's financial challenges, nor replace the need for longer term decisions to be made to achieve financial

sustainability over the medium term. However, they remain an appropriate and necessary short-term response to the unprecedented challenges which the Council continues to face.

- 3.13 Council agreed the capital programme for 2024/25 onwards on 20 February 2024, and this decision superseded the mitigation measure in relation to pausing non-committed capital expenditure. Capital spending therefore resumed in line with this decision from 1 April 2024.
- 3.14 It is recommended that all other mitigation measures should remain in place until the provisional outturn position is reported to Council in June. At this point the need for the continuation of mitigation measures will be subject to review.
- 3.15 In addition to the mitigation measures detailed within paragraph 3.11, action was taken during the year to address a projected overspend on the Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) by moving to the 'high and most compelling' criteria for assessing applications for Community Care Grants. This change took effect from 1 September 2023 and remained in place until the end of the financial year. During this time the service has continued to make all efforts to support applicants to the fund while seeking to minimise budget overspends, and has worked closely with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman to handle the increased level of appeals caused by the high rate of unsuccessful applications.
- 3.16 The SWF budget allocation for the 2024/25 financial year has now been announced, and the high and most compelling criteria ceased to apply from 1 April. However, it remains necessary to maintain a high threshold for applications to ensure that the limited available funds reach those most in need of them. This will remain under close review during 2024/25, and consideration will be given to moving back to the high and most compelling criteria if there is a risk of budget overspends.

#### 2022/23 Audit

- 3.17 Following on from previous updates concerning the statutory audit of the 2022/23 financial statements, and delays to finalising the audit, this work has now concluded with an unqualified audit opinion given on 20 March 2024.
- 3.18 The 2022/23 audit is therefore complete, and the Annual Audit Report features as a separate item on the agenda for this meeting. This is a significant achievement and supports our capacity to demonstrate accountability for public spending incurred by the Council.

#### Budget development 2025/26 onwards

- 3.19 As noted elsewhere in this report, work to develop financial plans for 2025/26 onwards must now continue. It is crucial that this work commences at an early stage in order to allow sufficient time to develop

sustainable approaches to closing the significant budget gap which the Council is facing. The recommended next steps are outlined within the table below. It should be noted that these plans are indicative and subject to change.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Action</b>
June 2024	Council	To consider the financial landscape and context for budget setting for 2025/26 onwards.
August 2024	Council	Q1 financial update report, to include an overview of progress towards delivering agreed savings for 2024/25.
October 2024	Council	Draft financial outlook report to Council, setting out high level budget forecasts and measures to balance the budget for 2025/26 onwards.
December 2024	Council	Q2 financial update report, to include an overview of progress towards delivering agreed savings for 2025/26.
December 2024	Council	Consider the financial and capital strategies for 2025/26 onwards.
January 2024	Cabinet	Consider the initial messages from the draft local government finance settlement and the high-level budget plan.
February 2024	Council	Agree the revenue and capital budgets for general services and the HRA for 2025/26 onwards, and to set council tax and rent levels for the forthcoming financial year. Agree the treasury management strategy.

*Table 1: Indicative budget development timetable 2025/26 onwards*

3.20 Council is asked to agree the indicative timetable. Alongside this, over the coming weeks, officers will undertake a review of the effectiveness of cross-party working on the budget through a series of debrief sessions with members of the cross-party budget working group, with a view to identifying potential improvements to this. In addition, consideration will be given as to how all councillors can engage informally with this process.



3.21 The budget development framework agreed by Council in June 2022 reflects a commitment to cross-party working and this approach remains aligned to good practice. It is therefore assumed that these arrangements will continue for the development of future budgets, noting that this is not a decision-making forum but aims to complement the formal elements of the budget-setting process. However, it is recognised that the effective operation of these arrangements will continue to evolve and improve over time.

**4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no direct policy implications associated with this report, although, ongoing monitoring and reporting of the Council’s financial performance is a key part of the approved Financial Strategy.

**5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

5.1 The subject of this report has been considered and given there is no change in policy direction, there is no requirement to undertake any further impact assessment.

**6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Financial – as described in the report.

6.2 Personnel - none

6.3 Other – none

**7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Council – 20 February 2024 – Item 2 – Budget Development 2024/25 onwards

<b>AUTHOR’S NAME</b>	Ellie Dunnet
<b>DESIGNATION</b>	Head of Finance
<b>CONTACT INFO</b>	<a href="mailto:edunnet@eastlothian.gov.uk">edunnet@eastlothian.gov.uk</a>
<b>DATE</b>	28 March 2024



**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Council  
**MEETING DATE:** 23 April 2024  
**BY:** Executive Director for Council Resources  
**SUBJECT:** Common Good Budget 2024/25

---

**4**

## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To provide an update on Common Good Funds and agree the proposed budgets for 2024/25.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 The Council is recommended to:

- Note the ongoing financial challenges relating to the current economic climate and the risks that this presents to the Common Good Funds;
- Approve the 2024/25 grants budget for Dunbar, Haddington, Musselburgh, and North Berwick as set out in Appendices 2a-2d, noting the context for future budget development;
- Approve the Grounds Maintenance budgets within Musselburgh Common Good as set out in section 3.10 from financial year 2024/25 onwards; and
- Note that a review of property maintenance requirements is ongoing, and that updates to the proposed budgets will be brought back to Council in June if the review presents a requirement for a material change to these budgets.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Council's approved Standing Orders and Scheme of Administration states the following:

- Council will approve an annual budget for each of the Common Good Funds that will include provision for the maintenance of assets and any committed items of expenditure.

- Each Common Good Committee has authority to approve the following for the benefit of the community:
    - Award a grant of up to £10,000 where there is sufficient budget.
    - Approve revenue expenditure of up to £10,000 for the maintenance of the assets of the fund, if any individual award can be met within the overall approved budget.
- 3.2 Common Good investment income and funds should be used to maintain the Common Good asset base with any surplus funds being used to benefit the inhabitants of the area covered by the funds.

### **Budget Development**

- 3.3 Council approved the Common Good budget for 2023/24 in June 2023. The budgets are updated annually, and take into consideration the following key components:
- a. Previous year review and updated fund balances.
  - b. Roll forward of indicative budgets, taking into consideration any updated assumptions relating to:
    - Projected expenditure commitments in particularly relating to ongoing repairs and maintenance of Common Good assets.
    - Projected income to the funds relating to rental income and investment income.
- 3.4 The funds have traditionally forecast to deliver a surplus, with levels of grants available to support the community set at a reasonable level to ensure the fund values could continue to meet current obligations and sustain a value of investment for future benefit.

### 2022/23 Financial Position

- 3.5 The accounts for 2022/23 were approved on 20 March 2024. The fund balances as at 31 March 2023 of all Common Good Funds including Cockenzie, Port Seton and Tranent remain aligned to the draft position reported to Council on 27 June 2023 and totals £13.133 million. Further detail is set out at **Appendix 1** of this report.
- 3.6 The fund balances also reflect the historic cost of Common Good property assets amounting to £3.977 million. This represents the proportion of the value of property assets which the Common Good funds may direct to achieve their objectives. As previously reported to members, some properties are inalienable and therefore their values cannot be realised through sale of assets.

### Current Position and Risks

3.7 Council is aware that there remains a number of key risks within each of the Common Good funds and these are highlighted below:

- An enhanced asset management plan to support future revenue and capital investment requirements in Common Good assets/properties remains under review and will be informed by asset condition survey reports aligned to the wider asset review. These are expected to be available by summer 2024. These surveys will inform the ongoing and future capital investment requirements in order to maintain the assets held by each Common Good fund and will take into consideration the available resources which each fund holds. Common Good funds must first and foremost be used to support the ongoing maintenance of assets, and this may have a significant impact on future budgets.
- The fund is supported by significant levels of investment which remains subject to market conditions and remain subject to ongoing discussion with treasury investment advisers. The need to ensure the ongoing viability of the investment funds remains essential to ensure the long-term benefits of the Common Good investments.
- As previously reported to Council there remains significant and ongoing challenges associated with Brunton Hall due to the identification of structural issues related to the use of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC). Detailed surveys and options appraisal work remains ongoing, and the affordability of any solution will need to be part of the wider consideration in terms of key next steps.

### 2024/25 Budgets

3.8 Notwithstanding the wide range of ongoing risks and variables which may impact on future budgets, it remains important for Common Good Committees to have some certainty in approved budgets, including any available budgets to consider any grant applications during 2024/25.

3.9 Until there is clarity on some of these risks, it is recommended that Council approve a 2024/25 Common Good budget, which has been rolled forward from previous approved budget, and updated with the assumptions set out in the section below:

- Based on commentary from the appointed investment managers, and current forecast market conditions, there has been no assumption to reflect an investment return during 2024/25. This position will remain under close review during the financial year and remains a key area of risk.
- Future capital investment requirements will be taken into consideration once updated asset management information is available. Each Common Good fund holds a number of assets, many

of which require ongoing investment and maintenance.

- Grant levels for each of the Common Good funds remains consistent with those approved for 2023/24. These levels will remain subject to change given both investment and future asset management investment requirements.

3.10 As part of the ongoing review of Common Good budgets, it has been identified that there are significant costs incurred by grounds maintenance to support assets held by Musselburgh Common Good. As such it is recommended that these costs are recharged to the Common Good. This will enable the continued provision of this service by the Council on behalf of the Common Good. Officers will continue to review the wider costs to maintain Common good assets, and any changes will be brought back to Council as part of future budget deliberations.

3.11 Noting the points set out above, the draft budgets for 2024-2025 for each of the Common Good Funds are set out in **Appendix 2a-d** of this report for consideration and approval.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no direct policy implications associated with this report, although ongoing monitoring and reporting of the Council's financial performance is a key part of the approved Financial Strategy.

#### **5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

5.1 The subject of this report has been considered and given there is no change in policy direction, there is no requirement to undertake any further impact assessment.

#### **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Financial – as described above.

6.2 Personnel - none

6.3 Other – none

#### **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 Council 27 June 2023 – Item 5 Common Good Budgets 2023/24

<b>AUTHOR'S NAME</b>	Keith Gemmell Ellie Dunnet
<b>DESIGNATION</b>	Principal Accountant Head of Finance
<b>CONTACT INFO</b>	edunnet@eastlothian.gov.uk
<b>DATE</b>	5 April 2024

**Appendix 1 - Common Good Fund Balances 2022/23 (signed off 20/3/24)**

<b>Fund</b>	<b>22/23 Fund Balance</b>	<b>Balance Related to Unrealised Fair Value Gains on Investments</b>	<b>22/23 Fund balances (Excluding Investments fair value movements)</b>	<b>Historic Cost of Property Assets (PPE)</b>	<b>22/23 Fund Balance (Excluding FV Investments and Historic Cost of PPE)</b>
<i>Balances at 31/03/2023 (audited financial statements)</i>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Dunbar	970	6	964	730	234
Haddington	820	15	805	208	597
Musselburgh	9,217	608	8,609	1,489	7,120
North Berwick	1,703	35	1,668	1,135	533
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>12,710</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>12,046</b>	<b>3,562</b>	<b>8,484</b>
Cockenzie, Port Seton & Tranent	423	0	423	415	8
<b>TOTAL COMMON GOOD FUND BALANCE</b>	<b>13,133</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>12,469</b>	<b>3,977</b>	<b>8,492</b>

\*Fund balances may be subject to variation based on common good grants awarded since April.

Draft 23/24 Financial Statements are still to be prepared and Investec Reports should be received later in April 2024.



**Appendix 2 – Summary – For information only as each Common Good is a separate entity**

**Consolidated Common Good  
Income & expenditure Budget**

	Approved	Draft budgets
	Budget 2023/24 £000	Indicative Budgets 2024/25 £000
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Premises - Repairs & Maintenance	97	66
Premises - Rates	29	29
Supplies & Services	61	184
Grants	174	174
Depreciation	86	86
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>539</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Rents & Other Income	-488	-488
Interest / Investment Income (inc realised gains and losses on sale of investments) *	-2	-2
Dividend income *	-83	-83
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-573</b>	<b>-573</b>
<b>Cost of Services</b>	<b>-126</b>	<b>-34</b>
<b>Net Surplus/Deficit for the year</b>	<b>-126</b>	<b>-34</b>
Common Good Balance *	-12,710	-12,836
<b>Accumulated Fund</b>	<b>-12,836</b>	<b>-12,870</b>

## Appendix 2a

### Dunbar Common Good Income & expenditure Budget

	Approved	Draft budgets
	Budget 2023/24 £000	Indicative Budgets 2024/25 £000
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Premises - Repairs & Maintenance	20	10
Premises - Rates	0	0
Supplies & Services	4	4
Grants	4	4
Depreciation	30	30
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Rents & Other Income	-19	-19
Interest / Investment Income (inc realised gains and losses on sale of investments) *	0	0
Dividend income *	-1	-1
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-20</b>	<b>-20</b>
<b>Cost of Services</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Net Surplus/Deficit for the year</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>28</b>
Common Good Balance *	-970	-932
<b>Accumulated Fund</b>	<b>-932</b>	<b>-904</b>

\* Excluding unrealised gains and losses on the fair value of investments

## Appendix 2b

### Haddington Common Good Income & expenditure Budget

	Approved	Draft budgets
	Budget 2023/24 £000	Indicative Budgets 2024/25 £000
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Premises - Repairs & Maintenance	1	1
Premises - Rates	0	0
Supplies & Services	1	1
Grants	10	10
Depreciation	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Rents & Other Income	-27	-27
Interest / Investment Income (inc realised gains and losses on sale of investments) *	0	0
Dividend income *	-2	-2
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-29</b>	<b>-29</b>
<b>Cost of Services</b>	<b>-17</b>	<b>-17</b>
<b>Net Surplus/Deficit for the year</b>	<b>-17</b>	<b>-17</b>
Common Good Balance *	-820	-837
<b>Accumulated Fund</b>	<b>-837</b>	<b>-854</b>

\* Excluding unrealised gains and losses on the fair value of investments

## Appendix 2c

### Musselburgh Common Good Income & expenditure Budget

	Approved	Draft budgets
	Budget 2023/24 £000	Indicative Budgets 2024/25 £000
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Premises - Repairs & Maintenance	45	45
Premises - Rates	24	24
Supplies & Services	52	175
Grants	150	150
Depreciation	51	51
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>445</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Rents & Other Income	-404	-404
Interest / Investment Income (inc realised gains and losses on sale of investments) *	-2	-2
Dividend income *	-76	-76
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-482</b>	<b>-482</b>
<b>Cost of Services</b>	<b>-160</b>	<b>-37</b>
<b>Net Surplus/Deficit for the year</b>	<b>-160</b>	<b>-37</b>
Common Good Balance *	-9,217	-9,377
<b>Accumulated Fund</b>	<b>-9,377</b>	<b>-9,414</b>

\* Excluding unrealised gains and losses on the fair value of investments

## Appendix 2d

### North Berwick Common Good Income & expenditure Budget

	Approved	Draft budgets
	Budget 2023/24 £000	Indicative Budgets 2024/25 £000
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Premises - Repairs & Maintenance	31	10
Premises - Rates	5	5
Supplies & Services	4	4
Grants	10	10
Depreciation	5	5
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Rents & Other Income	-38	-38
Interest / Investment Income (inc realised gains and losses on sale of investments) *	0	0
Dividend income *	-4	-4
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-42</b>	<b>-42</b>
<b>Cost of Services</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>-8</b>
<b>Net Surplus/Deficit for the year</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>-8</b>
Common Good Balance *	-1,703	-1,690
<b>Accumulated Fund</b>	<b>-1,690</b>	<b>-1,698</b>

\* Excluding unrealised gains and losses on the fair value of investments



**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Council  
**MEETING DATE:** 23 April 2024  
**BY:** Director of Health and Social Care  
**SUBJECT:** Non-Residential Charging: Social Care

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**5**

## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To inform East Lothian Council of the current position on the Non-Residential Charging policy for Social Care and the proposed changes.
- 1.2 To seek agreement from East Lothian Council to changes to the Non-Residential Charging Policy 2024- 2025.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 East Lothian Council is asked to:
  1. Note the contents of this report.
  2. Agree the recommendations summarised in 2.2 of the report.
  3. Note that any increase to charges requires a 1-month notice period to the payer and that charges to each individual will be limited by the income protection measures outlined in paragraph 3.10.
- 2.2 Summary of Recommendations:
  1. Approve the inclusion of ILF charges within the current Financial Assessment Process.
  2. Approve the recommendation to increase the taper 1st taper from 60% to 65% from April 2024 with a further 5% increase in the following three years to 75% from 1 April 2027
  3. Approve the phased removal of the 2nd Taper within the current Financial Assessment Process.
  4. Approve the removal of the £50 board and lodgings disregard applied to people who live with family and/or friends who have no formal rental charge or tenancy responsibilities.

5. Approve the recommendation to remove subsidy for frozen meals and complete removal of the hiring costs of freezers and microwaves.
6. Approve the recommendation to reduce the subsidy for Community Alarms from 33% to 0% over a 3-year period from 1 April 2024.
7. Approve yearly updates of Financial Assessments to ensure charges are increased in line with benefits uplifts and increasing income.
8. Approve a 10% increase in charge for Care at Home, and transport and 6% increase for resource centre and transport to and from resource centres.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Councils are empowered by statute to make decisions about charging for non-residential community care services. This includes services provided under the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, the Mental Health (Scotland) Act 1984, and the Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act 2002. Additionally, a consequential modification to the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 (the legislation which established Integration Authorities) makes it clear that social care charging is not delegated to IJBs and remains a Council function. As such, any changes to charging policies which relate to Adult Social Care services in East Lothian require to be approved and implemented by East Lothian Council.
- 3.2 East Lothian, along with the majority of councils in Scotland, charge for some of the services provided to our service users. These charges are an important source of income and are a means to help us to deliver services and our policy aims. Income from service charges is reinvested in order to maintain and develop services.
- 3.3 In March 2021, the Scottish Government pledged to end charging for non-residential social care services. In their Programme for Government 2023 to 2024 the Scottish Government clarified that they will “explore with Local Government and agree an approach to ending all non-residential social care support charges within the lifetime of this Parliament”. Precisely how, when, or indeed if, this will be delivered remains unclear. In the meantime, local authorities have been left with no choice but to charge for non-residential social care services.
- 3.4 Due to the level of protection afforded to our most financially challenged service users, through the use of a means tested charge, the total amount we receive from charging for non-residential services represents only a small percentage c.2.53% of the costs of delivering those services. In addition, (based on an analysis of the 2023/24 financial assessment data) 54% of service users who have a chargeable service do not pay anything towards the cost of the services they receive



(excluding alarms and meals), and the remaining 46% were assessed as being able to afford to contribute towards the cost of their care.

- 3.5 Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) national guidance provides councils with clarity on the regulations, legislation, and application of benefits to be applied when determining an individual's charge. The CoSLA guidance does not, however, 'require' councils to charge, and equally it does not prevent councils from implementing more generous treatment of an individual's circumstances than suggested in the guidance. The guidance provides a framework for councils to adopt whilst allowing for local accountability and discretion, and at the same time encourages councils to adopt best practice in the development of their policies.
- 3.6 Included within the CoSLA guidance are three main provisions to reduce the impact of social care charges: extending free personal care to all under 65s, waiving of charges for people who are terminally ill and providing support services for carers. These provisions have been fully implemented within East Lothian (see Appendix 3).
- 3.7 Members should be aware that the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 resulted in a halt of reviewing of annual financial assessments. In addition, the proposal of the Scottish Government at the time to remove non-residential charging, resulted in a hold on progressing any changes to the policy.

### **Current Charging Model**

- 3.8 East Lothian Council's Non-Residential Charging Policy, which has been developed within the parameters of the current legislation and guidance, and is consistent with CoSLA's guidance, sets out the legislative background to charges for non-residential social care services. It also describes the services for which service users' contributions apply, together with the level of protection afforded to our most financially challenged service users, through the application of financial assessments, the impact of minimum income thresholds and charging tapers.
- 3.9 The current Non-Residential Charging Policy is based on a combination of charging models:
1. **Free of charge:** we provide some services free of charge and free personal care for those assessed as requiring personal care.
  2. **Low flat rate charges:** we have a number of low flat rate charges: community meals, transport and community alarms.
  3. **Charges which are financially assessed:** such as Care at Home (for those limited range of tasks which are not classed as free personal care), attendance at building-based day centres (excluding older people day centres as the centre applies their own charge)
- 3.10 The policy also explains the income protection measures in place which include:

1. **Financial Assessment:** The Financial Assessment process for Non-Residential charges is complex. Financial Assessments are a national process used to calculate how much a service user can afford to pay towards the costs of their care; the amount a service user pays cannot be more than the cost of delivering that service(s). The Financial Assessment process captures how much income and capital a service user has, and also provides an opportunity to ensure service users are receiving the full range of benefits they are entitled to.
  2. **Minimum income thresholds:** this is the minimum amount of income below which a service user should not be asked to pay towards the costs of the service(s) they receive. CoSLA provides annual advice on the level of weekly income below which a person should not be asked to pay charges. These are known as Minimum Income Thresholds and are updated each financial year in line with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) benefit up-rates. If the assessable weekly income is less than the minimum income threshold figure, there will be no charge for services other than the flat rate charges (East Lothian Council calculates contributions for adult social care based on what is known as "assessable income.") This term encompasses an individual's gross income, allowable expenses, and disregards. The use of assessable income is a means to maintain a balance between affordability and financial fairness.
  3. **Buffer:** In order to provide additional support for those on a low income, a 'buffer' is added so that not all of a service user's remaining income is taken into account when calculating their payment towards the cost of their service(s). This therefore allows service users to retain more of their disposable income and has a similar impact as reducing the taper. In 2016 the buffer increased from 16.5% to 25%, with the associated cost (in relation to loss of income) to local authorities of doing so funded by the Scottish Government. The buffer has since remained at this level. At present the Scottish Government has given no indication of any plans to review or amend the current buffer rate.
  4. **Tapers:** this is a locally agreed percentage applied to service users' income which has a direct impact on how much an individual will pay towards their care needs. Setting the percentage taper will be influenced by a number of factors, not least the requirement to raise income to maintain good quality support.
- 3.11 Appendix 1 to this report provides examples of how a service user's charge is calculated using East Lothian current Charging Policy.

### **Proposed Changes**

- 3.12 **Financially Assess people who receive Independent Living Fund (ILF) funding.**

3.12.1 The ILF Scotland 2015 Fund is designed to support individuals who have complex disabilities to live independently. The 2015 Fund is currently closed to new applicants; however, 14 service users have services which have been historically funded and arranged by both ELHSCP and the Independent Living Fund (ILF).

3.12.2 ILF apply a flat charge to their service users of £43 per week (2023-2024). Currently we do not financially assess or charge people who receive ILF funding. However, the current ILF rate is significantly lower than the current weekly charges applied by ELC, which range from £15.69 to £116 per week. 76% of people who contribute towards their services via a charge from ELC are paying more than those who receive a charge from ILF.

3.12.3 To ensure equity of charges it is proposed that the 14 people who receive ILF funding currently should go through ELC's financial assessment process. The ILF charge will be taken into account with the financial assessment but should the financial assessment evidence ability to pay above their current ILF Charge then ELC would seek to bill for the difference between the newly ELC assessed charge and the £43 ILF charge.

3.12.4 Should the ILF reopen the same charging process would apply to new applicants, ensuring equity across service users receiving social care services.

**3.13 Increase the taper 1 from 60% to 65 % from April 2024 with a further 5% increase in the following three years to 75% from 1 April 2027**

3.13.1 The gradual removal lessens the impact of the increase of taper 1 to 75% and the complete removal of taper 2. Therefore, it is recommended that increasing the first taper is implemented in 2024 and increase in 5% increments to reach 75%.

3.13.2 The gradual increasing in taper will be a more affordable way to implement the increase and will be in line with current benefit uplifts on which the financial assessment is, in the most part, based.

3.13.3 Once the 2nd taper is removed in 26-27, taper 1 will be applied to the full available income.

**3.14 Removal of the 2nd taper within the Financial Assessment Process over three years until removal in 2026/27**

3.14.1 Part of the financial process includes a second two taper (see Appendix 1) which reduces the amount of available income for charging.

3.14.2 East Lothian has two tapers:

The first £50 of chargeable income above the threshold (Taper 1)	60%
Any additional chargeable income above the threshold (Taper 2)	75%

- 3.14.3 The second taper is outwith tapers in other local authority areas (see Appendix 2). This means that we are not accessing available income at a level to sustain services.
- 3.14.4 The complete removal of the 2nd taper will increase the amount of available income to pay for services. It will also mean some people who were not eligible for a charge may become eligible.
- 3.14.5 However, complete removal of the 2nd taper in a single year would have a significant impact on the charge to clients, with an average 22% increase in charge per week arising. It is therefore considered necessary and appropriate to phase the removal of the 2nd taper from 24/25 by applying an increase of 5% in 24/25, which results in an average 7.4% increase per person. This increase includes the impact of the increase of taper 1 in the same year by 5%.
- 3.14.6 Taper 2 would then increase by 10% in year 2 to 90% and then complete removal in year 3, 2026-27. Once the removal of taper 2 is complete, taper 1 would be applied to the full available income.

	23/24	Year 1 (24/25)	Year 2 (25/26)	Year 3 26/27
Taper 1	60%	65%	70%	75% (remove £50 allowance)
Taper 2	75%	80%	90%	100%
Average % increase in charge per person		7.4%	10.4%	9.4%

### **3.15 Approve the removal of the £50 board and lodgings disregard**

- 3.15.1 If the service user is not directly liable for housing, council tax and water and sewerage costs (because, for example, they live with their parents or other people who are responsible for those bills), a set allowance of £50 per week for the services users 'board and lodgings' is applied.
- 3.15.2 The removal of this charge may allow some people who are living at home to be charged for their care services, in the same way those who live in their own homes would incur a charge.
- 3.15.3 The £50 payment is not monitored, and should the individual be making payments for 'board and lodgings' then this could be considered within the Charging Appeals process.

### **3.16 Remove subsidy for frozen meals and the hiring of freezers and microwaves**

- 3.16.1 East Lothian HSCP provides this discretionary service to support people to live at home more independently, providing nutritious yet highly economical meals. East Lothian HSCP currently subsidises the meals provided in day centres, sheltered housing facilities and to service users within their own homes. For those service users who are not assessed as requiring this service or who make their own arrangements there is no corresponding food allowance.
- 3.16.2 There is also an arrangement from the provider of meals to provide hire of fridge freezers and/or microwaves. The cost of which has been covered by ELHSCP. The equipment is the property of the provider. This service is not used now as people are supported through welfare funds to purchase their own equipment outright or increasingly have the equipment already in place.
- 3.16.3 For those people who still have a freezer or microwave on hire, we would look to end this arrangement with the provider and support outright purchase for the individual through welfare funds if required.
- 3.16.4 The cost of the meal will be on full cost recovery and remain in line with the procured cost of the service. This would see an increase in 2024-2025 of 10% to £4.20 per meal.

### **3.17 Reduce the subsidy for Community Alarms from 30% to 0% over 2 years from 1 April 2024**

- 3.17.1 East Lothian HSCP currently provides an enhanced service providing a Responder team 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, to support residents and their families by providing a first response, to triage and assist residents with falls, personal care or any emergency assistance required.
- 3.17.2 The Community Alarm team install all alarms and telecare sensors which allows for installations to take place seven days a week, supporting hospital discharges as alarms can be fitted on the day of discharge. Technicians and responders provide a robust end-to-end service, including equipment installation and maintenance.
- 3.17.3 There are currently 2141 alarms in service, of which approximately 80% pay towards their alarm cost. Costs can be waived through an appeals process and waiver is based on risk if the alarm was removed due to refusal to pay and/or financial hardship. In addition, where an alarm is in place due to a Compulsory Treatment Order, a charge can't be made.
- 3.17.4 The current (23/24) charge for alarms is £4.05 per week. This currently covers the previous historic cost of the alarm service and is comparable to the National average £4.01.
- 3.17.5 The cost of the community alarm is rising significantly to approximately £12.00 per week per alarm. This is due to the requirement to move the alarms from analogue to digital technology in the UK's telephone infrastructure. Cost increases are a result of:

1. Equipment upgrades: as part of this transition, various devices and services that rely on analogue telephone connectivity require to be upgraded to work with the new digital systems. This includes community alarm services. Upgrading this equipment is necessary to ensure it remains functional and can connect to the new digital infrastructure.
  2. SIM cards: the new digital-ready equipment will need to come equipped with SIM cards, enabling devices to connect to mobile networks and the internet, which is crucial for IP-based connectivity. This additional requirement adds to the cost of the equipment.
  3. Shorter shelf life: digital-ready alarm devices and their peripherals typically have a shorter shelf life compared to older analogue equipment. This means that they may need to be replaced more frequently.
- 3.17.6 For the 2023/24 financial year the current charge level is forecast to result in a 30% subsidy (£156,627)<sup>1</sup> of the costs of the community alarm service which is not financially sustainable.
- 3.17.7 In order to ensure the financial sustainability of this vital service and taking into account the increased costs associated with delivering the service, it would be prudent for East Lothian Council to revisit the subsidy with a review to a reduction.
- 3.17.8 It should be noted that previously the East Lothian Integration Joint Board has earmarked some £750,000 use of reserves to support the costs of transitioning from analogue to digital. During 2023/24 some £185,000 is estimated to be required for these costs, meaning £565,000 of previously earmarked funding may be available to support future ongoing transition costs.
- 3.17.9 The table below outlines a 3-year plan to reduce the anticipated subsidy from 30% to 0% (based on 23/24 forecast costs, including the estimated costs of analogue to digital transition). Members should, however, note that these are indicative and would be subject to annual pay award and other inflationary increases. There is also the possibility that some service users would decline to take or continue using this discretionary service in light of increasing charges. The potential increase in charges for 25/26 and 26/27 to achieve a break-even position (as indicated below) can be anticipated to require review in 24/25 as the costs and demand for the service may change.

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<sup>1</sup> Estimated net costs for year before fees for alarms = £517,627. Estimated fees outturn for 23/24 = £361,000. Therefore estimated subsidy = £156,627 which is 30% of £517,627.

Year	% increase per alarm	£ Increase per alarm	Charge per week	Total Income (estimated)	Additional Income	Service Costs: estimated outturn 23/24 costs before income from charges	% Subsidy based on 23/24 costs
23/24	-		£4.05	£361,000	£0	£517,627	30%
24/25	11%	£0.45	£4.50	£401,111	£40,111	£517,627	23%
25/26 <sup>a</sup>	11%	£0.50	£5.00	£445,679	£44,568	£517,627	14%
26/27 <sup>a</sup>	16%	£0.80	£5.80	£516,988	£71,309	£517,627	0%
a – Potential changes in estimated costs and service demand for 25/26 and 26/27 may require further review of proposed charges to achieve a break-even position by the end of 26/27.							

### **3.18 Implement 10% increase in charge for Care at Home and transport and 6% increase for resource centre and transport to and from resource centres**

3.18.1 As part of East Lothian Council and the HSCP's commitment to deliver on the Scottish Living Wage, Care at Home rates paid to our external providers are updated annually in line with the agreed Scottish Living Wage increase and, where relevant, inflationary increases. It is therefore recommended that the charges for Care at Home be increased in line with the Scottish Living Wage, in addition, where relevant, any inflationary increases should also be reflected in the charge. This alignment would better reflect the costs of providing the service and would be in line with the basis of the proposed contributions model. For 2024-2025 this would be 10%.

3.18.2 With regards to other financially assessed charges the increase should remain in line with the uplift in benefits each year which for 2024-2025 would result in a 6% uplift in charges.

3.18.3 These increases would still be subject to the Financial Assessment limits for the individual and the income protection measures noted earlier in this paper. Based on a typical monthly care at home billing schedule it is estimated that, of those currently contributing towards the costs of their care, some 88% are already at their maximum financial contribution, representing some 95% of the typical monthly income from care at home billing. Consequently, the initial impact on the partnership's income could be limited (below £5,000 per annum) because of the existing assessed contribution client ceiling.

3.18.4 Estimation of the impact of the changes after review of existing Financial Assessments is challenging due to the variability of factors affecting individual circumstances and changes since the previous assessments. Ignoring other factors affecting contribution limits, however, the increase in current income for the partnership could, in total, be approximately £54,000 for all those currently contributing. Additionally, some individuals not currently contributing to their care may, in future, be

assessed as being able to contribute and therefore these charge changes could impact on them.

### **3.19 Implement annual review of Non-residential Financial Assessments to ensure charges are increased in line with increases in income**

3.19.1 With the exception of the meals related charges and community alarms the impact for any given individual of the proposed changes in charges noted above will be dependent on the financial assessment of that individual's circumstances. This determines the maximum contribution, where relevant, that the individual would be expected to make to the costs of their care.

3.19.2 Consequently, for an individual the impact of any change in relevant charge rates, changes in the taper, and the removal of the board and lodgings disregard will be dependent on the individual's personal and financial circumstances. For existing service users their maximum contribution is not affected until or unless a revised Financial Assessment is undertaken.

3.19.3 A review of each Financial Assessment should therefore ideally occur each year to ensure that any uplift in relation to income as a result of increases in benefits is taken account of in the charge for services, and that the impact on the individual recognises their current financial circumstances and assessed capacity to contribute.

### **3.20 Engagement**

3.1 East Lothian HSCP has a working group that considers Non-residential Charging. The group is attended by advocacy representation, Elected Member and officers from the social work operational team and finance team.

## **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Non-residential Charging Policy will be updated on the outcome of this report.

## **5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

5.1 The subject of this report has been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment process and the results have been published online. [IIA - Proposal to increase Non-Residential charges | East Lothian Council](#)

## **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Financial – As detailed in the paper a predicted increase in income for ELHSCP as a result of the changes to rates and the Financial Assessment process is difficult to quantify. Predicted alarm charges



increase of £40,000 and Financial Assessed charges this would result in a approx. £54,000 full year affect in 24-25.

6.2 Personnel – N/A

6.3 Other – N/A

## 7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 [Non Residential Social Care Charging Policy 2023-24 | East Lothian Council](#)

<b>AUTHOR'S NAME</b>	Laura Kerr
<b>DESIGNATION</b>	General Manager Planning and Performance
<b>CONTACT INFO</b>	<a href="mailto:lkerr@eastlothian.gov.uk">lkerr@eastlothian.gov.uk</a>
<b>DATE</b>	10 April 2024

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Financial Assessment**

Total Income = £324.85 per week  
Disregard = £111.70 per week  
Net Income = £213.15  
Charging Threshold = £137.00  
Available Income = £76.15  
Taper 1; 60% of first £50.00 = £30.00  
Taper 2; 75% of remainder = £19.61  
Assessed contribution = **£49.61 per week**

### **Increase in Tapers year 1**

Total Income = £324.85 per week  
Disregard = £111.70 per week  
Net Income = £213.15  
Charging Threshold = £137.00  
Available Income = £76.15  
Taper 1; 65% of first £50.00 = £32.50  
Taper 2; 80% of remainder = £20.92  
Assessed contribution = **£53.42 per week (increase of £3.81 per week)**

## **APPENDIX 2 - TAPERS**

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Taper 1</b>	<b>Taper 2</b>
East Lothian	60% (of first £50)	75% (of remainder)
Mid Lothian	70% (of all available income)	N/A
West Lothian	65 % (of all available income)	N/A
Scottish Borders	75% (of all available income)	N/A
Angus	75% (of all available income)	N/A

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Main provisions to reduce the impact of social care charges and summary numbers of charges**

1. Free Personal and Nursing Care was first introduced by the Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act 2002 and applied only to those aged 65 or over, assessed as needing personal and or nursing care, this was further extended from 1 April 2019 to those under 65 regardless of their condition. This means that, for those people in Non-residential care, Councils cannot charge for any assessed personal or nursing care needs. Those assessed as needing non-personal care services, or a mix of personal and non-personal care, may still be required to pay a charge subject to their Financial Assessment. The Financial Assessment determines the level of charge based on the individual's financial resources.
2. In respect of individuals with a terminal illness, the CoSLA guidance recommends – though does not stipulate – that charges for social care are waived. The prognosis of terminal illness is determined using the updated Scottish Government definition as follows: *“An individual is to be regarded as having a terminal illness for the purpose of determining entitlement to disability assistance if, having had regard to the (Chief Medical Officer's (CMO) guidance), it is the clinical judgement of a registered medical practitioner that the individual has a progressive disease that can reasonably be expected to cause the individual's death.”* East Lothian Council and East Lothian HSCP fully support the CoSLA recommendation and individuals with a terminal illness are not charged for non-residential social care.
3. East Lothian HSCP is dedicated to supporting carers in multiple ways. We allocate funding to ensure carers can access essential services without being charged. Additionally, we provide financial assistance through personal budget calculations to ease the burden on carers by funding replacement care and respite services. We also collaborate with and fund the local carers centre, a valuable resource for information, respite care, and other opportunities. Our comprehensive approach aims to empower carers, enhance their well-being, and enable them to continue providing essential care to their families without any additional costs. It should be noted with the implementation of this policy came a reduction in income particularly around the provision of respite.
4. Summary of people being charged for non-residential social care services March 2024:
  - 273 people receive a chargeable service
  - 126 people pay towards their care (94 with learning disabilities or mental health and 12 older people)
  - 81 people have been assessed as being unable to pay
  - 14 people have ILF so are not charged
  - 53 people still need to be assessed.

**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Council

**MEETING DATE:** 23 April 2024

**BY:** Chief Executive

**SUBJECT:** Corporate Risk Register 2024-25

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**6**

## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The Corporate Risk Register was last fully reported to Council in December 2023. Within the context of developing international, national and local risks impacting on delivery of Council services and local communities, the Corporate Risk Register, although live, is being reported to Council given the continued substantial levels of heightened risk.
- 1.2 The significant economic factors driving increased financial pressures and risks for the Council have been incorporated into the relevant risks across the Corporate Risk Register. Any further risk developments impacting on the Council in the period from 08 April 2024, will be reported verbally at Council in presentation of this report.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Council approves the Corporate Risk Register and in doing so, the Council is asked to approve that:
- The Corporate Risk Register is maintained as a 'live' document which will be reviewed by the Council Management Team (CMT), the CMT sub-group on Risk Management, Service Management Teams (SMT), risk owners and the Corporate Risk Management Group on a regular basis and reported back to Council as and when required;
  - agree that the relevant risks have been identified;
  - agree that the significance of each risk is appropriate to the current nature of the risk;
  - agree that the total profile of corporate risk can be borne by the Council at this time in relation to the Council's appetite for risk but in the context of the planned mitigations; and,

- recognise that, although while Corporate Risks require close monitoring and scrutiny over the next year, many are long term risks for the Council that are likely to be a feature of the risk register over a number of years.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 In keeping with the Council's Risk Management Strategy and reflecting upon the concurrent and constantly changing nature of risks managed by the Council, the Corporate Risk Register, although live, is being reported to Council given the continued substantial levels of heightened risk. The Corporate Risk Register considers the international, national and local risk factors impacting on the delivery of Council services and is also informed by the impacts of business continuity arrangements currently deployed in some services across Council.
- 3.2 The 2024-25 Corporate Risk Register, as at 8 April 2024, includes 6 Very High Risks, 7 High Risks, 6 Medium Risks and 1 Low Risk.
- 3.3 A CMT sub-group on Risk Management meets on a bi-monthly basis to monitor and drive Risk Management Council-wide and to review the Corporate Risk Register. This group includes the Executive Directors and ensures that Risk is given prominence by CMT.
- 3.4 Risk CR1 on 'Managing the Financial Environment' continues to have both current and residual risk scores of 25 (this continues to be the highest risk scoring the Council has reported), due to the very significant external pressures the Council is facing, including a wide and significant range of external and inflationary cost and demand pressures, significant increased cost of borrowing and consequences of national pay awards.
- 3.5 The Council remains in emergency response with business continuity plans invoked within four Council services at the time of this report; these are Facilities; Estates; Housing; and Sport, Countryside & Leisure (Forestry Team). These services' Business Continuity Plans are invoked predominantly in response to staffing pressure arising from a very challenged employment market, limited volume and calibre of response to recruitment campaigns and increased demand for services. Activation of Business Continuity Plans for these services results in the available staffing resource being deployed to deliver 'business critical' activities as priority.
- 3.6 Council can be reassured that CMT, its Sub-Group, the Corporate Risk Management Group and its Linking Risks Sub-Group, continue to closely monitor all Corporate Risks. Management of our risk environment is informed by global and national risks, via the annual Global Risk Report produced by the World Economic Forum in January each year, by the Scottish Government's National Risk Assessment (NRA) and the UK National Risk Register which are produced annually. Every effort is made to ensure that the Corporate Risk Register reflects current and future risks with appropriate mitigations in place.
- 3.7 The Council's Corporate Risk Strategy is reviewed annually and was reported to Cabinet on 14 March 2023.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 In approving this report, the Council will be ensuring that risk management principles, as detailed in the Corporate Risk Management Strategy, are embedded across the Council.

#### **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 –The financial impact of the corporate risks and mitigation measures remain under close monitoring and review, aligned with the Council’s Financial Strategy. Any unplanned and unbudgeted costs that arise in relation to any of the corporate risks identified will be subject to review by the Council Management Team, and if required will be reported to Council.
- 6.2 Personnel – There are no immediate implications impacting on the administration and oversight of the Corporate Risk Strategy and Framework.
- 6.3 Other – Effective implementation of this register will require the support and commitment of the risk owners identified within the register.

#### **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – Corporate Risk Register 2024-25

<b>AUTHOR’S NAME</b>	Scott Kennedy
<b>DESIGNATION</b>	Team Manager - Emergency Planning and Resilience
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<b>DATE</b>	08 April 2024

Risk Ref.	Risk Category	Risk Description	Existing Risk Control Measures	Risk & Controls Owner	Assessment of Current Risk			Planned Risk Control Measures	Assessment of Residual Risk [With proposed control measures]			Planned Control Owners	Timescale for Completion / Review Frequency	Evidence held of Regular Review
					Likelihood	Impact	Total		Likelihood	Impact	Total			
					L	I	L x I		L	I	L x I			
ELC CR 1	Financial Service Objectives	<p><b>Managing the Financial Environment</b></p> <p>The Council continues to face unprecedented levels of challenge and risk within the financial environment. The Council is currently forecasting an overspend in this financial year of £19.3 million, of which £7.3 million is unplanned, which is likely to result in a significant reduction to reserves balances. In addition, the Council faces a significant funding gap, estimated to be in excess of £55.8 million over the next 5 years. This represents approximately a fifth of the council's annual running costs.</p> <p>This is compounded by a growing range of external cost and demand pressures, policy and legislative obligations and financial pressures aligned to population growth.</p> <p>These wide range of external risks and demands are wholesale and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The level and complexity of national funding with current resources being made available not keeping pace with these growing demands, and around 70% of national funding being made available 'directed' to support specific policy obligations and specific settlement conditions.</li> <li>Impact of national settlement conditions including Council Tax freeze continues to have an adverse and recurring impact on resources available to the Council to fund sustainable local services.</li> <li>Significant increased cost of service delivery arising from high inflation and pay settlements.</li> <li>Growing demands for services aligned to on-going cost of living challenges and legislative change</li> <li>Increased cost of supporting services aligned to significant sustained and projected population growth, including the cost of new associated infrastructure such as new schools.</li> <li>Significant challenges in supporting capital infrastructure requirements including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher interest rates</li> <li>Significantly higher costs of construction</li> <li>Increased gap between approved S75 contributions and cost of infrastructure aligned to growth</li> <li>Investment needed to support an aged and wide-ranging asset base, including</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>The Council has approved a budget for 2024/25 and identified future financial projections for the next 5 years, which includes the delivery of in excess of £15million of planned savings.</p> <p>The Council has an approved financial strategy which is refreshed annually and sets out a series of critical enablers aligned to supporting transformation and future sustainability of service provision.</p> <p>The budget development framework incorporates a cross party budget working group, which meets regularly throughout the year to progress budget development options.</p> <p>The Council annually refreshes the Financial Strategy, Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy to take cognisance of any new / emerging financial risks. These documents support the medium-term financial planning for the organisation.</p> <p>The Council has an approved reserves strategy, which sets out the current level of reserves and associated commitments, including a requirement to maintain a minimum level of uncommitted reserves to support any unforeseen event.</p> <p>The Council has a wide range of on-going cost control and financial management arrangements to manage in year budget performance and delivery of planned efficiencies. This includes regular management information to CMT and quarterly financial reporting to Council.</p> <p>The Council has an enhanced range of urgent cost control measures aimed at mitigating and limiting the scale of these rising costs.</p> <p>Significant national lobbying and stakeholder discussions highlighting the specific challenges being faced by this Council aligned to a growing population continues at both political and officer level.</p> <p>The Council continues to actively support discussions and lobbying at both political and officer level setting out the scale of the funding challenge facing Local Government.</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Executive Director of Council Resources (CFO)</p> <p>Head of Finance</p> <p>EMT / CMT</p>	5	5	25	<p>Enhanced programme of monitoring of Council's budget aligned to risk currently being developed.</p> <p>On-going review of Capital Planning and capital infrastructure priorities.</p> <p>Conclude the review and prioritisation of Transformation programme aligned to supporting financial sustainability and shaping services for the future.</p> <p>The Council 'reset' the Council Plan to 3 overarching key priorities at its meeting on 27 February 2024 and officers are currently progressing work to develop an action plan aligned to focus resources and service delivery to be reported to Council in June.</p> <p>Continue to support national discussions through CIPFA Directors of Finance aligned to ensuring the on-going financial sustainability of local government.</p> <p>On-going engagement with Scottish Government and COSLA on local government funding and distribution to support a fair and adequate allocation of resources to deliver local services.</p> <p>Continue to review the budget development proposals and financial modelling and seek to identify further budget savings which will support sustainable service delivery.</p> <p>Continue to engage with Scottish Government and COSLA to adequately resource the funding requirements associated with population growth arising from the Local Development Plan, taking into consideration both revenue and capital costs.</p> <p>Continue to support regional placed based funding discussions with City Region Deal Partners.</p> <p>Continue to seek urgent national agreement with DFM for additional</p>	5	5	25	<p>Executive Director for Council Resources / Head of Finance / Council Management Team</p>	<p>Actions ongoing and under continuous review while monitoring arrangements will continue to be applied.</p>	<p>Risk fully reviewed by Executive Director Council Resources (CFO) and Head of Finance, April 2024, with no changes to risk scores.</p> <p>Risk reviewed by Head of Finance and Executive Director Council Resources, August 2023 with residual score increased to 25 given the scale of the current financial challenge.</p> <p>Risk refreshed November 2022 by CMT Sub-Group on Corporate Risks with current score increased from 20 to 25 and residual from 16 to 20 due to the current climate.</p>



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		<p>servicing on-going maintenance of these assets, and emerging challenges posed through the identifications of RAAC/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting the cost of enhanced infrastructure policy obligations including net zero.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There remains on-going uncertainty relating to the proposed national capital accounting review, which could result in changes in accounting for capital infrastructure and may ultimately result in significantly increased cost to local taxpayers.</li> </ul> <p>The level of unallocated reserves being held by the Council as a contingency to mitigate any unforeseen events remains very low relative to the concurrent risks the Council is currently facing. The Council aims to hold a minimum level of reserves of £7.6 million. Given the current level of in year overspend and future financial projections, there remains a high degree of risk that this may not be sufficient to meet current / future unplanned events.</p> <p>The Council approved a budget for 2024/25 and forward financial plans on 20 Feb 2024 which includes the delivery of £8.1m savings in 2024/25 and over £15 million over the next 5 years. In addition, the Council approved savings plans which includes an anticipated delivery of £20m of capital receipts over the next 5 years. The need to deliver these savings remains an essential part of current and future financial strategy, but the timing and delivery of this scale will be challenging. Should these savings not be deliverable, alternative proposals will need to be quickly identified to close the financial gap.</p> <p>The IJB has a very significant funding gap being faced in 2023/24 and in future years. There remains enhanced risks relating to the ability for the IJB to meet the level of planned savings aligned to delegated Council budgets and wider demand. Should this materialise and the IJB remain unable to meet the wider savings gap, this may result in an additional financial pressure for the Council.</p> <p>Given the significance of the financial pressures, there is a risk that the Council will not be able to continue to deliver all of its current and future obligations within the resources which are now available. The financial resilience and sustainability has now reached a critical stage, and the Council must now focus on redesigning services, and reprioritise and refocus Council priorities to ensure on-going financial sustainability.</p>	Continue to prioritise and support the statutory annual audit process. The accounts for 2022/23 were signed on 20 March 2024.				<p>place-based revenue funding for East Lothian.</p> <p>Provide regular updated public information for communities and residents explaining the financial pressures and impacts on services.</p>							

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CR 2	Financial	<p><b>Maintenance of Assets</b></p> <p>The Council has a significant asset base covering a wide range of services. Many of these physical assets require significant capital investment to ensure they meet both condition and suitability asset requirements and will also require significant on-going maintenance to ensure they can be maintained to an appropriate condition.</p> <p>There is a risk that the Council will not have the available financial resource and staffing requirement to carry out essential repairs and maintenance programmes to ensure buildings are maintained in a good condition, and on-going capital investment is required to ensure suitability and condition of buildings remain appropriate and aligned to national conditions.</p> <p>Failure to carry out repairs and maintenance programmes could result in unavailability of buildings e.g. school closure and reputational damage to the Council and could ultimately result in a failure of building elements and impacts on safe operation of an asset with the risk of closure or enforcement by Statutory or Regulatory authorities.</p> <p>Failure to carry out repairs and maintenance programmes could result in injury/loss of life of public building users and legal action against the Council. There is also a high risk to health and safety and of reputational damage.</p> <p>The risks posed through the identification of RAAC/Siporex and subsequent costs from the implications in respect of management, remediation and or total loss of assets.</p> <p>There remains significant cost pressures aligned to on-going cost of construction including challenges around availability and supply of goods/ services.</p> <p>There are a growing range of new policy requirements aligned to public infrastructure and funding including net zero and energy targets, which require additional monitoring, specification requirements and costs. These require significant additional finance commitment and staff resource is required to achieve this, assess the current status, and plan works to bring buildings up to the required standard.</p>	<p>Annual update of programme of works based on Condition, Suitability and Statutory Compliance assessments to inform budget requirement and prioritised aligned to available resources.</p> <p>A wider asset review is being progressed by the Council which includes exploring opportunities to repurpose, dispose of, or rationalise assets, and undertake a place-based asset review of existing assets.</p> <p>The Council has in place a Corporate Asset Management Group, chaired by the Head of Infrastructure, which receives regular reports on any risks which identify impact on the operation or safety of the assets to enable planned action to be considered and implemented.</p> <p>The Learning Estate Strategy Board continues to be in operation and chaired by Executive Director for Education and Childrens service to review and plan appropriately for the effective use and future strategy for Education estate.</p> <p>Management and survey work to identify RAAC/Siporex and wider investigation / review.</p> <p>RAAC / Siporex risk continue to be highlighted at ELC PPP Monthly Meetings and at Innovate Board Meetings.</p> <p>Transformational work progressing to move to a Corporate Landlord Model and a fully functional, comprehensive property asset management system, possibly by expanding the capability of the existing CIPFA modules held by Engineering Services and Finance.</p> <p>The Learning Estate Improvement Strategy was approved by full Council in December 2022. An associated learning estate improvement plan is the final stages of development and will be used to support works associated with the learning estate.</p> <p>Regular engagement with Care Inspectorate re-quality of care environment.</p> <p>Effective repairs and maintenance reporting and health &amp; safety workplace inspections and incident reporting inform asset maintenance programme and response.</p>	<p>Service Manages – Strategic Asset &amp; Capital Plan Management (PPP Project and Estates Non-Operational Properties)</p> <p>Service Manager – Engineering Svcs &amp; Building Stds (Operational Properties)</p>	5	5	25	<p>On-going monitoring of condition and other data to inform the planned delivery of works required to ensure buildings comply with statutory and legal requirements and are maintained in a safe operating condition.</p> <p>Progress with further lifecycle costing as part of project/business plan and review on a project basis for future capital bids and budget setting.</p> <p>The service continues to regularly evaluate the current situation as regards material availability and works to mitigate any adverse effects of cancelled or delayed orders for this year's major summer works programme.</p> <p>Review and identify staffing resource required within SACPM, Education and Engineering Services. Service review ongoing.</p> <p>Assess property estate against Scottish Government targets to address Climate Change. Plan programme of works to improve performance of buildings.</p> <p>Identification and management of assets affected by RACC and Siporex with option appraisals to identify remediation and or demolition and future provision.</p> <p>Contingency plans are being prepared to mitigate restricted use or unavailability of parts of buildings following assessments. Council Management and Executive Team to be made aware of emergency planning proposals.</p> <p>The security of secondary school grounds will be reviewed with Education and will be prioritised in terms of risk and available capital and revenue budget. Work is ongoing.</p> <p>The security of primary school grounds will be reviewed with Education and will be prioritised in terms of risk and available capital and revenue budget.</p>	4	5	20	Service Managers – Strategic Asset & Capital Plan Management And Engineering Svcs & Building Stds	All measures are ongoing and under constant review as to when they will be in place by.	<p>Risk reviewed by Executive Director Council Resources March 2024 and by Head of Infrastructure and Service Manager - Engineering Svcs &amp; Building Stds, February 2024 and with no changes to risk scores.</p> <p>Risk reviewed by Head of Infrastructure, June 2023 and scores increased from 20 and 16 to 25 &amp; 20 due to ongoing RACC / Siporex issues and subsequent costs.</p> <p>Risk reviewed by Head of Infrastructure, April 2023 with risks posed through the identification of RACC/Siporex and subsequent costs added. Risk also moved to Corporate Risk Register due to heightened issue. Current risk score increased from 16 to 20 and residual score from 12 to 16.</p>

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								Progress with work to support the asset review including Place Based Asset Review which will assist in prioritising future place-based assets and will inform future capital investment opportunities.								
ELC CR 3	Impact on Service Objectives  Financial  Legal	<p><b>Homelessness</b></p> <p>New policy approach rapid rehousing requires the Council to transform homelessness services, place people quickly into permanent accommodation, negating the use of temporary accommodation and requiring a significant reduction in temporary accommodation stock. Resource allocation, further exacerbated by a series of legislative change has been insufficient for service transformation and the approach has resulted in an inability to accommodate those in need, forcing use of non-contracted B&amp;Bs / B&amp;Bs out-with county.</p> <p>Scottish Government require the implementation of a Housing First approach as a key priority, although no funding is available for ongoing revenue costs.</p> <p>Legislative change regarding local connection came into force on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022 and requires the Council to accept rehousing responsibility for additional homeless cases. This adds to increased pressures posed by discretion around intentionality and change in focus to deliberate manipulation of the system Changes to local connection have been enacted without preparation of Guidance which places the Council at risk in respect of threats of judicial review and furthermore, presentations from neighbouring authorities are exacerbating existing pressures.</p> <p>Continued levels of low stock turnover results in limited lets available and longer average time spent in temporary accommodation. Scottish Housing Regulator has noted this.</p> <p>There is a higher financial cost burden for the general services budget due to increased costs as a result of a retendering exercise as well as increasing demand for suitable temporary accommodation, and lengthy stays in temporary accommodation, which is likely to increase further in light of anticipated legislative change.</p> <p>Ongoing breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order due to a shortage of 'suitable' temporary accommodation, with extension of the Order commencing October 2021 and subsequent daily breaches.</p> <p>Enforceable temporary accommodation standards framework implemented from 2021/22 which further reduces the existing portfolio of 'suitable' accommodation.</p>	<p>Housing Options preventative approach to provision of advice.</p> <p>Continued monitoring of RSL nomination process (new build and routine turnover).</p> <p>Allocation Policy reduced number of offers for each Homeless applicant to 1, to encourage quicker throughput in temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Cabinet approved recommended actions to address pressures relating to a lack of affordable housing supply and address homelessness pressures through delivery of an agreed action plan.</p> <p>Cabinet approval of allocations targets to general needs / homeless applicants. Performance to targets kept under ongoing review. Cabinet approval of Allocations Policy Review.</p> <p>Housing First protocol in place and placements ongoing.</p> <p>Open Market Acquisitions has helped to increase supply prioritising the western part of the county, where demand is highest, however there is no investment for any open market acquisitions in 2024/25.</p> <p>Significant work completed re-policies and procedures to increase flow through the rent deposit scheme.</p> <p>Audit of existing accommodation undertaken in relation to extension to unsuitable accommodation order.</p> <p>Refreshed performance monitoring framework in place to enable improved ongoing monitoring of key aspects of service.</p> <p>Fortnightly monitoring of voids performance to ensure turnaround times are kept to a minimum.</p> <p>The Council Leader has written to and met the Minister noting the challenges around meeting our ambitions to deliver on our RRTP as a result of both recent and planned legislative changes, the impact of Ukraine and other Resettlement schemes and the risk that if interventions don't</p>	Service Manager – Community Housing & Homelessness			5	4	20	<p>Further iterations of Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans (RRTP) with clear plans to transform homelessness services by 2024 and beyond, kept under regular review in context of resource allocation and changing legislation.</p> <p>Continue new build activity to increase housing stock, exploring potential to further increase supply within context of the growth agenda.</p> <p>Significant growth in mid-market rent properties coming forward.</p> <p>Housing Options Training Toolkit is being rolled out to Community Housing and Homelessness staff to improve homelessness prevention and complement new Prevention Duty anticipated 2024/25</p> <p>Exploration of flat share / hosting models and shared tenancies ongoing, which could potentially make better use of existing stock.</p> <p>Revised Homelessness Operations Policy is ongoing, alongside comprehensive review of existing policies and procedures, to ensure service is operating efficiently and effectively.</p> <p>Improved partnership working with existing partners and neighbouring authorities could potentially result in new ways of working and economies of scale.</p> <p>Continue to engage with the Scottish Government to review and monitor the impact that legislative changes and Resettlement Schemes are having on meeting RRTP ambitions to ensure any adverse impacts are addressed quickly. Engagement will likely focus on the concerns around local connection.</p> <p>Significant resource is being channelled to improve void turnaround times including the establishment of a team to address long-term major works voids.</p>	5	4	20	Service Manager - Comm Housing & Homelessness for all measures	<p>December 2024</p> <p>March 2025</p> <p>March 2025</p> <p>December 2024</p> <p>December 2024</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p>	<p>Risk updated by Head of Housing and Service Manager - Comm Housing &amp; Homelessness March 2024 with no changes to risk scores.</p> <p>Decision to move risk H1 to Corporate Risk Register following update by Service Manager – Comm Housing &amp; Homelessness October 2022 with residual score increased from 16 to 20.</p>

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		<p>Proposed changes to Homelessness Code of Guidance / new prevention duty pose further risk to existing practice / Homelessness Operations Policy. Implementation will result in increased referrals and a percentage increase in homeless assessments.</p> <p>Reduced supply of private lets due to landlords' ongoing concerns re Private Residential Tenancy, legislative change (energy efficiency and repairing standard), welfare reform impacts and cost of living increase, resulting in increased rents. This is further exacerbated by reliance on the PRS as a suitable housing option for Ukraine households, preventing their homelessness. A significant increase in LHA rates from 01 April 2024 will make private lets even more unaffordable for more households.</p> <p>The Cost of Living Bill (Scotland) has reduced the ability of landlords to recover tenancies extended to March 2024 and this will result in a significant number of households (currently with evictions on hold) presenting and requiring temporary accommodation during February and March 2024. Linked to this, landlords are increasingly taking action to end tenancies due to mortgage interest rates rising on their own homes and / or homes they rent out.</p> <p>Potential increase in service demand due to poverty and relationship breakdown associated with cost of living crisis are also likely to add pressure to the homeless team both in terms of staff and accommodation. Also likely to result in an increase in cost for temp accommodation</p> <p>Uncertainty over future funding of supported housing (DWP) and proposed changes in respect of restructuring the financing of temporary accommodation.</p> <p>The policy area of migrant homelessness and destitution is becoming increasingly complex within the context of limited Scottish Government Guidance.</p> <p>Legislative change is likely to increase demand on homelessness services and corresponding duties to accommodate, meaning increased spend.</p> <p>There are ongoing concerns regarding limited flow through the housing system and inability to accommodate people in emergency accommodation, due to lack of supply. This can impact upon the ability to source emergency accommodation at times of crisis, which can be particularly stressful for staff on call and leave homeless households without adequate shelter.</p> <p>The Regulators recent risk assessment as a result of our recent engagement, has highlighted we are at heightened risk from systemic failure.</p>	<p>happen timeously the adverse impacts on our local housing system are significant.</p> <p>Housing Options team provide housing options advice to all clients and try to mitigate situations of eviction and discuss housing options to assist others. Government's Mortgage to Rent Scheme is available.</p> <p>Review of income via HB and revised policy re furnishing temporary accommodation</p>				<p>Strengthened and dedicated resources in day-to day team, development of performance management framework and high-level monitoring of progress with both the backlog project and day to day voids.</p> <p>Consideration of business case/options appraisal in respect of alternative forms of accommodation in response to forthcoming legislative change.</p> <p>A new LHS has been published and approved with an implementation date of April 2024, setting out the challenges and actions for the next 5 years.</p> <p>Further communication with the Housing Minister is likely, regarding requests for assistance to help alleviate housing pressures, with a focus on the issues presented by legislative change regarding local connection.</p> <p>Planned programme of tenancy conversions and temporary increase in % allocations to increase flow through the system and enable reduction in temporary accommodation to be met.</p> <p>Review of Response, Accommodation and Prevention Teams to enable more efficient ways of working, cost savings and increased focus on prevention for vulnerable groups via service transformation.</p> <p>Joint working with external providers is ongoing, to explore an emergency accommodation project for the exclusive use of on call staff.</p> <p>The City Region is looking to take more of a regional holistic approach to reviewing and understanding the Housing pressures across the region, particularly in relation to Homelessness and Ukraine to help find a more joined up solution</p> <p>Monthly review meetings with Finance.</p> <p>Regulator to engage with us to gather further information and assurance about our homeless service with an ask to keep them</p>				<p>December 2024</p> <p>June 2024</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>June 2024</p> <p>June 2024</p> <p>December 2024</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>June 2024</p>			

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					L	I	L x I		L	I	L x I						
		<p>There is increasing homelessness and housing demand pressure arising from a number of Resettlement schemes, primarily the Ukrainian refugee schemes, with host arrangements breaking down early and pressure from the recent Scottish Government re-entry policy. This is likely to result in increased homeless presentations from mid-2024 onwards, with associated accommodation requirements. These demands are likely to increase with further UK and Scottish Government commitments anticipated, particularly in respect of the move in focus from a 'warm Scots welcome' to a 'warm Scots future'. There are also other humanitarian schemes including but not limited to the existing Afghan schemes and rollout of the asylum seeker dispersal scheme which involves Mears procurement of properties within council areas.</p> <p>Reduction/slowdown in the Affordable Housing programme can be expected given the recent reduction in SG investment meaning less affordable housing properties coming forward that would meet the needs of homeless households as identified through the LHS.</p> <p>The Homelessness Service is at risk of being unable to operate within budget going forward, due to a combination of rising costs generally, recent procurement of emergency accommodation which resulted in increasing costs, rising numbers of homeless presentations, and lengthy periods of time in temporary accommodation.</p>					updated on capacity to meet our statutory duty in relation to temporary accommodation and the UAO. This will involve quarterly meetings										
ELC CR 4	Capacity	<p><b>Workforce Challenges</b></p> <p>Maintaining a stable and skilled workforce is essential to efficient, effective and safe delivery of services.</p> <p>The Council continues to face on-going workforce challenges to meet the diverse range of services including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recruitment and retention of staff</li> <li>- High level of sickness absence in some service areas, placing pressure on service delivery and many areas remain in business continuity resulting in some service closure /impact</li> <li>- Impact of pay and grading structure and annual pay awards</li> <li>- Attractive employment opportunities in other sectors risks staff migrating out of Council services</li> <li>- Impact of Council financial mitigation measures including enhanced recruitment mitigations</li> <li>- Aging workforce and impact on succession planning</li> </ul>	<p>The 2023-2027 Workforce Plan was approved by Cabinet (Jan 2023). The 2023-2027 Workforce Plan actions are being implemented.</p> <p>There is a corporate action plan resulting from the Employee Engagement Survey 2023 which has been integrated into the Workforce Plan and actions will be monitored through the Workforce Plan Action Plan, of which CMT has oversight.</p> <p>Regular assessment of staffing capacity within services enables redeployment of available resources to maintain frontline service delivery, reducing service provision when essential in non-statutory services.</p> <p>Essential vacancies are advertised within the approved Recruitment &amp; Selection Policy processes and in accord with budgetary controls criteria instigated by Council in August 2023.</p> <p>Initiatives are in place to help employees manage their own stress, including</p>	Council Management Team				<p>The 2024 employee engagement survey will be carried out in April 2024.</p> <p>Update Management Arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire Safety</li> <li>• First Aid</li> </ul>	5	4	20	5	3	15	<p>Service Manager - Policy, Performance &amp; Organisational Development</p> <p>Service Manager – Protective Services</p>	<p>April 2024</p> <p>June 2024</p>	<p>Risk reviewed and updated by Executive Director Council Resources March 2024 with no change to risk scores.</p> <p>Risk updated February 2024 by Service Manager – Customer Services and November 2023 by Service Managers – CP&amp;I and Customer Services with no change to risk scores.</p> <p>Risk Refreshed</p>

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					L	I	L x I		L	I	L x I				
		<p>Failure to preserve business critical activities within these services could lead to increased risks in respect of 'life and limb' services, finance and severe reputational damage to the Council.</p> <p>Insufficient staff can also lead to an inability to open facilities, or to reducing opening hours/days, impacting on local service access and reducing community programmes of activity, particularly those supporting early intervention and prevention activities.</p> <p>Staffing challenges may result in a lack of cross-service staff capacity to meet emergency response requirements and any other concurrent risks which may place risks to public safety, bringing reputational damage to the Council.</p> <p>The Council has a duty of care to the workforce, a breach of which may affect the health, safety and wellbeing of employees leading to increased sickness absence, pressures on service delivery and added potential for employee liability claims against the Council for incidents involving employees or non-employees or enforcement action by the Health &amp; Safety Executive.</p>	<p>Employee Assistance Programme, Listening Ears, Healthy Working Lives</p> <p>Service Reviews involve inputs from HR and Finance to ensure appropriate role and grading definitions within the service and broader corporate context.</p> <p>Business Continuity Plans activated as necessary, reducing scope and scale of service delivery to focus existing resource on business critical and statutory functions.</p> <p>The Joint Health &amp; Safety Committee and Joint Consultative Committee oversee joint health and safety arrangements for all staff.</p> <p>Employee Engagement Survey 2023 conducted and results analysed. A 'You said/we did' update has been published.</p> <p>Service Planning and PRD processes were reviewed in early 2024 and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.</p>										<p>November 2022 by CMT – amalgamating previous CR6, CR 15 and CR 18 – composing one 'workforce challenges' risk.</p> <p>Risk refreshed November 2022 by CMT Sub-Group on Corporate Risks with current score increased from 16 to 20 and residual from 12 to 15 given number of services in BC mode.</p>		
ELC CR 5	Reputational	<p><b>Information Security and Data Protection</b></p> <p><i>External IT Security Threats</i></p> <p>Council IT systems are compromised by criminal <b>3rd party</b> (e.g. hacker, terrorism) - causing the loss of a system, virus/Trojan/ransomware infection or loss/disclosure of data.</p> <p>In recent months our supply chain has become an increasing risk as suppliers are targeted by criminals to obtain access to their customers.</p> <p>The Council's increased participation in shared services escalates this risk as the council's network boundaries are being opened up to enable data sharing with other agencies.</p> <p>Due to the current conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East there is a continuous risk of Nation State led cyberattacks on the UK which could potentially affect National Infrastructure in a way that has a direct impact on East Lothian Council.</p> <p><i>Internal IT Security Threats</i></p> <p>Council IT systems are compromised by the actions of an internal employee - causing the loss of a system, virus/trojan/ransomware infection or loss/disclosure of data.</p> <p><b>Information Security</b></p> <p>Failure to have comprehensive council wide Information Security Management (ISM) measures in place will put at risk the availability, integrity and confidentiality of the councils information and may cause a Council wide failure of central IT systems</p>	<p>Continue to follow advice and guidance from the National Cyber Security Centre, UK and Scottish Governments, Local Government Digital Office, Scottish Local Authority Security Group and react accordingly.</p> <p>Comprehensive change control and programme of regular patching of systems and hardware in place.</p> <p>Technical controls in place and regularly reviewed as part of normal Business as Usual processes, including backups hardware and software security solutions in place.</p> <p>Acceptable Use policy in operation.</p> <p><b>Information Security</b></p> <p>The Council complies with the international standard ISO 27001:2017 as the framework for its ISM system.</p>	Executive Director – for Council Resources Head of Corporate Support Data Protection Officer			5	4	20			3	4	12	<p>Service Manager - IT</p> <p>June 2024</p> <p>External and Internal IT Security Threats updated by Service Manager – IT March 2024 with no change to risk score.</p> <p>Risk Refreshed by Team Manager, Information Governance November 2023 with no change to risk scores.</p> <p>Risk refreshed July 2023 by Service manager – IT and Team Manager, Information Governance with no change to risk scores.</p> <p>Risk updated March 2022 by Team Managers – IT</p>

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		<p>(incl. Telephony) caused by a malicious attack by hackers, virus, trojan, disclosure of information or Fire/Flood event.</p> <p>Attacks via spam emails containing infected ransomware attachments continue to be high. Should these emails manage to break through Firewalls and Intrusion Detection Systems there is a high possibility of file encryption at both a local and network wide levels. During 2020/21 high profile attacks against supply chain and other Scottish public bodies has shown this risk has not decreased.</p> <p>An increase in the use of Cloud facilities and our dependence on suppliers having remote access to our networks means our security risk from external influences has increased and our security posture needs to change to meet these new challenges</p> <p>The Cabinet Office introduced a zero tolerance approach for all LA's connected to the Public Sector Network (PSN). Scottish LA's use the PSN to register Births, Marriages &amp; Deaths and connection to DWP for benefit provision. We have to re-accredit to this network every year and must meet stringent requirements. Failure to do so would mean disconnection from the PSN.</p> <p>In 2017 the Scottish Government introduced the Cyber - Public Sector Action Plan which sets out the minimum-security standards for all public bodies</p> <p>New ways of working and shared buildings including the proposed Collaborative Hub between the Council, Police and other parties present new risks and challenges to maintaining IT Security and Data Privacy. Procedures, appropriate design of workspaces and staff training are needed to mitigate risks.</p> <p><b>Data Protection</b></p> <p>Under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR, the Council is required to ensure that personal data is processed lawfully, fairly and securely. Breaches of the Data Protection Act / GDPR could result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- harm to individuals;</li> <li>- legal action;</li> <li>- fines of up to £17.5 million or 4% of turnover, whichever is higher;</li> <li>- requirement to pay compensation;</li> <li>- adverse publicity;</li> <li>- damage to reputation</li> </ul>	<p>As part ISO27001:2017 a number of control areas are set out : IS policy; IS organisation; Human resources security; Asset management; Access controls and managing user access; Physical &amp; Environmental security of all sites/equipment, Secure communications, Data handling and Data Protection (including paper documents); Secure acquisition, development, and support of information systems; Security for suppliers and third parties; Information Security Incident management; Business continuity/disaster recovery (to the extent that it affects information security);</p> <p>Annual IT health checks on the existing infrastructure.</p> <p>New systems are risk assessed and security checked prior to introduction to ensure they meet expected criteria.</p> <p>Council Information Governance and Security (IGS) Forum co-hosted by the IT Team Manager – Infrastructure and Security and the Team Manager – Information Governance / Data Protection Officer.</p> <p>The DPO/Team Manager-Information Governance &amp; Team Manager – Infrastructure &amp; Security (CISO) are members of the Collaborative Hub Working Group and the JMH User Group and provide advice and support re: compliance &amp; Info Security.</p> <p>Acceptable use policy for all ELC employees has been refreshed and is now live following consultation. All employees will be expected to read, re-sign and adhere to the policy to keep themselves and the Council safe.</p> <p><b>Data Protection</b></p> <p>The Council has a comprehensive suite of measures to ensure compliance, including the retention of a statutory Data Protection Officer (DPO), the Data Protection Policy, Data Breach Procedure and multiple procedures governing the creation, use and disposition of records and personal data.</p> <p>IS, DP and Records Management Awareness training is a mandatory part of induction and must be refreshed every two years. E-learning module content was refreshed and redesigned in May 2022. The ELNet pages for Information Governance also include templates, guidance and information to support</p>											<p>Security and Information Governance with current risk score increased from 16 to 20 due to war in Ukraine.</p> <p>June 2024</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

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		<p>The Council has a mandatory 72 hour window in which to report relevant breaches to the Information Commissioner's Office.</p> <p>Limited security, procedural and environmental controls at the Dunbar Road records store mean that records and personal data are at risk of security breach and/or accidental loss or destruction. The shift to home/digital working in response to COVID-19 has also placed additional pressures to digitise paper records management systems and ensure new ways of working remain secure.</p> <p>Requests for personal data (SARs) have increased significantly in both number and complexity (50% increase on Jan-May 2022). Increase is partially attributable to the indirect impact of the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry and the launch of the Redress Scheme. Combined impact with staffing challenges, increase in FOI requests and disproportionate impact of a number of frequent requesters, the Council is at higher risk of missing statutory timescales for responses. This gap continues to rise year-on-year.</p> <p>DP compliance is dependent on good records management. The Council's Records Management Plan 2014-2019 needs to be formally updated to account for GDPR/DPA18 as well as changes to recordkeeping practice across the Council. This is also a requirement of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 (PRSA).</p> <p>Current pressures on Registration service and increased demand from Services for review of Data Sharing Agreements / Data Protection Impact Assessments are impacting capacity to address Records Management.</p>	<p>corporate compliance. A new Team Leader-Information Governance took up her post on 31 July 2023, whose brief includes leading the Information Governance training and awareness programme.</p> <p>The Council's Records Management Plan (RMP) covers how the Council manages its records and includes links to our IS, DP policies and retention schedule. There is an annual assessment of Progress of Records Management Plan by The Keeper's office. The Council is planning formal re-submission of its RMP for the Keeper's approval (date tbc).</p> <p>The Council has a close working relationship with SOLAR (Society of Local Authority Lawyers and Administrators) and attends meetings regularly. These meetings are also attended by the Information Commissioners office. The Council also attends and currently chairs ASLAWG (Archivists of Scottish Local Authorities Working Group) to share best practice with other record keeping professionals.</p> <p>Records Management Plan: Retention schedules and BCS have been updated in line with national models. Initial phase of Digital Preservation Plan currently underway to identify/register digital information assets, and procure baseline software/hardware. A Digital Preservation Policy has been drafted and prepared for review by relevant stakeholders. 5 departments have completed reviews of the Retention Schedule to map to their own records with support from the Information Governance Team.</p> <p>Information Asset Register: 3 workshops have been completed with Feedback. Procurement and Economic Development to identify data flows and risk points. This is a key compliance measure under Article 30 of the UK GDPR and the Council's Records Management Plan.</p> <p>DSA/DPIA Process Reviews completed: DSA and DPIA processes have been reviewed and simplified, with reduced waiting times. Team Leader now taking on new DPIA requests allowing Team Manager to address backlog.</p> <p>Dunbar Road Options Paper: CMT has approved proposals to contract out paper document management services, including records storage, retrievals, metadata</p>				<p>Manager-IT Infrastructure &amp; Security are drafting an Information Transformation Strategy and associated Action Plan to underpin the Digital Strategy and Business Transformation agendas and 'to ensure the right information gets to the right person, at the right time, and in the right format'.</p> <p><u>Records Management Plan:</u> All 14 elements of the Council's RMP will be reviewed and updated, focusing particularly on secure destruction, digital preservation, application of retention schedules and changes to ways of working.</p> <p><u>Paper document management:</u> Procurement exercise to identify best value for document management services for all paper records. Existing contract has been extended with supplier Oasis by six months to allow for completion amidst other service pressures.</p>									



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			<p>management, scan-on-demand and secure destructions.</p> <p><u>Information Strategy</u> Work continues to implement Microsoft 365 across corporate Council Services; consultant workshops have now been completed and migration of email to Microsoft Exchange near completion with new 5-year retention rule applied going forward.</p> <p>Data Protection/Records Management training delivered as needed to Asset Review Champions.</p>														
ELC CR 6	Physical and/or Psychological Impact on People  Legal & Regulatory	<p><b>Refugee/Asylum Schemes</b></p> <p>Both the UK and Scottish Government have responded to the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis by introducing refugee schemes that are largely required to be administered by local authorities, with confirmation January 2024 that changes to visa requirements / schemes will enable Ukraine households to remain in the UK until 2026. These schemes are broader in scope and of a significantly greater scale than previous refugee schemes. Consequently, this means greater demands placed on Council services (including service areas not previously involved) in administering the schemes, supporting hosts and refugees as well as placing additional demand on schools and Health and Social Care services. The challenges posed are further compounded by the requirement for local authorities to commit to accommodating other groups of refugees via the cap on safer and legal routes and request to assist Mears regarding local procurement of properties and corresponding support requirements. Current challenges include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complexity and variation between different schemes (Homes for Ukraine (H4U), Scottish Super Sponsor &amp; Family Visa&amp; H4U Extension Scheme (UES) and more recent changes to visa extensions to 2026</li> <li>Constant changing and revision of national guidance, which continues to evolve through ongoing discussion between SG, COSLA, Home Office and local authorities</li> <li>Being clear on different funding arrangements, scope and operational deployment</li> <li>Being clear on extent of safeguarding responsibilities and wraparound support</li> <li>Understanding the scale of and resourcing the challenge in the context of existing commitments to the global refugee scheme, Afghan schemes, Asylum dispersal scheme.</li> <li>Being clear on data protection requirements and which information can be shared between internal teams and with external partners</li> </ul>	<p>Cross-Service Oversight Group meetings in place during initial Ukraine Crisis to ensure development of appropriate response / services.</p> <p>Cross-Service Working group in place until Autumn 2023 and additional resources identified within Community Housing &amp; Homelessness (CH&amp;H) to deal with administrative tasks and casework</p> <p>Additional development resource identified from CH&amp;H to provide third sector interface, assist with improvement work, address local community issues and maximisation of resources (internal and external)</p> <p>Regular attendance at meetings with SG, Home Office and COSLA.</p> <p>ELC Website page in place.</p> <p>ELC Ukraine enquiries contact email address set up.</p> <p>Initial dedication of two-full time officers from Housing Options team to set up procedures, team interfaces, casework and administration of schemes.</p> <p>Database of hosts and families created comprising all administrative aspects (disclosures, property checks, payments, education requirements etc.).</p> <p>Ongoing case management of hosts / guests, where appropriate.</p> <p>Resource requirements of other service areas identified and in operation, including the contribution of colleagues in HR, Protective Services, Finance, Education, Customer Services, Communications Team and HSC.</p>	Service Manager – Community Housing & Homelessness				5	4	20	<p>Quantification of Scottish Super Sponsor scheme (SSS) numbers, data integrity work, background checking to be done by CH&amp;H resource</p> <p>Quantification of future resource requirements to be identified and articulated via service review.</p> <p>Working closely with SG &amp; COSLA to inform future iterations of Guidance for clarity and confirming with SG &amp; COSLA colleagues that ELC cannot source social housing properties (with the exception of Brown Street) as housing pressure continues to be extreme</p> <p>Children’s services are considering a host families scheme to provide accommodation and support for UASC.</p> <p>Work with ALACHO, SOLACE, COSLA and others to ensure future funding arrangements are adequate, in accordance with the revised approach to a ‘warm Scots future’.</p> <p>Completion of Brown Street project and allocation to Ukraine households.</p>	4	3	12	Service Manager - Comm Housing & Homelessness for all measures	<p>December 2024</p> <p>June 2024</p> <p>December 2024</p> <p>December 2024</p> <p>December 2024</p> <p>April 2024</p>	Risk refreshed by Service Manager February 2024 with no changes to risk scores.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General administration of the scheme in the medium to long-term including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disclosure checks</li> <li>Property and welfare visits</li> <li>Wraparound support</li> <li>Refugee payments</li> <li>Host payments</li> <li>Interface with Education and HSC</li> </ul> </li> <li>Clarity as to whether funding will continue going forward at what level and in what form</li> <li>Potential increased homeless and housing demand (where hosting arrangements break down, with almost all existing hosts wishing to withdraw from providing assistance and no additional hosts available)</li> <li>Service resource demands on all affected teams but particularly Community Housing &amp; Homelessness</li> <li>Capacity of Children's and Adult Social Work services, Education and HSC to cope with increased demands</li> <li>Additional demands continue to emerge through extensions and variations to all the schemes – including the rise in unaccompanied minors and associated responsibilities</li> <li>Implementation of the mandatory national transfer scheme means East Lothian must accept an allocation of unaccompanied asylum seeking young people set by the Home Office. Notification will be at short notice and the frequency is dependent on their rate of arrival in the UK. This mandatory allocation has been increased without consultation.</li> <li>This presents a significant resource challenge in terms of providing accommodation, potentially a care placement, housing and social work support.</li> <li>The national local crisis in fostering resources is compounding the service risk.</li> <li>Some refugees and asylum seekers are reluctant to settle in East Lothian, preferring to be in bigger cities, resulting in significant aborted work around matching.</li> <li>A change in Scottish Government policy focus from a 'warm Scots welcome' to delivery of a 'warm Scots future' within the context of wider homelessness and housing pressures, with associated changes / extensions to visas to 2026.</li> </ul>	<p>National safeguarding system in place.</p> <p>Privacy Statement signed off.</p> <p>Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) are currently being supported by the Aftercare Team in children's services, making use of accommodation within the My Place project. Managers attend regular national meetings to ensure we understand best practice.</p> <p>Clarity on funding at national level, notwithstanding ongoing changes.</p> <p>Successful recruitment of two Tenancy Support Officers, however posts have since ended in November 2023 and February 2024, with no dedicated resource to deal with this client group.</p> <p>Refurbishment of Brown Street Haddington properties to enable a small number of Ukraine households to be accommodated in settled housing until 2026, as host accommodation comes to an end.</p>												
ELC CR 7	Reputation Financial	<b>Climate and Nature Emergency</b> East Lothian Council has statutory duties to mitigate its emissions, further biodiversity conservation, adapt to climate change and act sustainably. The Scottish Government's Climate Change Act (2009) requires the Council to support the delivery of the national net zero targets and adaptation programmes.	<p>Annual reporting to the Scottish Government to track CO<sub>2</sub>e reductions and delivery of adaptation programmes.</p> <p>Reporting to the Scottish Government every three years on the actions the Council has taken to meet our Biodiversity Duty.</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Head of Development</p> <p>Sustainability and Climate</p>	4	4	16	130	<p>Identify budget and funding streams to continue delivering transformational change to Fleet and Asset Management (e.g. staff resources to chase funding opportunities and support services to access them).</p>	3	4	12	Sustainability and Climate Change Officer	Ongoing with annual review	Risk updated February 2024 by Team Manager – Strategy, Policy & Development with no

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		<p>The risks associated with the responsibilities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure to meet our statutory duty under Scotland's Climate Change Act (2009).</li> <li>Failure to meet our statutory duty under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.</li> <li>Lack of financial and staff resources to mitigate emissions and deliver the net zero interim target by 2030 and full target by 2045.</li> <li>Lack of financial and staff resources to proportionately respond to the nature emergency.</li> <li>Unknown costs of the transformational change needed to adapt to climate change impacts.</li> <li>Risk aversion, particularly in relation to new technologies that could support mitigation and adaptation.</li> <li>Reputational damage and failure in corporate social responsibility if climate action and biodiversity conservation are not mainstreamed across the Council.</li> <li>Lack of/unclear funding and unbudgeted costs to reduce carbon emissions, e.g., for the transformational changes needed in Fleet<sup>1</sup> and Asset<sup>2</sup> Management.</li> </ul> <p>The latest IPCC sixth assessment reports show that we have reached a tipping point where we will face extreme weather and climate change impacts despite efforts to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. To cope with these risks we need to ensure that our adaptation efforts are as ambitious as our mitigation actions.</p> <p>The State of Nature Scotland Report (2019) found that 49% of Scottish species have decreased in abundance and 11% are under threat from extinction. Failure to halt biodiversity loss and restore nature will have a detrimental impact on our environment, economy, jobs, health and wellbeing and impact our capacity to adapt to and mitigate the climate crisis.</p> <p>The Council is making progress in reducing the Climate and Nature Emergency risks. However, there is an urgent need to secure the funding, resources, tools and powers to enable us to deliver net zero and become nature positive. Until then, our capability for transformational change to reduce these risks is uncertain.</p> <p><sup>1</sup>Fleet Management: We need to replace public sector fleet vehicles with ULEV by 2025. However, funding from the Scottish Government is limited and focused on smaller vehicles. Shifting ELC's heavy commercial fleet to a UNLEV platform will require additional unbudgeted funding. Currently, the cost of an EV refuse collection vehicle is 2.5 times more expensive than a fossil-fuelled equivalent. Another</p>	<p>Annual reporting to the Council to track actions and delivery towards ELC's Climate Change Strategy (2020-2025) to achieve net zero by 2045. This includes actions to support and enhance nature / biodiversity and enhance green networks.</p> <p>Quarterly Cross-Party Sustainability Forum meetings to ensure tracked progress and follow up of the Council's declaration of a climate emergency.</p> <p>Quarterly Climate Change Planning and Monitoring Group meetings to ensure Council-wide commitment to the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. It was agreed at the December 2023 meeting that the remit of this group will now be extended to ensure Council-wide commitment to delivering actions to tackle both the Climate and Nature Emergencies.</p> <p>Bi-monthly Energy Transformation Board meetings, to deliver a Local Heat &amp; Energy Efficiency Strategy for the county, improve innovation and energy supply from renewable sources while generating income from installing low carbon technologies across the Council's estate.</p> <p>The Council's COVID Recovery and Renewable Framework, in which a Green Recovery from COVID is a key principle.</p> <p>To address the climate change and nature emergency risks, the Council collaborates with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN) and the Scottish Government, guiding public authorities to implement the National Climate Change Plan Update (Dec 2020).</li> <li>Adaptation Scotland and SSN, ensuring consistency and collaboration between public bodies in the response to the climate emergency.</li> <li>Scottish Biodiversity Officers' Network and the Scottish Government to implement the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and ensure consistency and collaboration between local authorities on biodiversity matters.</li> <li>NatureScot, who provide guidance on and funding for management of natural heritage resources.</li> <li>Transport Scotland, funding ELC's ULEV public sector fleet objective (2025). NB, funding options are limited to be either lease of part funded purchases. Thus, the opportunities to fully utilise ULEVs are limited.</li> </ul>	<p>Change Officer</p> <p>Head of Infrastructure</p> <p>Biodiversity Officer</p>				<p>Secure the tools, powers and resources to enable the delivery of a 'Net Zero Council'.</p> <p>Identify interim emission reduction targets across Council Services and implement a monitoring &amp; evaluation framework in response to this.</p> <p>Engage East Lothian Partnership to include carbon emissions reduction targets in review and update of the East Lothian Plan. Work has commenced with Strategic Assessment Workshops and the internal Community Wealth Building Working Group.</p> <p>Re-engage with the Resilient Communities initiative, to prepare East Lothian residents for emergencies and severe weather events. Progress made: internal adaptation workshop with Senior Council Managers, community workshop with East Lothian Climate Action Network planned.</p> <p>Monitoring and reporting to be set up to track progress following the Council's declaration of Nature Emergency in October 2023, including a report to Council and monitoring and discussion on an ongoing basis after this by the cross-party Climate Change and Sustainability Forum.</p> <p>Identify funding streams and partners to continue delivering projects to conserve and enhance biodiversity on a local and landscape scale.</p> <p>Work with Community Councils and Community Groups to raise awareness of the nature emergency and identify local actions.</p>				<p>S&amp;CCO</p> <p>S&amp;CCO</p> <p>S&amp;CCO</p> <p>S&amp;CCO</p> <p>Team Manager - Strategy, Policy &amp; Development</p> <p>Biodiversity Officer</p> <p>Biodiversity Officer</p>	<p>2025 - annual review</p> <p>Ongoing with annual review</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>October 2024</p> <p>August 2024</p> <p>Ongoing with annual review</p> <p>Ongoing with annual review</p>	<p>change to risk scores.</p>

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		<p>cost implication is the charging infrastructure needed to support these vehicles.</p> <p><sup>2</sup>Asset management: We anticipate the costs of transformational change for our built assets to reach net zero to be substantial. To achieve net zero, we need to ensure that capital is available (e.g. capital for asset reconfiguration, energy efficiency measures, energy generation, etc.). It is key to manage Council assets in line with the climate change agenda.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Sustainable Transport Officers Group, which coordinates a multi-departmental response to increase active and sustainable travel.</li> </ul> <p>East Lothian Climate Action Hub and Community groups, which supports public engagement to reach net zero. The Sustainability &amp; Climate Change Officer continues engagement with SSN and Scottish Government to align work with the Scottish Public Engagement Plan for net zero (Sep 2021).</p> <p>The Council works to protect and enhance species and habitats within its land holding through the work of the Countryside Rangers and Amenity Services, including the development of Nature Networks within its urban landholding, and works closely with partners, community groups and through the planning &amp; development process to protect and enhance biodiversity and green networks across the county, to deliver actions set out in the Green Networks Strategy SPG, Open Space Strategy, Climate Change Strategy, Countryside Site Management Plans and Nature Networks in Parks &amp; Greenspaces Action Plan.</p> <p>The East Lothian Biodiversity Partnership has been re-convened.</p> <p>Work is currently progressing with stakeholders through the East Lothian Biodiversity Partnership to develop and update the East Lothian Biodiversity Action Plan, to identify priorities for action to reverse biodiversity loss and identify interim targets for nature recovery.</p> <p>Carbon Literacy Training is currently being rolled out to staff. The Council has set a target of training 500 staff members by 2027, as this is one way to comply with our statutory duty in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 that public bodies must act sustainably. Raising climate literacy helps each department to identify action and contribute to mitigating and adapting to climate change.</p> <p>Climate emergency workshops have been held with the Area Partnerships in NBC, Musselburgh and PSG to integrate climate action in the Area Plans. Meetings with Association of East Lothian Community Councils to discuss the climate impacts in the area and actions needed.</p>											

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			Meet with Association of East Lothian Community Councils to discuss the climate impacts in the area and actions needed.											
ELC CR 8	Legal & Regulatory	<p><b>Limitation (Childhood Abuse) (Scotland) Act 2017</b></p> <p>The Act covers the period prior to 2004 for civil actions arising from allegations of childhood abuse for children who have been in the care system.</p> <p>The Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry is currently in its 8<sup>th</sup> Phase, with a 9<sup>th</sup> identified. Survivors may continue to come forward for the period from 1964 to 2004. Historic and current insurers are put on notice where claims are received. The level of deductible or excess is the financial pressures if historic claims of child abuse are made and upheld against East Lothian Council as the statutory successor.</p> <p>The Council's insurers have indicated that where the policy can respond, they will cover appropriate external legal costs and compensation payments subject to the deductible in force. However, the requirements to comply with SCAI S21 requests are placing significant strain on internal resources within the legal, social work and records management teams for which there is no additional budget.</p> <p>Redress Scotland established to provide survivors with an avenue to compensation where they do not wish to submit a claim directly to a successor organisation. Where the Redress Scheme is not used, any legitimate claimant may still raise action against ELC.</p> <p>Note that there remains a period from 2004 to present which is not covered by Scottish Government proposals/legislation for compensation schemes and as such any legitimate claim arising would need to be taken forward through ELCs Insurers.</p>	<p>It is a requirement under the act that the abuse occurred at a time when the individual was a child which is defined as being under 18.</p> <p>Child Abuse Claims Group and SCAI Overview Group – East Lothian co-ordination of responses, reported strategically, managed flow and collaboration.</p> <p>Close monitoring of the work of the Scottish CAI itself and review of any published materials. Scotland-wide networking and information sharing on SCAI between authorities.</p> <p>Council has appointed external solicitors to provide legal support for the public fostering inquiry.</p> <p>Records Management expertise allows us to respond effectively to SAR requests and information requests / provide evidence. However, increase in volume of SAR requests received, not just in this area, are placing more pressure on the Information Governance team to be able to coordinate further work as required throughout the Council, to improve our records management systems to make them more efficient.</p> <p>Cross Lothian collaboration on Lothian Region period 1975 to 1996 (and predecessor authorities) re-records management and retrieval etc occurs regularly when a claim is received. Accurate records post 1996 relating to East Lothian Council clients.</p> <p>Council Financial Reserve – may reduce the impact to service provision if claims extend beyond budget. 2024 update: further discussions have been held between successor LRC local authorities due to emerging risks of limits of indemnity and future allocation of claims. Unanimous decision to put formal agreement in place to cover from 1996 to date (and beyond)</p> <p>The Scottish Government redress schemes is available for potential claimants to pursue. Where a survivor submits a claim to the redress scheme and accepts the compensation offered, a waiver is signed so that they are no longer permitted to submit</p>	<p>Service Manager – Governance</p> <p>Chief Social Work Officer</p>	4	4	16	<p>Discussions planned to consider how to ensure sufficient staffing resource available to deal with claims, court actions, and submission of S21 requests and recovery of documentation and to preserve the Council's position.</p> <p>Fully engage with the SCAI to anticipate and forecast future claims and ensure ELC is represented well in the public hearings.</p> <p>Ensure current social work practice with children who are accommodated away from home meets high professional standards and complies with legislation and national standards to ensure they are safe and reduce the likelihood of any 'new' claims arising.</p> <p>Full review of the overall Council Records Management systems and behaviours required to be undertaken to streamline obtaining the relevant information requested.</p> <p>Counsels opinion has been sought in relation to historic liabilities for the former LRC and a meeting is due to take place soon to discuss.</p>	4	3	12	<p>Cross Service Group</p> <p>Chief Social Work Officer</p> <p>Chief Social Work Officer</p> <p>Records Management</p> <p>Insurance</p>	<p>All measures reviewed quarterly at cross service catch up meeting and will be ongoing for some time.</p> <p>Risk reviewed February 2024 by Insurance, Legal and CSWO with no changes to risk scores.</p> <p>Risk reviewed May 2022 by Chief Social Work Officer with planned score increased from 9 to 12.</p>	

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			<p>a civil litigation claim. The maximum amount of compensation through Redress Scotland is £100,000.</p> <p>Regular discussions are held with Council's Insurance providers and brokers to ensure risk continues to be covered and/or mitigated to allow regular review for sufficient budgetary provision for any additional costs/claims that may not be covered by insurance.</p>													
ELC CR 9	Physical and/or Psychological Impact on People Service Objectives Legal & Regulatory	<b>Flooding and Coastal Erosion</b> As the incidence of flooding and coastal erosion increases as an impact of Climate Change, there is an increased risk of disruption and damage to road and path networks, impact on public and community safety, property, businesses, harbours and natural heritage sites and an associated increase in claims against the Council.	<p>In December 2021, a Flood Risk Management Plan covering the Forth Estuary catchment over the 2022-28 (Cycle 2) period was published. In March 2023, the Forth Estuary Local Flood Risk Management Plan covering 2022-28 was published. This publication outlines the specific objectives and actions to be undertaken to mitigate flood risk in the East Lothian area and complies with East Lothian Council's duties under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009.</p> <p>The Forth Estuary Local Flood Risk Management Plan (LFRMP) 2022-28 identifies actions such as river and coastal flood studies, awareness raising and maintenance which are subject to funding.</p> <p>Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme (MFPS) is proposed to be funded 80% by Scottish Government. The delivery of flood protection schemes is reliant on funding.</p> <p>In January 2024, East Lothian Council approved the MFPS to move to Stage 5 (Statutory Approvals). This approval allowed the Scheme to move to publishing ("notifying") its Outline Design in March 2024.</p> <p>Community consultation has progressed throughout the project and a large-scale community consultation event took place to present the preferred outline design in June 2023; this outline design has been refined and a final outline design completed for the Statutory Approval stage.</p> <p>In January 2024, MFPS Project Team presented an Executive Summary Report on Coastal Change in Musselburgh at a Council meeting. This report identified that coastal erosion is a current and growing concern in Musselburgh. East Lothian Council agreed in the January 2024 meeting that further investigation of erosion should take place.</p>	Executive Director for Place			4	4	16	<p>Flood studies for Dunbar, West Barns &amp; North Berwick (Coastal), Cockenzie, Port Seton, Longniddry &amp; Prestonpans, and Tranent &amp; Macmerry have been included in the 2021-28 Flood Risk Management Plan and the 2022-28 Forth Estuary LFRMP.</p> <p>As part of the 2022-28 Local Flood Risk Management Plans Flood Protection Schemes for Musselburgh and Haddington are included in the list of actions for the Forth Estuary Local Plan District.</p> <p>ELC have undertaken Flood Studies for Musselburgh and Haddington within the 2016-2022 FRM cycle and are currently progressing the Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme which is a fully established project.</p> <p>Musselburgh FPS is not yet approved under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009. In January 2024, East Lothian Council approved the Scheme to move to Stage 5 (Statutory Approvals) of the Scheme Design in accordance with the project's PRINCE2 Project Management System. The statutory approvals process, which includes publishing the final Outline Design, will take place in March 2024.</p> <p>A full report on Coastal Change in Musselburgh will be completed in March 2024. MFPS will continue to work with organisations such as Dynamic Coast to assess coastal change risks. East Lothian wide, a Coastal Change Adaptation Plan (CCAP) is proposed for 2024-25.</p>	3	3	9	Senior Engineer - Flood Protection  Senior Engineer - Flood Protection  Senior Engineer - Flood Protection  Senior Engineer - Flood Protection	2024-2028  2024-2028  2024  2024-2026  2024-2026	Risk reviewed and updated February 2024 by Senior Engineer - Flood Protection, with no change to assessment of current scores.

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			<p>Flood risk and drainage issues are considered when processing planning applications and within long-term development planning. This assessment is aligned to new policy within National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), published February 2023.</p> <p>The Severe Weather Response Plan has been developed and ensures a co-ordinated and consistent multi-agency response across the county.</p> <p>Emergency surface water, coastal and river flooding procedures are in place and have proven effective.</p> <p>A Shoreline Management Plan is in place.</p> <p>Advice on dealing with flooding is available on the Council website and directs people to the relevant websites.</p> <p>The Council is working with various organisations to promote and progress "Resilient Communities" as per the Scottish Government initiative "Ready Scotland".</p> <p>Communication with vulnerable groups regarding access and assistance during severe weather events.</p> <p>Mainten existing flood protection schemes.</p> <p>Improvements to introduce a risk-based process of undertaking watercourse inspections and delivering appropriate clearance and repair of watercourses was implemented in 2022.</p>											
ELC CR 10	Financial Service Objectives & Legal Regulatory	<p><b>The Impact of the National Care Service on East Lothian Council</b></p> <p>The Scottish Government proposal to establish a National Care Service, which could extend to all adult social work and social care services, children's services, justice social work services will result in the largest re-organisation of local government since the creation of single tier local authorities in 1995/96.</p> <p>The National Care Service (Scotland) Bill was published as at 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022. The Bill sets out principles for the NCS and places a duty on Scottish Ministers to promote a Care Service designed to secure improvements in the wellbeing of the people of Scotland. The full scope of the NCS is still to be determined, although, the inclusion of Adult Social Work and Social Care must be assumed. There will be a period of formal research and consultation to inform the decision about the inclusion of Children and Justice Social Work Services. The Bill states that the NCS will be up and running by 2026.</p>	<p>The council provided a detailed and comprehensive response to the Scottish Government's consultation on its proposals, outlining the concerns and risks involved in the creation of a National Care Service (report to Members Library, November 2021).</p> <p>Council officers will actively engage in National Professional networks and feedback any relevant information to the working group.</p> <p>CMT will continue to monitor the development of the proposal and report as appropriate to the Council.</p> <p>Council agreed to delegate authority to the Exec Dir of E&amp;CS to respond to consultation exercises, and submit evidence, in respect to the Scottish</p>	<p>Chief Social Work Officer</p> <p>Head of Operations (H&amp;SCP)</p> <p>Executive Director for Education and Children's Services</p>	5	3	15	<p>The Council has established a working group that will consider the scope and impact that the NCS may have on Council Services. The working group will also monitor ongoing developments and respond to any request for information and engage in the consultation.</p>	4	3	12	<p>Executive Director, Education &amp; Children's Services</p>	<p>In line with Scottish Government decisions</p>	<p>Risk reviewed November 2023 by Executive Director, Education &amp; Children's Services and April 2024 by Director of ELHSCP and Chief Social Worker with no change to risk scores.</p> <p>Risk reviewed July 2023 by Executive Director, Education &amp; Children's Services and reviewed by CMT August 2023 with current score</p>

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		<p>On the 12th July 2023, SG and COSLA confirmed that they had reached an initial consensus agreement that accountability for the NCS would be a partnership between SG / LG and NHS. This included that the workforce and assets currently within local authorities, would remain there in the new NCS. In November 2023, COSLA reported some emerging uncertainties including that SG intended to retain as much of the NCS Bill as possible and were taking a 'maximalist approach' to NCS integration and delegation including for Children's Services and Justice Social Work.</p> <p>At its inception, the council detailed concerns at the risk involved in this proposal which were detailed in the Council's response to the Scottish Government's consultation on its proposals (report to Members Library, November 2021). The potential for elements of the proposed changes to lead to improved outcomes for vulnerable people is acknowledged. However, there remains uncertainty on any unintended consequences of the changes on how effectively and efficiently the council can continue to meet its statutory obligations.</p> <p>The bill has passed through stage 1 (29/2/24) and is in the stage 2 process.</p>	Government's proposal for a National Care Service for Scotland and the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill.										reduce from 20 to 15 and residual score from 20 to 12.	
ELC CR 11	Physical and/or Psychological Impact on People	<p><b>Public Protection – Risk of Harm</b></p> <p>The Council has a legal responsibility to address concerns that may require a Child or Adult protection response. The Council also has an obligation to manage offenders through the Justice Social Work service and contribute to MAPPA arrangements.</p> <p>It should be noted that by the very nature of the work involved in Child Protection, Adult Protection, management of offenders and people experiencing domestic abuse this is a high risk business even with all the controls and measures in place.</p> <p>Any failure to adequately respond to concerns may negatively impact on children and adults, who may be at risk of harm. This could also result in serious harm/death to an individual/s, prosecution, having to pay compensation and have a negative impact on the reputation of the Council.</p> <p>A failure to secure efficient and effective Public Protection arrangements, covering Child Protection, Adult Support and Protection, local MAPPA arrangements, Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) and Substance Misuse services, may see the Council being unable to fulfil its statutory duties/duty of care which could contribute to a service user suffering harm/death or detriment. This would in turn result in reputational damage to and increased scrutiny of the Social Work services.</p> <p>There are continuing issues with the delivery of Social Care Services within the Care Home and</p>	<p>Strategic Structure</p> <p>The East and Midlothian Public Protection Committee (EMPPC) is the local strategic partnership responsible for the overview of policy and practice in relation to Adult Protection, Child Protection, Offender Management and Violence Against Women and Girls. The primary aim of the Committee is to provide leadership and strategic oversight of Public Protection activity and performance across East Lothian and Midlothian. It discharges its functions through four sub-groups which meet quarterly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance and Quality Improvement sub-group maintains overview of work through the door and performance in relation to CP and ASP work</li> <li>Learning and Practice Development sub-group takes forward our 2021-23 strategy for Multi-agency training, and oversees our training programme. Training needs on aspects of Public Protection are considered by this group and are informed by Training Needs Analyses undertaken by the East Lothian Workforce Development Officers in Children's Services and the HSCP.</li> <li>VAWG delivery group keeps oversight of services for gender based violence</li> </ul>	<p>Executive Directors</p> <p>Director of East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership</p> <p>Chief Social Work Officer</p> <p>Public Protection Team Manager</p>	3	4	12	<p>Awaiting feedback from Scottish Government.</p> <p>L&amp;D</p> <p>Work has begun to refresh the knowledge and understanding of both CMT and SMT that child protection is everyone's responsibility and to ensure that this key message is communicated and understood by all staff.</p> <p>The East Lothian Partnership's establishment of the new Community Safety and Justice Partnership, and creation of its 3 supporting groups – Community Safety Group, Community Justice Group and Equally Safe Group – will see a renewed focus on community safety and justice priorities during 2023/24. Community Justice Group self-assessment against appropriate standards completed and action plan to be taken forward.</p>	2	4	8	East Lothian Partnership	August 2024	<p>Risk reviewed February 2024 by Director of ELHSCP and Chief Social Worker.</p> <p>Risk refreshed October 2022 by General Manager - Adult Social Work and Public Protection Team Manager with current score reduced from 16 to 12 and residual score from 12 to 8.</p> <p>Risk reviewed and refreshed by Public Protection Team Manager, March 2022. Risk reduced from 20 and 20 to 16 and 12 due to an improving picture.</p>



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		<p>Care at Home sector. There is the potential for a service failure which could place vulnerable adults at risk of harm.</p> <p>There has been a long standing waiting list for an Outreach Service from Women's Aid Mid and East Lothian which is the specialist service provider for Women experiencing or having experienced domestic abuse. There is a funding gap created by non-recurring revenue streams and increased demand.</p> <p>In the context of rising demand for domestic abuse supports in the county, the council's arrangements for delivering Equally Safe, the national strategy to eradicate violence against women and girls requires a stronger strategic and partnership focus. Without this, East Lothian will not reduce the numbers of people experiencing harm through domestic abuse.</p> <p>Police Scotland had proposed unilateral changes to information sharing arrangements within MAPP that would have had serious repercussions for the safe operation of MAPP and the council's ability to deliver its duties as a responsible authority. Whilst the imminence of this risk has been reduced by extending the deadline for the change, the underlying barriers have not been resolved and some uncertainties remain around operational joint working between ELC and Police Scotland. East Lothian has no access to ViSOR.</p> <p>There are currently a small number of vacancies at senior leadership level arising from the Head of Operations, H&amp;SCP and General Manager - Adult Social Work moving on to new posts. This loss of experience presents a risk and has the potential to create some uncertainty amongst staff teams.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>East and Midlothian MAPP Group (EMMG) oversees MAPP arrangements.</li> </ul> <p>Level 1 training for Child Protection and Public Protection training are available via Learn-Pro.</p> <p>Critical Services Oversight Group (CSOG), Provides governance and leadership of EMPPC on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>The CSWO is chair of the local Strategic Oversight Group for MAPP and actively involved in national and local discussions around MAPP information sharing, supported by ELC legal and justice services. The East and Midlothian MAPP Group provides oversight and assurance of local MAPP performance and practice.</p> <p>The CSWO remains actively engaged in national meetings aimed at achieving a long-term solution to the MAPP information sharing / ViSOR issue ahead of the implementation of the replacement system MAPPS. The CSWO will continue to provide regular assurance of the safety of MAPP practice to the CEO.</p> <p>The CSWO and Chief Executive are fully sighted on the current situation regarding ViSOR. Access to ViSOR requires Non-Police Personnel Vetting L2 or L3 and this is a highly intrusive process and colleagues in legal, Information Governance and HR have advised that JSW staff cannot be instructed to undertake this vetting and have confirmed that JSW need access to the information that ViSOR holds only, not the system itself, to fulfil their duties under the Management of Offenders (Scotland) Act 2005 on which MAPP is based.</p> <p>Acting Up' arrangements have been put in place whilst the recruitment process is underway to fill the permanent posts.</p> <p>Marac (Multi-agency risk assessment conferences) continues to operate on a four weekly basis, by Microsoft Teams, with additional meetings scheduled to respond to increase in demand, ensuring that the needs of and supports to highest risk victims of domestic abuse are planned for on a multi-agency basis.</p> <p>East Lothian Safe and Together implementation group will continue to meet to review and maintain oversight of training and embedding S&amp;T in practice in East Lothian. This will also be monitored via</p>											

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			<p>EMPPC Learning and Development Sub-group.</p> <p>A Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Public Protection has been progressed and is monitored by CSOG. This project increased demand for services and makes a number of recommendations for the future delivery of Public Protection services.</p> <p>ELC H&amp;SCP Management attend NHS Gold meetings where the capacity gap is detailed and set in the context of the wider system risk caused by challenges facing NHS Lothian acute sites</p> <p>ELC H&amp;SCP have regular Care at Home Oversight Group Meetings to monitor the levels of provision of essential care at home. The councils' CSWO attends this meeting to ensure discharge of assuring the quality of care. This will remain in place until there is assurance of stability.</p> <p>Care at Home service provision continues to be monitored via East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee and Critical Services Oversight Group which both meet quarterly.</p> <p>A risk management tool has been developed in relation to Care at Home to provide consistency in how the providers are assessing their capacity to respond and deliver their required level of service.</p> <p>Policies, Protocols, Procedures and Guidance are in place, subject to ongoing review and update and available on Public Protection website: <a href="http://www.emppc.org.uk">www.emppc.org.uk</a>.</p> <p>Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) fulfils statutory role and responsibilities, overseeing and reporting on Public Protection issues to Chief Executive and Elected Members, reporting annually to Council giving oversight of Public Protection performance including assessment of risks and pressures.</p> <p>The Council, through the CONTEST Oversight working Group, Chaired by Head of Communities, continues to work towards delivering the UK Government's Counter Terrorism strategy, known as CONTEST, of which Prevent is a key element. EMPPC has a Prevent referral pathway which has been reviewed.</p> <p>The Lead Officer for Adult Protection leads the Council Officer forum, to support learning and practice and process consistency in Adult Protection.</p>											

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			<p>All Regulated Services e.g. Care homes for older people, residential units for young people, Schools are inspected by Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland. Improvement plans are implemented following all Regulated Services inspections. A weekly Care at Home Oversight Group has been established to oversee and manage risks in relation to staffing</p> <p>Both the Lead Officer for Child Protection and Adult Protection participate in the Inter-agency Referral Discussion Overview Group, which reviews and provides quality assurance of the decisions taken to manage vulnerable children and adults' risks.</p>											
ELC CR 12	Service Objectives & Legal Regulatory	<p><b>Duty of Care to Public</b></p> <p>The Council has a responsibility to provide care and support for the people of East Lothian and East Lothian's environment. Any breach of this duty of care may compromise legislative duties, health, safety and wellbeing, impacting on, for example, the protection of children and adults.</p> <p>Failure to fulfil the duty of care could also result in serious harm/death to an individual/s, prosecution, having to pay compensation and have a negative impact on the reputation of the Council.</p> <p>Additional pressure within this area caused by external providers struggling to deliver through staffing issues.</p> <p>The Council took out QBE policy in 2021 with Medmal, which now includes cover for some intrusive medical intervention (e.g. tube feeding or assistance with diabetic pumps). However, prior to this there is a 5 year period where the Council was without any cover, the claims for which may not be submitted for many years (particularly if it relating to children) meaning this risk will remain for some time.</p> <p>Members of the public access services in many public buildings which require to operate within statutory health and safety requirements relating to the building itself, and spaces within it. Some services are provided in the outdoor public realm. Failure to operate services safely both within ELC buildings and in outdoor spaces could risk harm to members of the public and staff, resulting in injury, financial liability and reputational damage.</p> <p>Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) poses a physical and virtual threat, be that human trafficking, drug supply, sexual exploitation, fly-tipping, fraud, unsafe consumer sales et al. These risks can include cyber-attacks, corruption, bribery, IT system infiltration, human 'plants' into organisations. SOC poses risks to our</p>	<p>Prioritise maintenance of safe staffing levels for all statutory services the partnership delivers.</p> <p>Briefing sessions, specialist training and supports are in place.</p> <p>Regular formal supervision in place for all staff including completion of PRD's and e-KSF, focusing on specific and agreed development needs.</p> <p>Clinical &amp; Care Governance Committee established which is to provide strategic oversight within the Partnership. Chief Social Work Officer, Chief Nurse, Clinical Director, AHP Lead oversight and review of practice to assess workload allocation and risk management.</p> <p>Specific oversight groups established for example Care Home, Health &amp; Safety and Risk Management.</p> <p>Review ongoing through bi-weekly Care at Home meetings chaired by General Managers.</p> <p>Services comply with required professional registration standards for all staff, e.g. SSSC, HCPC, NMC etc.</p> <p>"Safer Recruitment" practices and PVG checks embedded.</p> <p>LSI mechanism in place with reporting structure through PPC.</p> <p>Regular engagement with the Care Inspectorate reviewing services in place</p> <p>Risk assessment documentation shared with providers with client RAG in place to</p>	<p>Head of Operations, H&amp;SCP</p> <p>Head of Children's Services/ Chief Social Worker</p>	<p>3</p> <p>4</p> <p>12</p>	<p>Review of oversight and governance arrangements for assessment.</p> <p>Alteration of the workforce model for delivery of care at home service including expansion of internal delivery.</p> <p>Utilisation of SDS option 3 to support delivery of care at home.</p> <p>Comprehensive pathway modelling underway lead by Head of Operations HSCP.</p> <p>Continual recruitment underway for care at home with recruitment events designed and held including media, open days etc to encourage applications.</p> <p>Review of existing CAH packages underway to identify any capacity that can be released and support unmet needs at home or currently waiting at hospital</p> <p>Refresh of Serious and Organised Crime Multi-Agency Plan, aligned to review of Anti-social Behaviour Strategy.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>4</p> <p>8</p>	<p>Head of Operations, H&amp;SCP</p> <p>Head of Communities</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>April 2024</p> <p>June 2024</p> <p>April 2024</p>	<p>Risk reviewed February 2024 by Director of ELHSCP and Chief Social Worker.</p> <p>Risk reviewed September 2023 by Director of ELHSCP, Head of Communities and the Head of Children's Services/Chief Social Worker with SOC Risk and mitigations moved from Communities Service Risk Register by CMT Risk Sub-Group</p> <p>Risk reviewed April 2023 by Head of Operations, H&amp;SCP with no change to risk scores.</p> <p>New risk created November 2022 by Head of Operations, H&amp;SCP.</p>				

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					L	I	L x I		L	I	L x I			
		communities through targeting of vulnerable people and their properties e.g. to act as conduits for drug supply, door-step fraud, on-line crime et al.	<p>ensure services are prioritised for those most at risk.</p> <p>Council owned buildings and open spaces subject to strict management and maintenance regimes, with all requisite risk assessments and safe operating arrangements in place.</p> <p>Effective Partnership working with Police Scotland, immigration and HMRC.</p> <p>Anti-social Behaviour Oversight Group operates and oversees Serious Organised Crime Multi-Agency Action Plan.</p> <p>Effective oversight of all aspects of Public Protection through the East and Midlothian Public Protection Committee.</p> <p>Trading Standards oversight of safe consumer practices and promotion of call blocking devices. Trusted Trader Scheme in operation.</p> <p>CONTEST and Prevent counter-terrorism arrangements in operation overseen by East and Midlothian Public Protection Committee.</p>											
ELC CR 13	Physical and/or Psychological Impact on People  Service Objectives	<p><b>National Power Outage</b></p> <p>The National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) transports electricity across Great Britain. Total failure of this system would cause a nationwide loss of electricity supplies instantaneously and without warning. This would cause cascading failures across multiple sectors including telecoms, water, gas, sewage, food, health and fuel, and cause significant disruption to public service provision and most businesses and households. These disruptions could lead to physical and psychological casualties or fatalities due to the loss of the services relied upon by many, especially those with health and wellbeing vulnerabilities.</p> <p>ELC must be prepared, as best we can, to respond and recover should widespread electricity failure ever occur. Communications will be seriously interrupted, the care of vulnerable people will become hugely challenging and the continued provision of our critical activities, highlighted within our Business Continuity plans, will be seriously tested.</p>	<p>Backup generator at Penston House with Fuel to power essential emergency facilities for up to 8 days.</p> <p>Fuel Plan in place for the provision of fuel to backup generators and essential vehicles.</p> <p>Critical services have up to date business continuity plans, exercised annually.</p> <p>IT Back-up generator at JMH for vital server equipment. IT has completed a significant amount of upgrade work to the IT infrastructure to remove single points of failure.</p> <p>3 x Airwave Radios Terminals are available for our use. These terminals are currently stored at Haddington Police Station and allow for communications with other category 1 emergency responders during incidents. Airwave Terminals are tested by the emergency planning team every 3 months.</p> <p>Deployable Space X Starlink Satellite system purchased and installed at Penston House which allows for internet connectivity at ELC facilities remote to Penston house such as Offices, Depots, Rest Centres and Media Briefing centres.</p>	Team Manager, Emergency Planning & Resilience	2	5	10	<p>Awaiting Scottish Government national framework for National Power Outage response.</p> <p>Complete ELC NPO framework Plan to assist the Council, should an NPO occur, to have processes in place to deal with the ongoing challenges and recover from the impacts of the power outage. Linking in with the Lothian and Borders Local Resilience Partnership (LRP) completed NPO framework of 16/2/24 which outlines the multi-agency considerations for L&amp;B LRP in the event of an NPO. Training exercise and incorporating in to ELC response documentation to be completed.</p> <p>All services to carry out an annual BC test based on NPO.</p> <p>Purchase power banks to allow for charging of mobile phone and laptops and powering 230V devices.</p>	2	3	6	<p>Scottish Government</p> <p>Team Manager, Emergency Planning &amp; Resilience (TM EP&amp;R)</p> <p>TM EP&amp;R</p> <p>EP&amp;R Officer</p> <p>EP&amp;R Officer</p>	<p>February 2024</p> <p>May 2024</p> <p>August 2024</p> <p>December 2024</p>	<p>New risk created by Emergency Planning &amp; Resilience Team, November 2023 and further reviewed January 2024.</p>

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					L	I	L x I		L	I	L x I					
			RAYNET UHF radio capability now installed at Penston House enabling communication with other LAs and Police Scotland.													
ELC CR 14	Physical and/or Psychological Impact on People	<p><b>Severe Weather</b></p> <p>There is a risk that severe winter weather will lead to an increase in demand for gritting and snow clearing of roads/footpaths which exceeds normal capacity and supplies of salt.</p> <p>This could result in travel disruption, difficulties for people in accessing services, failure to maintain refuse collection timetable and school closures at short notice as well as a possible increase in insurance claims related to pothole damage.</p> <p>Communities may become isolated, particularly in rural areas, due to heavy and prolonged snow. In such cases communication with residents within these isolated areas may become difficult as they become cut off, possibly aligned to power failure caused by strong winds and/or the weight of snow on the lines.</p> <p>There are limitations to the service the council can offer. The Council Roads team focus on treatment and snow clearing of the main priority road network, made up of the major routes where the majority of vehicle movements take place and also includes accesses to hospitals, ambulance stations, fire stations, other emergency service establishments, railway stations and schools. Primary Routes are treated and cleared of ice and snow first and then the Roads team move onto Secondary Routes and finally tertiary and minor routes which include residential areas, cul-de-sacs. During periods of extreme weather and heavy snowfall when roads and footways are affected by significant levels of lying snow, priority will be given to primary carriageway routes and primary footpath routes with resources deployed on these specified routes continuously until satisfactory snow clearance has been achieved before resources are deployed to any secondary routes and tertiary routes, so it maybe some time before we can attend to these areas.</p>	<p>East Lothian Councils Winter Maintenance Plan has been in place for some time and ensures that the main transport routes are treated as priority.</p> <p>The Council has a Severe Weather and Adverse Events Policy in place for all staff while the Council has its own mitigating measures for its own estates/property during severe weather.</p> <p>During Severe Weather events our Contact Centre becomes the first point of contact for any issues to be raised and responded to whilst our Communications team shares warnings and other relevant information with the public as this becomes available.</p> <p>The ELC Severe Weather Response Plan has been developed over many years and ensures a co-ordinated and consistent multi-agency response across the county. This plan is reviewed annually in conjunction with partner agencies.</p> <p>The ELC Severe Weather Response plan includes reference to and improvements learned from the 'Beast from the East' (snow) incident in 2018 and Storm Arwen.</p> <p>The Council's Salt Barn has a capacity of 8,000 tonnes to meet demand arising from severe cold weather.</p> <p>A fourth-generation SXL framework was approved by Executive Sub Committee in August 2022. This framework has commenced for salt for winter road maintenance for the period 1 November 2022 until 31 October 2026.</p> <p>Snow clearing equipment has been supplied to Primary Schools. Community Councils through Resilient Communities are able to request winter response equipment from the Council. These requests are considered as per their need. A number of grit bins are provided to enable self-help gritting of adopted roads and footways. Resilient Communities are encouraged to survey the grit bins in their area and report back to the Council if new bins or grit is required.</p> <p>Winter Maintenance operatives are trained to SVQ or equivalent in winter gritting and snow clearing. Winter Maintenance Duty</p>	<p>Executive Director of Place</p> <p>Head of Infrastructure</p>				3	3	9	3	3	9	<p>Team Manager – EP&amp;R</p>	<p>Spring 2025</p> <p>October 2024</p>	<p>Risk reviewed March 2024, with no change to assessment of current scores.</p>

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			<p>officers trained as Winter Service Supervisors to City and Guilds level.</p> <p>The majority of Community Councils have Resilient Community Groups who have created their own emergency response plans or asset registers of volunteers/skills available at a time of crises. Each Resilient Community has its own Single Point of Contact (SPOC) and deputy for resilient matters including severe weather. Communication and good working relationships have been created and maintained with these SPoCs/deputies by ELC Emergency Planning staff.</p> <p>Work continues with the Resilient Communities and also involves other voluntary groups such as Tenants and Residents Groups. ELC organises an annual workshop for Resilient Communities which allows lessons learned and best practice to be discussed and progressed. It also allows for the public to meet responder agency staff such as the 'blue lights', SEPA and the utility companies.</p> <p>ELC finances all 20 Community Councils' annual insurance premiums ensuring that Insurance is not perceived as a barrier to invoking such plans.</p> <p>Training and awareness sessions, related to the activation of the ELC Severe Weather response plan, are completed on a regular basis. Partner agencies are often involved.</p>											
ELC CR 15	Physical and/or Psychological Impact on People Legal & Regulatory	<p><b>Threat of Terrorism</b></p> <p>Delivering the UK Government's Counter Terrorism (CT) strategy, known as CONTEST (comprised of four components - Prevent, Protect, Prepare and Pursue).</p> <p>All Local Authorities in Scotland are required to comply with the statutory legislation issued under section 24 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 that relates to Prevent.</p> <p>Failure to discharge this duty could mean sufficient steps are not taken to prevent an incident taking place, under Prevent, and could result in the Secretary of State issuing a direction to the Council via the powers within the act and would also result in a loss of reputation and negative publicity.</p>	<p>Multi agency 'J' Division CONTEST Meeting attended by East Lothian Council representatives.</p> <p>ELC has established a CT WG chaired by the Head of Communities with members consisting of CMT, key senior managers, Police Scotland and a QMU representative.</p> <p>ELC has appointed senior members of staff as SPoC (Head of Children's Services) and Deputy SPoC (Head of Education) for Prevent as per statutory guidelines.</p> <p>A SPoC for Prepare and Protect although not a statutory requirement, has also been appointed (Emergency Planning, Risk and Resilience Manager).</p> <p>Under Protect the CMT are prepared should the Government raise the Security Level to Critical. Service Business Continuity plans take this into account. This includes staff working from home as a result of council</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Executive Directors</p> <p>Council Management Team</p> <p>EL Contest Chair (Head of Communities)</p> <p>Contest SPoC (Emergency Planning, Risk &amp; Resilience Manager)</p> <p>Prevent SPoC (Head of Children's Services)</p>	3	3	9	<p>Awareness-raising sessions are being arranged with Police colleagues with independent service providers operating in East Lothian.</p> <p>CT police are offering bespoke Prevent training across other council services and supporting managers to update paper-based training materials for manual staff.</p> <p>Further service specific Prevent training is being arranged for children's and justice social work services.</p>	2	3	6	<p>Contest and Prevent SPoCs for all</p>	<p>May 2024</p> <p>May 2024</p> <p>May 2024</p>	<p>Risk refreshed by Head of Communities, Contest Working Group Chair, February 2024 – no change to risk scores.</p>

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					L	I	L x I		L	I	L x I			
			<p>facilities being closed during any emergency response.</p> <p>ELC follows and contributes towards the 'J' Division Contest group implementation plan.</p> <p>The SPOC Prevent Group in the East of Scotland is attended by the ELC SPoC.</p> <p>Prevent Multi-Agency Panels Chair (SPoC) and Depute (Service Manager Adult Social Work and General Manager Children's Services respectively) identified to chair multi-agency meetings established to discuss any referrals.</p> <p>Regular internal and external communication of any national counter-terrorism updates. Information regarding Protect and Prepare is received from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office. This information is then circulated to appropriate key ELC staff and local businesses.</p> <p>A Prevent working group, chaired by the Head of Children's Services, meets regularly and a Prevent reporting process has been established. A refreshed Prevent Delivery Plan has been completed and has been approved by the ELC Contest group. Progress of the Prevent delivery plan will be monitored through quarterly Prevent working group meetings and reporting to EL Contest group.</p> <p>Elected Members were briefed in January 2022.</p> <p>Joint training (with Midlothian) for PMAP members was undertaken.</p> <p>Home Office PMAP training was provided for managers in justice, children's and adult social work services.</p> <p>ELC have submitted an annual assurance statement of compliance with Prevent to Scottish Government in relation to the new statutory guidance for Prevent and PMAP (Feb 2021).</p> <p>Education personnel are fully engaged with Prevent and appropriate filters have been installed on the Education infrastructure.</p> <p>Updated Prevent referral pathway has been agreed with EMPPC and communicated on the intranet, including the new national Prevent referral form.</p>											

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			<p>A Prevent – Counter Terrorism e-learning module is available on Learn Pro and is a mandatory learning module for staff. Uptake of mandatory Prevent e-learning is reported to the Prevent working Group.</p> <p>UK Government Home Officer e-learning for the new Protect Duty rolled out from March 2023, signposted to services/staff working in complex public buildings/venues and in outdoor arenas.</p> <p>ELC Emergency Planning, Risk and resilience and members of CMT attended Exercise Safe Steeple, March 2023, led by SGov Resilience to exercise multi-agency response to a marauding terrorist attack.</p> <p>The ELC Prepare and Protect SPoC liaises with Police Scotland and in particular the CT team to ensure current information on these areas is circulated to appropriate ELC key staff and staff in general if required. The SPoC also ensures important information is uploaded onto the ELC Intranet.</p>												
ELC CR 16	<p>Service Objectives</p> <p>Legal &amp; Regulatory</p> <p>Physical and/or Psychological Impact on People</p>	<p><b>Business Continuity</b></p> <p>Failure to ensure currency of Business Continuity Plans could lead to services not having a robust response to an incident affecting their service area or critical services may not be maintained, while critical services for the public could be affected and statutory requirements not completed.</p> <p>Non availability of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>premises, through fire, flood or other unexpected incident;</li> <li>key staff or significant numbers of front-line staff for any reason e.g. a Pandemic;</li> <li>systems (IT, telephony, power failure etc.);</li> <li>any form of transportation due to a fuel shortage.</li> </ul> <p>The occurrence of any of these may have an adverse effect on the Council to function fully and to complete critical services and statutory requirements.</p>	<p>Business Continuity Framework Plan in place and regularly reviewed.</p> <p>Business Continuity Plans are maintained for all service areas, giving details of minimum levels of staff, alternate locations, exercise and review dates and version control.</p> <p>The Chief Executive has a statutory responsibility for the ELC BC process. The Heads of Service remain responsible for ensuring the BC process is completed within their area of work.</p> <p>Each service area now has a Single Point of Contact (SPoC) and deputy who are responsible for, their services BC Plan, exercising this plan and ensuring it is maintained. All BC Plans are managed through Continuity<sup>2</sup> Software.</p> <p>The Council carried out a Council Wide Business Continuity Exercise in November 2019 which successfully tested the BC capabilities of the Council. Each Service carries out an annual BC exercise.</p> <p>ELC staff have access to an e-learning package on Business Continuity which was reviewed and refreshed during March 2021.</p> <p>Business Continuity Plans are invoked as Services suffer BC issues with a fortnightly update of those plans invoked provided to CMT.</p>	<p>Emergency Planning, Risk and Resilience Manager</p> <p>Emergency Planning, Risk and Resilience Officer</p>			2	4	8			2	3	6	<p>EP&amp;R Officer</p> <p>May 2024</p> <p>Risk refreshed February 2024 noting changes to risk description and mitigation measures whilst no change to risk scores.</p>



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			<p>An IT Disaster Recovery Plan is in place and will be regularly updated when any changes take place in the main data centres. For single server failure - there are over 100 systems now running on virtual servers which automatically fall over to another server if there are hardware issues. Specific disaster recovery arrangements are in place for the critical systems of telephony, e-mail and social care.</p> <p>Controls that are in place to prevent and limit the effects of IT system unavailability including firewalls, anti-virus software, system/data backup routines, and resilience in the form of a back-up generator for the main data centre at JMH.</p> <p>All Services asked to consider a National Power Outage as part of their BC Plan.</p> <p>ELC services are encouraged to take all risks that may impact on East Lothian into account when completing their Business Continuity (BC) plans as an example, severe weather or electricity failure or extreme staff shortages. BC plans are key to ensure ELC services continue to provide their critical activities.</p>											
ELC CR 17	Legal & Regulatory	<p><b>Failure to maintain, review &amp; exercise Emergency Planning, Incident Response and Management</b></p> <p>Failure to maintain, review and exercise Emergency Contingency Plans and to comply with current guidance and legislation or to contravene current legislation, which may result in severe penalties as well as an ineffective response to an emergency.</p> <p>Any ineffective preparation and planning for potential crises and disruptive events such as those reflected within the Community/UK Risk Register, that directly relate to the council as a 'Category 1 Responder' may result in the council's inability to effectively respond and manage the event in a way that minimises harm to the community, our employees and the reputation of the council. For example, connectivity between partner agencies during a response to spontaneous events/incidents is challenging due to several agencies using different software and platforms.</p>	<p>Contingency plans in place, to address risks as identified in the UK National Risk Register and that are most likely to impact on East Lothian, including generic, site, event and response specific. Incident response processes and resources are identified in contingency plans.</p> <p>Training and exercises to ensure emergency arrangements remain 'fit for purpose' and to test the robustness of contingency plans.</p> <p>Ensure 'key' ELC staff continue to stay abreast of incident/ emergency response arrangements and processes and are aware of their role and how they integrate with multi-agency partnership working.</p> <p>The Council works with Community Councils (CC) and other community groups e.g. Tenants and Residents Associations to promote and progress 'Resilient Communities' as per the Scottish Government initiative 'Ready Scotland'. The council communicates directly with community groups as risk warnings are received. Resilient Community Single Points of Contact (SPoC) are in place for the majority of CCs and are fully aware of their responsibilities.</p>	Team Manager – Emergency Planning & Resilience	2	4	8	<p>Ongoing communication with ELC 'Resilient Communities'. Several more Community Councils are considering creating Resilient Communities plans following their response to COVID-19.</p> <p>Future Emergency/Resilience training will be progressed with ELC staff, strategic, tactical and operational.</p> <p>A full Level 2 nuclear emergency response exercise will take place in June 2024.</p> <p>An ELC response plan for incidents of significant electricity failure, also known as power loss or blackout, will be created alongside Scottish and UK Government guidance. Such an incident will have major impacts for all councils and there are no easy answers with a major such incident expected to last up to 7 days. However, this plan will ensure ELC is prepared, as much as it can be, to respond and recover from such an incident.</p>	1	4	4	<p>J Fleetwood</p> <p>TM EP&amp;R</p> <p>TM EP&amp;R</p> <p>TM EP&amp;R</p>	<p>June 2024</p> <p>August 2025</p> <p>June 2024</p> <p>May 2024</p>	Risk reviewed by Team Manager, EP & R, March 2024 with no change to risk assessment scores.

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			<p>Corporate emergency planning arrangements are in place, including media/public information and social care arrangements.</p> <p>Working with other Category 1 and 2 Responders e.g. Police Scotland, Scottish Fire &amp; Rescue Service (SFRS), Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS), Utility companies etc. as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to ensure an effective and integrated response.</p> <p>Debriefing processes are followed, when appropriate, to enable lessons learned to be fed back into contingency planning.</p> <p>ELC services are encouraged to take all risks that may impact on East Lothian, into account when completing their Business Continuity (BC) plans as an example, severe weather or electricity failure. BC plans are key to ensure ELC services continue to provide their critical activities.</p>												
ELC CR 18	Physical and/or Psychological Impact on People  Legal & Regulatory	<p><b>Communicable Disease Outbreaks of Public Health Significance</b></p> <p>ELC continue to liaise with NHSL Public Health Service, and wider national and international reports e.g. World Health Organisation, to monitor public health advice and guidelines relating to all public health outbreaks e.g. legionella. Pandemic, et al.</p> <p>The ability to quickly and effectively respond to any declared national or local public health outbreak remains embedded in Civil Contingency Act 2004 first responders e.g. NHS, Police, Fire, Councils.</p>	<p>Processes in place to establish proactive communicating and encouraging compliance with all government and public health authorities' advice and reducing the impact/spread of misinformation by relying on information from trusted sources.</p> <p>Established mechanism to stand up the Council Management Team (Critical Incident Response Team) to oversee and direct the Council's response to any public health outbreak.</p> <p>The Council has had to adapt is delivery of services beyond the COVID pandemic and now subsequent concurrent challenges including the cost-of-living crisis and ensuing economic volatility. The COVID-10 Recovery &amp; Renewal Plan interventions are now embedded within the Council Plan and are also overseen by the East Lothian partnership.</p> <p>Resilience Direct continues to be available for use to share information on a multi-agency basis.</p> <p>Business Continuity Plans in place in all services leading to staff continuing to work from home unless it is essential for them to be in their place of work.</p> <p>Public Health Scotland has published (September 2022) National Respiratory Surveillance Plan and also Plan for Monitoring and Responding to New SARS-</p>	Head of Operations, H&SCP			2	3	6			2	3	6	<p>Risk reviewed March 2024 by Director of ELHSCP and Head of Operations with Current Risk Score reduced to 6 due to vaccination programme established.</p> <p>Risk reviewed April &amp; May 2023 by Head of Operations, H&amp;SCP with current risk score reduced from 12 to 9 due to service not seeing a significant impact and residual score reduced from 9 to 6 once vaccine fully rolled out.</p>

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			<p>Cov-2 Variants and Mutations. These plans detail how an effective and efficient surveillance service will be delivered in Scotland and sets out how the identification, investigation, risk assessment and response in relation to COVID19 variants and mutations will be carried out.</p> <p>The document recommends local authorities to stand ready to support any operational roll out of a VAM response.</p> <p>Protective Services continue to have regular engagement with NHS Lothian Health Protection Team and are ready to work in partnership with NHS Lothian in relation to standing up a response where required.</p> <p>HSCP continues to support delivery of the COVID19 vaccination programme.</p> <p>Established vaccination programme and resilience to react to most anticipated scenarios. New Spring programme and the new RSV vaccination starting in Summer 2024.</p> <p>Resilient Communities Groups exist in each Community Council area and Groups are ready to stand-up when required.</p> <p>Volunteer Centre East Lothian collaboration over support for local Third and Voluntary sector organisations able to respond to consequences across communities.</p> <p>The Council provides a prime source of local EL public information, constantly updated, in the Council Website as well as regular updates on Social Media platforms.</p> <p>HSCP are following NHS and ELC guidance on staffing and using JPF to monitor the situation.</p>											
ELC CR 19	Legal & Regulatory	<p><b>Equality</b></p> <p>Failure to meet duties and legislative requirements of the Single Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>The Single Equality Act 2010 and related guidance places a general duty on public authorities to be active in promoting equality, eliminating unlawful conduct and fostering good relations. It also places specific duties on public authorities to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>report on mainstreaming the equality duty;</li> <li>publish equality outcomes and report progress;</li> <li>assess and review policies and practices;</li> <li>gather and use employee information;</li> <li>publish gender pay gap information;</li> <li>publish statements on equal pay;</li> </ul>	<p>ELC Equality Plan 2021-2025 was adopted in November 2021 and is now being implemented. This includes the commitments made by East Lothian Council as a Licensing Board and as an Education Authority. The plan outlines our commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to lead a culture where respect, choice and understanding is fostered and diversity positively valued;</li> <li>Maintain a working environment where unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying is not tolerated;</li> </ul>	Executive Director for Place	2	3	6		2	3	6		Risk reviewed March 2024 by Service Manager - Policy, Performance & Organisational Development with no change to assessment of current scores.	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement;</li> <li>publish in a manner that is accessible.</li> </ul> <p>The Scottish Government has introduced the Fairer Scotland (socio- economic) duty. This will require the Council to consider the impact of our work on those living in poverty. The Council will need to respond to the full requirements of this new duty and raise awareness of the requirements on the Council.</p> <p>There is a risk that the Council may not be able to meet its general or specific duties and in particular at a time when difficult budget decisions are having to be made that there will be cuts in services or increases in charges that have a disproportionate impact on people who may need those services most because of their equality background.</p> <p>The Council would be open to legal challenge of not meeting its duties and in particular of not carrying out adequate assessment of impact of policies and budget decisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to develop our understanding of the needs of different individuals and communities in a time of rapid change;</li> <li>Continue to embed the equality agenda in all our work, and contribute to the early intervention and prevention approach adopted by the Council and its Partners;</li> <li>Improve understanding of the impact of poverty and inequality on people's lives; and</li> <li>Ensure that we plan and deliver services which meet modern standards of delivery and that are inclusive of a wide range of different needs from digital services to face to face interactions</li> </ul> <p>The Poverty Plan has been reviewed and produced for the period 2023 – 2027. Delivery will be monitored by the Poverty Working Group and the new East Lothian Partnership Governance Group.</p> <p>The Integrated Impact Assessment Process is embedded and is now widely used. This includes consideration of poverty which should allow us to meet the requirements of the new socio economic duty. A programme of support, including training on the new IIA process is ongoing.</p> <p>Continue to embed the use of the Scottish Government's Sustainable Procurement Tools into procurement procedures.</p> <p>The Health &amp; Social Care IJBs (East &amp; Midlothian and City of Edinburgh) along with NHS Lothian will use the 'checklist and IIA form' package, with East and Midlothian Councils using the IIA form only package.</p> <p>As per our statutory obligation, HR is annually capturing the Employment Monitoring information required under the Act. This is reported publicly alongside the requirement to publish an annual Equal Pay Report.</p> <p>ELC Equalities Mainstreaming Annual Report 2022-23 published.</p> <p>eLearning equalities modules are available on Learn Pro and 'Get in on the Act' guides to the Council's legal responsibilities are available for all employees and Elected members. A new e learning package 'Understanding Poverty' has been added to support employees to understand about taking poverty into account when designing services and will be updated once details of the Socio-Economic duty are known.</p>											

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					Likelihood	Impact	Total		Likelihood	Impact	Total			
					L	I	L x I		L	I	L x I			
ELC CR 20	Reputation & Legal Regulatory	<p><b>Standards in Public Life</b></p> <p>Failure of corporate governance or to meet standards in public life.</p> <p>Failure of the Council's corporate governance or of officials or members to meet standards in public life could result in reputational damage.</p>	<p>Standing Orders (the Schemes of Administration and Scheme of Delegation) are regularly reviewed and revised. The most recent review took place in April and June 2023, with two reports to Council.</p> <p>The Council has an adopted Code of Conduct for its employees which gives all employees greater clarity around the standards of behaviour expected of them. Breach of the Code may amount to a disciplinary offence.</p> <p>Training on the Councillors' Code of Conduct is offered to Members periodically with regular updates from the Standards Commission circulated to Members.</p> <p>The Council's Monitoring Officer and Depute Monitoring Officers provide advice as required.</p> <p>An induction programme for new Councillors was delivered to both new and returning Members. This included training on standards in public life and, specifically, on compliance with the requirements of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.</p> <p>A 100-day review took place with our Elected Members in August 2022. This was carried out by way of face-to-face meetings with Elected Members and covered the Elected Member Induction Programme, the Councillors' Code of Conduct, PA support, office accommodation, Access to Council officers, committee papers, surgeries, and further training and development.</p>	Service Manager – Governance	2	2	4	The Council's Standing Orders are reviewed regularly, and a further review will be undertaken after a period of operation of the Hybrid Committee Meetings system to ensure they remain up to date and relevant.	2	2	4	Service Manager – Governance	April 2024	Risk Reviewed by Head of Corporate Support February 2024 with no change in risk scores.



**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Council  
**MEETING DATE:** 23 April 2024  
**BY:** Executive Director for Place  
**SUBJECT:** East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment for approval by the Council.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Council is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment.
- 2.2 Note that the Play Sufficiency Assessment will inform the Evidence Report for the next East Lothian Local Development Plan.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) is intended to provide an overall picture as to the provision and distribution of outdoor play opportunities for children and young people across the whole of a local authority area.
- 3.2 The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 introduced new duties on planning authorities to assess the sufficiency of outdoor play opportunities for children and young people in their area and use the assessments to inform their Local Development Plan.
- 3.3 The statutory requirements for PSAs are laid out in the Town and Country Planning (Play Sufficiency Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2023. The regulations specify that all PSAs should provide statements as regards the overall quality, quantity and accessibility of formal and informal outdoor play opportunities in the planning authority's area, and in each locality within the planning authority's area. The Regulations define children as

any person under the age of 18 years, and specify the consultation requirements in preparing the PSA.

### **East Lothian's Play Sufficiency Assessment: Process**

- 3.4 East Lothian Council commissioned Play Scotland, the representative body for play in Scotland, to assess the quantity, quality and accessibility of play spaces in East Lothian to inform East Lothian's PSA.
- 3.5 Play Scotland undertook a detailed assessment of all Council-owned or managed formal public outdoor play spaces in East Lothian, with particular focus on inclusion and accessibility.
- 3.6 Extensive consultation and engagement, particularly with children and young people, including those with Additional Support Needs, also informed the PSA.
- 3.7 Play Scotland undertook engagement with children and young people and their families about their views on the sufficiency of formal and informal play spaces in East Lothian, with particular attention to the views of the following three groups, which were identified by the Council as priority groups:
  - Disabled and Additional Support Needs (ASN) children and families;
  - Young women and girls;
  - Early years (0–4-year-olds) families.
- 3.8 Five play spaces were also assessed by disabled children and their families with the support from specialist practitioners from East Lothian Play Association (ELPA) and Can Do.
- 3.9 Play Scotland developed a new Accessibility and Inclusion Play Space Assessment to assess East Lothian's formal outdoor play spaces. East Lothian is therefore the first authority in Scotland to undertake a full and transparent assessment of accessible and inclusive play provision in formal outdoor play spaces.
- 3.10 The Council then undertook a further round of public consultation on the draft findings of the PSA, which included consultation on all Community Council Areas across East Lothian. There were 291 responses to this public consultation on the PSA findings.
- 3.11 The findings from all these stages of consultation and engagement across East Lothian's communities have informed and been incorporated into the East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment.

### **East Lothian's Play Sufficiency Assessment: Key Findings**

- 3.12 The Play Sufficiency Assessment undertaken by Play Scotland identified that there is an excellent quantity of play provision in East Lothian, and a good range of physical and risky play opportunities. The PSA also identified important ways to strengthen the quality and accessibility of play opportunities in East Lothian where future funding opportunities would make this possible.



3.13 The East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment Summary Report is set out at Appendix 1. The full PSA Technical Report, which includes the detailed findings of play sufficiency for each Community Council Area of East Lothian, is published in the Members' Library Service (Ref: 42/24, April 2024 Bulletin: [Agendas, reports and minutes | East Lothian Council](#)).

3.14 The key findings of East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment are:

**3.15 Quantity of Formal Outdoor Play Spaces**

- East Lothian has 121 Council-owned or managed formal outdoor play spaces distributed across the entirety of the local authority area.
- Most residents in the six largest settlements have at least one formal outdoor play space within a 5-minute walk.

**3.16 Quantity of Informal Outdoor Play**

- East Lothian has a wealth of informal outdoor play opportunities across a wide range of natural settings, including woodland and forests, coastal areas and beaches, and grasslands and wetlands.
- Most East Lothian residents live within a 5-minute walk of their nearest useable green space.

**3.17 Quality of Formal Outdoor Play Spaces**

- Outdoor formal play spaces in East Lothian are generally attractive, clean, and well-maintained sites which are free from dog mess, vandalism, and traffic and noise pollution. Most play spaces are green and are overlooked by houses and offices.
- There is a lack of nearby or signposted cycle racks and public toilets and a lack of natural features within formal play spaces.
- Most formal play spaces provide a range of opportunities for physical and risky play for younger children. There are significantly fewer opportunities for physical and risky play for the 12–17-year-old age ranges.
- Formal play spaces offer opportunities for a variety of physical play experiences, including running, skipping, hopping, jumping, swinging, sliding, spinning and rocking. There are minimal opportunities for crawling, balancing or bouncing and limited formal opportunities for bike or scooter riding, skateboarding or roller skating within formal play spaces.
- Opportunities to engage in creative, sensory, and nature-based play in formal play spaces are extremely limited across all age ranges.
- There are opportunities for social play across different ages, although this reduces in the older age ranges. There are minimal opportunities for children with differing abilities to play together.
- Some formal play spaces offer calmer spaces to be on your own or with a small group of friends, however these are usually for the

younger age groups and inaccessible to anyone using a mobility aid or wheelchair.

### 3.18 **Quality of Informal Outdoor Play**

- East Lothian residents highly value the range of informal outdoor play opportunities offered in natural and green settings across East Lothian.
- Most East Lothian residents are satisfied or very satisfied with their nearest open and green spaces.
- All PSA target groups identified access to green and natural spaces as important to ensuring the quality of their informal outdoor play opportunities.
- Accessibility to natural and green spaces can be challenging for disabled families.

### 3.19 **Accessibility of Formal Outdoor Play Spaces**

- There are minimal play opportunities for disabled children, young people and families in formal outdoor play spaces across East Lothian. This includes children with Additional Support Needs (ASN).
- No play spaces are fully accessible or inclusive, and where accessible equipment is included within the play space this offers a limited play experience and is often located on the periphery of the main play space.
- There is minimal inclusive infrastructure to support access into and around play spaces.

### 3.20 **Recommendations of the Play Sufficiency Assessment**

The following recommendations identified through the PSA process are intended to provide focus for future investment in play provision, where funding and resources would make this possible.

### 3.21 Key recommendations of the PSA:

- **The quality and range of play opportunities in East Lothian could be improved through:**
  - Increasing opportunities for sensory, creative and nature-based play
  - Increasing all play opportunities for the 12–17-year-old groups
  - Increasing opportunities for calm, quiet play
  - Increasing opportunities for social play
  - Increasing 'hang out' spaces for the 12–17-year-old age groups
- **Accessibility and inclusion of play opportunities in East Lothian could be improved through:**
  - Increasing the variety of play space surfaces
  - Including a wider variety of inclusive fixed equipment

- Increasing opportunities for social, sensory, creative, and natural play
  - Integrating inclusive play opportunities into the main play space
  - Including features to support play for children with a wider variety of disabilities
  - Improving safe, accessible routes into play spaces
  - Embedding lived experience into play space design
- 3.22 The PSA notes that there is no expectation that all formal outdoor play spaces be fully inclusive. The assessment is designed to be used to inform meaningful community engagement and strategic decisions regarding investment in play space renewal.
- 3.23 The PSA states that the Council will aim to address these findings and recommendations of the PSA in our ongoing management and maintenance of our existing play areas, where future funding opportunities would make this possible, and we will consider incorporating these recommendations in our Local Development Plan as requirements for the future development of play areas.
- 3.24 The PSA will inform the Evidence Report for the next East Lothian Local Development Plan, and it is anticipated that future PSAs will be undertaken to coincide with future Local Development Planning processes.
- 3.25 The findings of this PSA have already enabled the Council's Amenity Services to adjust the specification of new proposed play areas, including improving consultation and engagement processes for developing and improving play areas, with current examples underway including play area improvements in Tranent, Dunbar, Whitecraig and Gullane. In addition, the Council has allocated capital funding to deliver new pump tracks within communities for young people of all ages.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The PSA will inform the Evidence Report for the next East Lothian Local Development Plan, as required by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019.
- 4.2 The PSA will help to inform planning decisions on development proposals affecting play areas.
- 4.3 The recommendations in the PSA report will also inform the ongoing strategic and operational management of the Council's play areas and are intended to provide focus for future investment in play provision.

#### **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. Any

policy changes which may arise from this report, including through the next Local Development Plan, will be subject to Integrated Impact Assessment at that stage.

## 6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial – There are no financial implications directly arising from this report. However, the report identifies ways to strengthen outdoor play opportunities in East Lothian where future funding would make this possible, and it sets out recommendations which are intended to provide focus for future investment in play provision.
- 6.2 Personnel – None.
- 6.3 Other – None.

## 7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment: Summary Report (set out at Appendix 1 to this report).
- 7.2 East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment: Technical Report and appendices (available in the Members’ Library (Ref: 42/24, April 2024 Bulletin: [Agendas, reports and minutes | East Lothian Council](#)):

Appendix 1: Report of Findings from the Public Consultation on the Draft PSA including by Community Council Area.

Appendix 2: Report by East Lothian Play Association and Can Do: Play Sufficiency Assessment of the accessibility of selected formal outdoor play spaces for disabled children and their families in East Lothian.

Appendix 3: East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment Maps.

Appendix 4: East Lothian Formal Play Space Assessment Scores.

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<b>DATE</b>	27 March 2024

# East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment

## Summary Report

March 2024



*Image 1: Welcoming sign at Ormiston Park Play Area*

# 1 Background to Play

## The national vision for play

The Scottish Government has committed to embedding children's right to play across every aspect of children's everyday lives.

### **The vision for play in Scotland**

*"We want Scotland to be the best place to grow up. A nation which values play as a life-enhancing daily experience for all our children and young people; in their homes, nurseries, schools and communities."*<sup>1</sup>

## Why is play important?

Children's right to play is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Research<sup>2</sup> clearly demonstrates the individual and societal benefits of play for children and young people. We now know that play leads to a wide range of interconnected beneficial outcomes to play across the cognitive, physical, emotional and social developmental areas. However, research also demonstrates that play also has positive societal outcomes through building healthier and more tolerant societies.

## What do we mean by play?

Play is not easily defined and can take many forms. It can be active, passive, solitary, independent, assisted, social, exploratory, educational or just for fun. It can happen indoors or outdoors. It can be structured, creative, messy, entirely facilitated by the imagination or can involve using the latest gadget. However, no matter what form play may take, what is important is that every child's right to play is respected and they are allowed the freedom to choose how and when they play.

## What are 'high quality play opportunities'?

The varied forms of play means it is not easy to assess quality. High quality play opportunities may be structured or entirely child-led. They may be taking place in spaces specifically designed for play or in spaces in which play has not been planned. It may be taking place outwith the control or view of adults. Further, by its very nature 'high quality' provision will vary in different circumstances and locations. However, in terms of the provision and assessment of play opportunities and environments, in general we might expect 'high quality opportunities' to happen when:

- the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are put into practice.
- the environment provides stimulus for play to flourish.
- if adults are involved, they work to established ethical and professional standards.<sup>3</sup>

It is also increasingly understood that children need challenge and risk when they play, so a balance must be sought between keeping children safe from harm while also allowing them to engage in risky activities.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [Play Strategy for Scotland: our vision](#)

<sup>2</sup> Play for a Change, 2008; [Getting it Right for Play: an evidence base](#); [The Play Return](#); [Play is the Way](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Play Strategy for Scotland: our action plan](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Managing Risk in Play Provision](#)

## 2 Play Sufficiency Assessments

### Why do a Play Sufficiency Assessment?

The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 **introduced new duties on planning authorities to assess the sufficiency of outdoor play opportunities for children and young people in their area and use the assessments to inform their Local Development Plan.**

### What is a Play Sufficiency Assessment?

The Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) is intended to provide an overall picture as to the provision and distribution of outdoor play opportunities for children across the totality of a local authority area. The statutory requirements for PSAs are laid out in the Town and Country Planning (Play Sufficiency Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2023<sup>5</sup>. **The regulations specify that all PSAs should provide statements as regards to the overall quality, quantity and accessibility of formal and informal outdoor play opportunities in the planning authority's area, and in each locality within the planning authority's area.** The Regulations define children as any person under the age of 18 years.

Regulation 3(1) requires that PSAs take the form of a written report, incorporating maps as required. The Regulation provides flexibility for planning authorities to include information that is meaningful locally and to align the Assessment with other relevant areas of work such as the Open Space Audit and Strategy and local Play Strategy, however the PSA must feed into the Local Development Plan.

### What does a Play Sufficiency Assessment need to include?

The Regulations require PSAs to include a map identifying locations of all formal play spaces and statements as regards to **the quantity, quality and accessibility of both formal and informal outdoor play opportunities**. Informal play spaces are defined as areas of open space of which the primary function is not play. To achieve this, authorities can draw upon a range of alternative assessments, for example previous assessments of open and green spaces, to inform the PSA. Further details of the requirements are provided in the Scottish Government's Planning Guidance on PSAs<sup>6</sup>.

Regulation 4 requires that in preparing the PSA, planning authorities must consult with children, parents and carers, Community Councils, and the general public.

### How often do we need to assess play sufficiency?

The PSA will inform the Evidence Report for the next East Lothian Local Development Plan, and it is anticipated that future PSAs will be undertaken to coincide with future Local Development Planning processes.

## 3 The Process for Assessing Play in East Lothian

### Aim of the Play Sufficiency Assessment in East Lothian

East Lothian Council commissioned Play Scotland to assess the quantity, quality and accessibility of their play spaces to inform their baseline PSA. Play Scotland undertook the following:

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<sup>5</sup> [The Town and Country Planning \(Play Sufficiency Assessment\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2023 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

<sup>6</sup> [Play Sufficiency Assessment Regulations 2023: planning guidance - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

- Desktop analysis of documents relating to play and play spaces, including recent relevant consultations undertaken in the local authority.
- Assessment of the quantity of formal play spaces across the full Local Authority area and major settlements through the use of GIS mapping to identify walking distances to formal play spaces at half-mile and quarter-mile distances.
- Engagement with children and young people about their views on the sufficiency of formal and informal play spaces, with particular attention to the views of the following three priority groups:
  - Disabled and Additional Support Needs (ASN) children and families
  - Young women and girls
  - Early years (0-4 year olds) families

In addition, Play Scotland undertook a detailed assessment of all formal public outdoor play spaces in East Lothian, with particular focus on inclusion and accessibility as defined below.

### Accessibility and inclusion

The aim of the PSA is to assess the quantity and quality of outdoor play spaces for all children. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD) states that governments must ensure that children with disabilities have equal access with other children to participation in play, recreation, and leisure sporting activities<sup>7</sup>. The National Planning Framework 4 requires new, replacement or improved play provision to be inclusive and accessible for disabled children<sup>8</sup>.

The Children’s Play Policy Forum and UK Play Safety Forum<sup>9</sup> define accessible and inclusive play spaces as:

*An Accessible Play Space is a space which is barrier-free, allows users access to move around the space and offers participation opportunities for a range of differing abilities. Not every child of every ability will be able to actively use everything within an accessible play space.*

*An Inclusive Play Space provides a barrier-free environment, with supporting infrastructure, which meets the wide and varying play needs of every child. Disabled children and non-disabled children will enjoy high levels of participation opportunities, equally rich in play value.*

Play Scotland developed a new Accessibility and Inclusion Play Space Assessment to assess East Lothian’s formal outdoor play spaces. **East Lothian is therefore the first authority in Scotland to undertake a full and transparent assessment of accessible and inclusive play provision in formal outdoor play spaces.** As noted by the Children’s Play Policy Forum and UK Play Safety Forum Joint Position Statement<sup>10</sup>, capital and revenue budgets for the provision of children’s play facilities are limited, therefore **there is no expectation that all play spaces be fully accessible and fully inclusive.** However, the joint position statement suggests that “the strategic provision of truly inclusive play spaces at well-chosen destination sites is likely to be a key feature of a reasonable response to legislation”<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> [Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)

<sup>8</sup> [National Planning Framework 4](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Including Disabled Children in Play Provision](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Including Disabled Children in Play Provision](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Including Disabled Children in Play Provision](#)



## Methodology: Research framework

The PSA requires assessment of the quantity, quality and accessibility of informal and formal play spaces across the authority area. To achieve this, the following methods were adopted:

- The **quantity of formal outdoor play spaces** was assessed via a GIS survey. This survey identified the location and walking distances to each formal outdoor play space within each main settlement and across the authority area.
- The **quantity of informal outdoor play spaces** was assessed through drawing on East Lothian Council assessments, audits and reports, including the Open Space Audit<sup>12</sup> and Green Network Strategy<sup>13</sup>.
- The **quality of formal outdoor play spaces** was assessed via in-situ visual assessments of every formal outdoor play space across the entirety of the authority area and through direct engagement with children and families in East Lothian.
- The **quality of informal outdoor play spaces** was assessed via direct engagement with children and families in East Lothian.
- The **accessibility of formal outdoor play spaces** was assessed via in-situ visual assessments of every formal outdoor play space across the entirety of the authority area alongside site visits to a sample of play spaces by disabled children and their families supported by staff from East Lothian Play Association (ELPA) and Can Do special needs playscheme.

## Research tools

The quality assessment used three data collection tools developed by Play Scotland. These tools were:

- **Play Space Survey** – in-situ visual assessments looking at the play space environment and features, and the quality and accessibility of play provision in formal outdoor play spaces.
- **Play Opportunities Survey** – in-situ visual assessments looking at the quality and range of play opportunities provided within formal outdoor play spaces.
- **Play Needs Survey** – facilitated and online survey of children’s play preferences to capture their perspectives on the types and availability of formal and informal outdoor play in their local area.

## Participation and engagement to inform the Play Sufficiency Assessment

Alongside in-situ assessments of all formal outdoor play spaces in the authority area, twelve formal play spaces were assessed by primary school children, disabled children and families, and specialist practitioners. All primary and secondary schools in the East Lothian authority were invited to participate via an email invitation, and five primary schools responded.

Overall, the PSA includes the following range of views and forms of assessment:

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<sup>12</sup> [East Lothian Open Space Strategy 2018](#)

<sup>13</sup> [East Lothian Green Network Strategy – Supplementary Planning Guidance](#)

Table 1: Overview of target group participants, assessed play spaces and assessment methods

Target Group	Number of Participants	Play Spaces / Locations Assessed	Method of Assessment	Facilitated by
Disabled children and families	48 families	Neilson Park (Haddington) Bleachingfield (Dunbar) Whitecraig Park (Whitecraig) Quayside Park (Musselburgh) Cemetery Park (Prestonpans)	Play Space Survey Play Opportunities Survey	East Lothian Play Association (ELPA) Can Do
Primary school children	78 children (P3-P7)	East Linton Park (East Linton) Goolwa Park (Port Seton) South Seton Park (Port Seton) Windygoul Park (Tranent) Lewisvale Park (Musselburgh) Musselburgh Burgh Primary (Musselburgh) Innerwick Primary (Innerwick)	Play Opportunities Survey Place Standard Assessment	Play Scotland Assessment Team
Young women and girls	8 young women and girls	North Berwick	Play Needs Survey	Play Scotland Assessment Team
Early years families	25 adults 21 children	Musselburgh	Play Needs Survey	Play Scotland Assessment Team

### Assessment of the Play Spaces

Assessment of East Lothian’s formal outdoor play spaces took place over a period of five weeks in March and April 2023. All Council owned or managed formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian were assessed at least once. In total 121 formal play outdoor play spaces owned or managed by East Lothian Council were assessed by the Play Scotland assessment team.

Five play spaces were also assessed by disabled children and their families with the support from specialist practitioners from East Lothian Play Association (ELPA) and Can Do. The play spaces assessed by that group were Neilson Park (Haddington), Bleachingfield (Dunbar), Whitecraig Park (Whitecraig), Quayside Park (Musselburgh) and Cemetery Park (Prestonpans).

A further five formal outdoor play spaces were assessed by primary school children. These were East Linton Park (East Linton), Goolwa Park (Port Seton), South Seton Park (Port Seton), Windygoul Park (Tranent) and Lewisvale Park (Musselburgh).

Privately owned play spaces that are not Council owned or managed were not included in the assessment, as there is a lack of data about these spaces, and the Council has no jurisdiction to influence their maintenance or to improve or make recommendations for change in these spaces. This is an area that might be considered again in future PSA reports.

### Public consultation on findings of the Play Sufficiency Assessment

Following the consultation and engagement with children and young people and their parents and carers which was undertaken by Play Scotland, the Council then undertook a further round of public consultation on the draft findings of the PSA, during October to November 2023.

This included consultation on specific Community Council Areas across East Lothian. The consultation was publicised and circulated widely, including to all Community Councils.

There were 291 responses to this public consultation on the PSA findings. The detailed results from this consultation are set out in Appendix 1.

**The findings from all these stages of consultation and engagement across our communities have informed and been incorporated into the East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment.**

## 4 Play Sufficiency in East Lothian

The detailed PSA for East Lothian, including maps and lists of all the play areas, is set out in the PSA Technical Report. The key findings of East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment are as follows:

### 4.1 The quantity of formal and informal play in East Lothian

#### The quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

**KEY MESSAGE: East Lothian has 121 Council owned or managed formal outdoor play spaces distributed across the entirety of the local authority area.**

East Lothian has 121 Council owned or managed formal outdoor play spaces. Figure 1 illustrates the location of all these formal outdoor play spaces across the East Lothian authority area. There is a good distribution of formal outdoor play spaces across the local authority relative to the size of the settlements.

Figure 1: East Lothian Authority Area Map Identifying All Council Managed Formal Outdoor Play Spaces

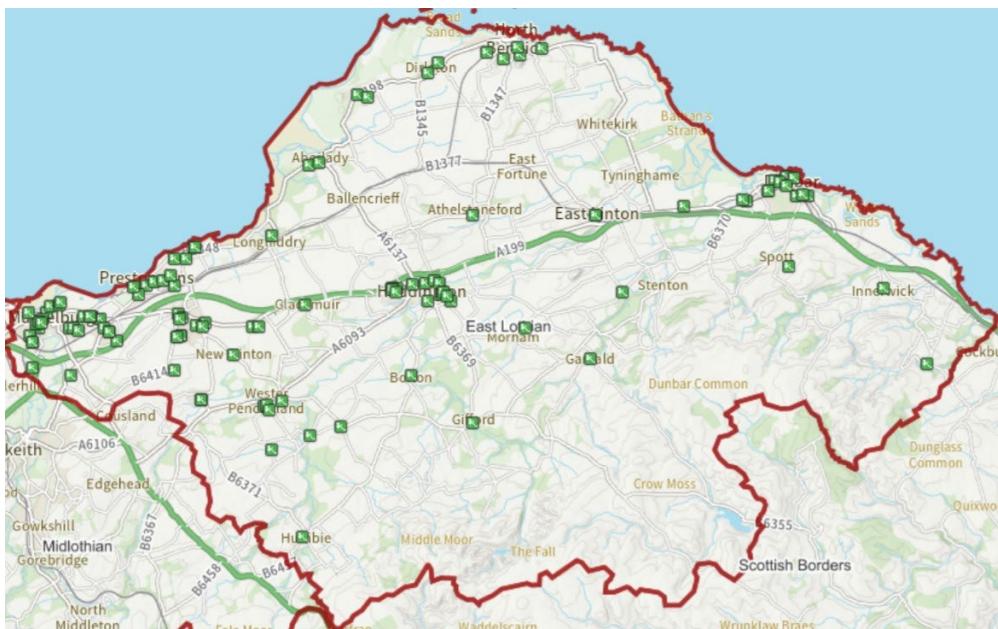


Table 2: Number of Formal Outdoor Play Spaces per Main Settlement

Settlement	Number of Formal Outdoor Play Spaces
Dunbar	10

Haddington	16
Musselburgh	20
North Berwick	6
Prestonpans	7
Tranent	10

### Walking distances to formal outdoor play spaces

**KEY MESSAGE: Most residents in the six largest settlements have at least one formal outdoor play space within a 5-minute walk.**

The analysis demonstrates good levels of access to formal outdoor play spaces across the authority area. Over half of residential areas in the six largest settlements have a formal outdoor play space within a 5-minute walk and nearly all residential areas in these settlements have at least one formal outdoor play space within a 15-minute walk.

### The quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

**KEY MESSAGE: East Lothian provides a wealth of informal outdoor play opportunities across a wide range of natural settings.**

East Lothian is a rural and coastal authority area with a high proportion of open and green spaces. East Lothian therefore provides a wealth of informal outdoor play opportunities across a wide range of natural settings, including woodland and forests, coastal areas and beaches, and grasslands and wetlands.

## 4.2 The quality of formal and informal play in East Lothian

### The quality of formal outdoor play spaces

Every formal outdoor play space in East Lothian was assessed for the quality of play opportunities. Each individual piece of fixed equipment within each play space was included in the assessment. In total, 889 pieces of fixed equipment were assessed. On average there were seven pieces of fixed equipment per play space, although most play spaces have between four and ten pieces of equipment. Three play spaces have 20 or more pieces of fixed equipment.

### Quality of formal outdoor play space environments

**KEY MESSAGE: East Lothian's formal outdoor play spaces are generally clean and well maintained.**

All play spaces were assessed as being free from dog mess (100%) and the vast majority free from hazardous waste (97%) and vandalism (97%). Most spaces are well maintained (82%) with litter bins provided (88%) and fencing/gates in good condition (85%). Most spaces have an immediate outlook that is green or open space (83%) and overlooked by housing or offices (88%). Most play spaces are free from traffic and noise pollution (91%) and free from any signage indicating that play is prohibited (90%). Just under half (41%) of play spaces are at least 20 metres from a road and unfenced, with the same proportion (41%) having working nearby lighting. While only some play

spaces have clear signage about control of dogs (28%) and specific bins available for dog mess (35%), this does not seem to have resulted in dog mess being an issue.

## Quality of formal outdoor play space features

**KEY MESSAGE: Most formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian are in attractive sites with natural features such as trees, bushes or shrubs.**

Most play spaces were assessed as being in attractive sites (84%) with short grass (82%) and trees, bushes or shrubs (62%). Most play spaces have adult seating (85%) although only 9% of spaces have specific seating areas for children. Very few play spaces have public toilets (4%), however, it is recognised that this is not a necessary feature for small neighbourhood play spaces. Very few play spaces provide cycle racks (9%). In relation to natural play resources, just over one third of formal play spaces have undulating ground or mounding (37%) however very few spaces have other natural features such as long grass (11%), rocks or boulders (7%), or permanent water features (2%). Very few spaces explicitly welcome play (8%) or provide shade or sheltered areas (5%).

## Quality of formal outdoor play opportunities

### General play opportunities

**KEY MESSAGE: Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian provide welcoming and safe play environments with a variety of general play opportunities.**

Most play spaces (81% and 83%) had fixed equipment suitable for the 0-4 and 5-11 age groups. Just over half (56%) of play spaces had equipment suitable for the 12-15 year old age group, falling to 42% for 16-17 year olds. This demonstrates that East Lothian provides a good variety of general play opportunities in proportion to the play needs across the age brackets. Similarly, while 78% of play spaces felt welcoming and safe for children under 12, this fell to 55% and 43% respectively for the 12-15 and 16-17 age ranges. This reduction correlated with play spaces not including equipment suitable for older young people so is perhaps unsurprising. It should be noted that not all play spaces can or should cater for the full age range due to limits on physical space and allocated budgets, however there should be appropriate opportunities across the age ranges.

### Opportunities for physical play

**KEY MESSAGE: Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian provide a good range of opportunities for physical play, particularly for younger children.**

The Play Opportunities Survey identified that play spaces in East Lothian provide a good range of opportunities for physical play. This is particularly good for children under the age of 12, although there are fewer opportunities for physical play for older age groups.

## Opportunities for adventurous and risky play

**KEY MESSAGE: Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian offer a range of opportunities for younger children to take risks and experience adventurous play.**

The Play Opportunities Survey identified that most formal outdoor play spaces provide opportunities for children under 12 years of age to take risks and experience adventurous physical play. This falls to half and just over one-third of play spaces for the 12-15 and 16-17 year old age groups. For example, while the majority of play spaces provide opportunities for children under 12 years to climb and jump from high up, this reduces by half for the 16-17 year old age range. There are limited opportunities for roller skating or skateboarding, although there are some good examples of skate ramps and pump tracks within the authority area. There are no specific areas designated to practice parkour, however there are areas where this may be possible and appropriate, for example some skate parks. The design of the fixed equipment also means that there are almost no opportunities for children and young people to move equipment in ways to make play more difficult or challenging.

## Opportunities for creative play

**KEY MESSAGE: Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian currently offer limited opportunities for creative play.**

The Play Opportunities Survey identified limited opportunities for all forms of creative play across all age ranges. Some formal outdoor play spaces have opportunities for pretend play for the 0-4 (17%) and 5-11 (11%) age groups but this reduces to 2% for the 12-15 and 16-17 age groups. There are limited opportunities for children to control their form of play, with nearly all (95%) of play spaces not providing any opportunities for children to engage in different ways with the equipment.

## Opportunities for social play

**KEY MESSAGE: Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian provide a good range of opportunities for younger children to engage in social play.**

The Play Opportunities Survey identified that most formal outdoor play spaces provide opportunities for social play across different ages and abilities for the under-12s, although this falls to 45% and 37% for the 12-15 year old and 16-17 year old age groups. It should be noted that this relates to age-related differences in ability rather than play spaces enabling play with children and young people with disabilities.

## Opportunities for nature-based play

**KEY MESSAGE: Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian provide limited opportunities for children to play on or with a range of natural resources.**

The Play Opportunities Survey identified limited opportunities for nature-based play within the boundaries of formal outdoor play spaces, with only 10-15% of play spaces including long grass, wildlife, plants, insects or trees for climbing. There are some good examples of incorporating nature into play spaces, for example through the nature area in Cuthill Park and the bug hotel in Ormiston Play Space. It is also recognised that many formal play spaces are located within parks and green areas which provide informal opportunities for nature-based play.

### Quality of informal outdoor play opportunities

**KEY MESSAGE: East Lothian provides a good range of informal outdoor play opportunities in a range of natural and green spaces.**

Participants across all target groups spoke positively about the availability of natural spaces in East Lothian, with primary school children stating that they are generally very pleased with the natural spaces in East Lothian. The children stated that they appreciate their rural lifestyle and the green space, wildlife, and cleanliness that go along with it. Specifically, they appreciate hearing birds and other wildlife, seeing a variety of colourful flowers, and the woodlands and trees. The children further suggest that green spaces get you outside and are a good place for active socialising. Children also stated that the location of the formal play areas in wider 'green spaces' as being important, suggesting that they integrate the surrounding informal green spaces into their play which enhances their play experience.

The young women and girls' group identified nature as important to their informal play and 'hang out' opportunities, and were very positive about the opportunities they had to access surrounding natural environments.

The disabled families' groups identified the importance of access to natural resources and spaces to provide a variety of informal outdoor play experiences, however accessibility remains an issue.

### 4.3 The accessibility of formal play spaces in East Lothian

The Accessibility and Inclusion Play Space Assessment was used to assess all formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian for opportunities and barriers to play for disabled children and families. This is a new form of assessment that aims to inform the development of inclusive formal outdoor play spaces as required by the UNCDRP and the NPF4. **There is no expectation that all formal outdoor play spaces be fully inclusive. The assessment is designed to be used to inform meaningful community engagement and strategic decisions regarding investment in play space renewal.**

### Accessible play in formal outdoor play spaces

**KEY MESSAGE: Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian offer limited accessible play opportunities for disabled children and families.**

The Accessibility and Inclusion Play Space Assessment allocates scores to each formal outdoor play space based on set accessibility criteria. Due to most play spaces having a mixture of grass rubber matting and/or woodchip surfacing with no or very limited hard surface access, most play spaces

(81%) were allocated the minimum score (1). Play spaces with this score are either not accessible to anyone using a mobility aid or wheelchair, or the play spaces do not provide any accessible fixed play equipment. A few play spaces (20%) were accessible and therefore achieved a higher score. This was mainly due to the availability of an inclusive roundabout, multi-use games area (MUGA), skate ramp or pump track. MUGAs, skate ramps and pump tracks often provide hard surface access to part of the play space and are therefore more likely to be accessible to anyone using mobility aids or wheelchairs.

The assessment completed by the disabled children and families of the five selected play spaces supports the overall assessment. This assessment identifies a significant lack of accessible play opportunities for disabled children and families across all five assessed play spaces.

It is recognised that it would not be expected for most formal play spaces to have these features, however it would be expected that a **reasonable** number of formal play spaces throughout the authority provide a range of accessible and inclusive play opportunities. Each Local Authority should make this judgement based on improvement priorities, the demographic of each area, available budgets and priorities.

### **Inclusive formal outdoor play opportunities**

**KEY MESSAGE: Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian currently offer limited inclusive infrastructure to support inclusive play opportunities.**

The Accessibility and Inclusion Play Space Assessment allocates scores to each formal outdoor play space based on set inclusion criteria. Almost all (96%) of the formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian scored the minimum (1) for inclusive play. This was mainly due to a lack of specific infrastructure to support inclusive access into and around play spaces, along with lack of barrier-free play opportunities. Five play spaces were assessed as meeting the criteria for a score of 2, primarily due to the inclusion of a MUGA and/or skate park or pump track within the play space.

The assessment of five formal outdoor play spaces by disabled families reflects the main findings. This assessment identifies a significant lack of inclusive, integrated play opportunities across all five assessed formal outdoor play spaces.

It is recognised that it would not be expected for most formal play spaces to have these features, however it would be expected that a small number of formal play spaces throughout the authority include these features. Each Local Authority should make this judgement based on improvement priorities, the demographic of each area, available budgets and priorities.

### **Children's views on accessible and inclusive play**

#### **Disabled children's views**

During the disabled families' assessment, all families were asked their views on what could make the play spaces better for everyone. Common responses included:

- More equipment suitable for disabled people, including wheelchair accessible swings.
- Better lighting to extend the opportunity to play during the hours of dusk. This was noted as being particularly important to support play opportunities for teenage age groups.



- Stable surfaces designed into the layout of the play area to make features of the play area accessible and inclusive.
- More accessible seating and shelters.
- More accessible and inclusive toilets.
- Ensuring quiet areas and hang out areas used by children and young people are accessible for anyone with a physical disability using a mobility aid or wheelchair.
- More lower level sensory play opportunities
- More opportunities for social play.

#### **4.4 Play Sufficiency Assessment findings by Community Council Area (locality)**

The key findings identified by Play Scotland on the quantity, quality and accessibility of **formal play spaces** for each Community Council Area of East Lothian are set out in the Technical Report. The summaries for each Community Council Area have incorporated feedback received in the public consultation on the Draft PSA.

**Informal play spaces:** Assessment of the quantity, quality and accessibility of the informal play spaces was undertaken through the East Lothian Open Space Strategy.

The detailed findings from the public consultation for each Community Council Area are reported in Appendix 1. This includes commentary on both formal and informal play spaces across East Lothian.

Maps of the play spaces in all Community Council Areas are in Appendix 3.

The Formal Play Space Assessment Scores for all formal play areas in each Community Council Area are set out in Appendix 4.

## **5 Key Findings of East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment**

### **Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces**

- East Lothian has 121 Council owned or managed formal outdoor play spaces distributed across the entirety of the local authority area.
- Most residents in the six largest settlements have at least one formal outdoor play space within a 5-minute walk.

### **Quantity of informal outdoor play**

- East Lothian has a wealth of informal outdoor play opportunities across a wide range of natural settings, including woodland and forests, coastal areas and beaches, and grasslands and wetlands.
- Most East Lothian residents live within a 5-minute walk of their nearest useable green space.

### **Quality of formal outdoor play spaces**

- Outdoor formal play spaces in East Lothian are generally attractive, clean, and well-maintained sites which are free from dog mess, vandalism, and traffic and noise pollution. Most play spaces are green and are overlooked by houses and offices.

- There is a lack of nearby or signposted cycle racks and public toilets and a lack of natural features within formal play spaces.
- Most formal play spaces provide a range of opportunities for physical and risky play for younger children. There are significantly fewer opportunities for physical and risky play for the 12-17 year old age ranges.
- Formal play spaces offer opportunities for a variety of physical play experiences, including running, skipping, hopping, jumping, swinging, sliding, spinning and rocking. There are minimal opportunities for crawling, balancing or bouncing and limited formal opportunities for bike or scooter riding, skateboarding or roller skating within formal play spaces.
- Opportunities to engage in creative, sensory, and nature-based play in formal play spaces are extremely limited across all age ranges.
- There are opportunities for social play across different ages, although this reduces in the older age ranges. There are minimal opportunities for children with differing abilities to play together.
- Some formal play spaces offer calmer spaces to be on your own or with a small group of friends, however these are usually for the younger age groups and inaccessible to anyone using a mobility aid or wheelchair.

### **Quality of informal outdoor play**

- East Lothian residents highly value the range of informal outdoor play opportunities offered in natural and green settings across East Lothian.
- Most East Lothian residents are satisfied or very satisfied with their nearest open and green spaces.
- All PSA target groups identified access to green and natural spaces as important to ensuring the quality of their informal outdoor play opportunities.
- Accessibility to natural and green spaces can be challenging for disabled families.

### **Accessibility of formal outdoor play spaces**

- There are minimal play opportunities for disabled children, young people and families in formal outdoor play spaces across East Lothian. This includes children with Additional Support Needs (ASN).
- No play spaces are fully accessible or inclusive, and where accessible equipment is included within the play space this offers a limited play experience and is often located on the periphery of the main play space.
- There is minimal inclusive infrastructure to support access into and around play spaces.

## **6 Summary of Key Findings of the Play Sufficiency Assessment supported by the public consultation**

Appendix 1 sets out the detailed responses received during the public consultation.

## Key Overall Message

The quantity of outdoor play spaces in East Lothian is good with most residents having access to formal or informal outdoor play spaces near to their homes. Any future improvements should therefore focus on strengthening the quality and accessibility of both formal and informal outdoor play opportunities.

## Key Positive Messages

East Lothian has 121 Council owned and managed formal outdoor play spaces distributed across the entirety of the local authority area.

Most residents in the six largest settlements have at least one formal outdoor play space within a 5-minute walk.

East Lothian provides a wealth of informal outdoor play opportunities across a wide range of natural settings.

East Lothian's formal outdoor play spaces are clean and well maintained.

Most formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian are attractive sites with natural features such as trees, bushes or shrubs.

Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian provide welcoming and safe play environments with a variety of general play opportunities.

Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian provide a good range of opportunities for physical play, particularly for younger children.

Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian offer a range of opportunities for younger children to take risks and experience adventurous play.

Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian provide a good range of opportunities for younger children to engage in social play.

East Lothian provides a good range of informal outdoor play opportunities in a range of natural and green spaces.

## Key Development Messages

Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian currently offer limited opportunities for creative play.

Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian provide limited opportunities for children to play on or with a range of natural resources within the boundary of the play space.

Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian offer limited accessible play opportunities for disabled children and families.

Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian currently offer limited inclusive infrastructure to support inclusive play opportunities.

## 7 Recommendations

The Play Sufficiency Assessment undertaken by Play Scotland identified that there is an excellent quantity of play provision in East Lothian, and a good range of physical and risky play opportunities. The PSA identified important ways to strengthen the quality and accessibility of play opportunities in East Lothian where future funding opportunities would make this possible. The following recommendations are intended to provide focus for future investment in play provision.

### Opportunities to strengthen the quantity of outdoor play in East Lothian

The quantity of outdoor play spaces in East Lothian is good with most residents in the six main settlements having access to formal or informal outdoor play space near to their homes. Any future improvements should therefore focus on strengthening the quality and accessibility of both formal and informal outdoor play opportunities.

### Opportunities to strengthen the quality of outdoor play in East Lothian

The following recommendations identify ways that the quality and range of outdoor play opportunities in East Lothian could be improved:

- **Increase opportunities for sensory, creative and nature-based play** – play spaces provide a variety of physical play opportunities however there are minimal opportunities for other forms of play. Including a wider variety of sensory, creative and nature-based play opportunities within formal play spaces supports child development and promotes inclusion.
- **Increase all play opportunities for the 12-17 year old groups** – there are significantly fewer play opportunities for older children across all forms of play. Provision of play opportunities across the full age range promotes inclusive play and builds community cohesion.
- **Increase opportunities for calm, quiet play** – there is a lack of quiet spaces in formal play spaces for children to be on their own or to play with small groups of friends, particularly for older age groups and for anyone with mobility difficulties. Provision of quieter spaces promotes a wider variety of play and facilitates accessibility for anyone with sensory sensitivity.
- **Increase opportunities for social play** – there is a lack of opportunities for children with different ages and abilities to play together. This is important to promote inclusion and integration.
- **Increase ‘hang out’ spaces for the 12-17 year old age groups** – there is a lack of places where older children feel welcome to ‘hang out’. Provision of more hangout spaces is particularly important for younger teenagers.

### Opportunities to strengthen the accessibility of outdoor play in East Lothian

During the assessment process, assessors identified several ways to improve accessibility and inclusion. Recommendations include:

- **Increase the variety of play space surfaces** – almost all play space surfaces are a mixture of grass rubber matting and woodchip, which makes access difficult for anyone using a mobility aid or wheelchair. A wider variety of surface areas will improve accessibility.

- **Include a wider variety of inclusive fixed equipment** – when available, the only inclusive equipment available for wheelchair users was a roundabout, MUGA or pump track. A wider variety of play equipment with accessible features would improve the variety and inclusivity of play opportunities.
- **Increase opportunities for social, sensory, creative, and natural play** – the focus of most formal play spaces is on physical play. Increasing the variety of play opportunities and utilising natural play resources would increase the variety of play opportunities and promote play across the age and ability ranges.
- **Integrate inclusive play opportunities into the main play space** – when available, inclusive equipment was generally located on the periphery of the play space with minimal hard surface access through the main play space. Integrating play opportunities will enable children with differing abilities to integrate and play within the same spaces.
- **Include features to support play for children with a wider variety of disabilities** – there were minimal features to support inclusive play for anyone with visual impairments or complex additional support needs. More accessible signage, accessible seating and wayfinding routes through play spaces would support inclusion.
- **Improve safe, accessible routes into play spaces** – increasing the amount of inclusive infrastructure into and around play spaces will support accessibility and enable families to use play spaces more regularly and for longer periods of time.
- **Embed lived experience into play space design** – at the time of writing, as far as we understand, no formal consultation had taken place with disabled families to understand and embed local needs into design processes. The disabled families’ assessment identified numerous opportunities to design accessibility into existing play spaces and stated they would welcome further consultation.

ELPA and Can Do provided a detailed report of disabled families’ assessments of formal play spaces in East Lothian (see Appendix 2). Their key recommendations are:

- Embed the social value of inclusive play at the design stages.
- Plan for accessible play and rest sites throughout the play space.
- Widen the variety of play opportunities, including natural, sensory and creative play.
- Increase opportunities for high-value play, including play opportunities for children with complex needs.
- Ensure play spaces feel welcoming for children at differing developmental stages to their peers.
- Provide safe, accessible routes to play spaces, including lighting and nearby transition points.

## 8 Summary of Key Recommendations supported by the public consultation

### Key findings and key recommendations from the public consultation

#### **The quality and range of play opportunities in East Lothian could be improved through:**

- Increasing opportunities for sensory, creative and nature-based play
- Increasing all play opportunities for the 12-17 year old groups
- Increasing opportunities for calm, quiet play
- Increasing opportunities for social play
- Increasing ‘hang out’ spaces for the 12-17 year old age groups

#### **Accessibility and inclusion of play opportunities in East Lothian could be improved through:**

- Increasing the variety of play space surfaces
- Including a wider variety of inclusive fixed equipment
- Increasing opportunities for social, sensory, creative, and natural play
- Integrating inclusive play opportunities into the main play space
- Including features to support play for children with a wider variety of disabilities
- Improving safe, accessible routes into play spaces
- Embedding lived experience into play space design

#### **The public consultation reiterated the PSA findings that:**

- **There is a need to improve the quality and range of play opportunities in East Lothian for**
  - sensory, creative and nature-based play – although it was recognised that the surrounding countryside around our towns and villages, including the hills, woodlands and beaches of East Lothian, already provide significant opportunities for these which are well used by our residents, of all ages;
  - the 12-17 year old groups, including more challenging and risky play for older children and teenagers;
  - calm, quiet play;
  - social play;
  - ‘hang out’ spaces for the 12-17 year old age groups – although it was recognised that this is unlikely to include formal play areas but more likely other outdoor spaces in and around our communities. This will form an action in our forthcoming revised Open Space Strategy.
- **Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian offer limited accessible play opportunities for disabled children and families.**
- **Formal outdoor play spaces in East Lothian currently offer limited inclusive infrastructure to support inclusive play opportunities.**

- **More play opportunities are needed for girls, and several respondents highlighted the examples from the organisation 'Make Space for Girls' as good examples.**
- **In general, East Lothian's formal outdoor play spaces are clean and well maintained, however, local community consultations identified some key locations for priority improvements such as renewal or replacement of play equipment.** We will aim to continue our ongoing programme of maintenance, replacement and renewal of play equipment across the Council's play areas where funding is available.
- **There was a view in some areas that play areas are poorly maintained and repairs take time.** All of the Council's play areas are subject to a continuous and ongoing programme of inspection and maintenance, including daily checks of larger 'destination' play areas, quarterly inspections by Register of Play Inspectors International (RPII) qualified staff and annual inspections by External Inspectors of Play Areas. Priority repairs are undertaken continually across our 121 play areas and ongoing repairs, maintenance and replacement works are programmed, subject to available funding.
- **We received feedback that woodchip surfacing in our play areas is inaccessible to some users with calls to reduce the areas surfaced with woodchip.** This accords with the findings of our initial consultation and engagement with special needs groups including our disability and inclusion assessment. We will revise our use of woodchip surfacing across our formal play areas by including a greater variety of surfacing where possible, to improve accessibility for a wider range of abilities, subject to funding and ongoing maintenance constraints and noting that a balance is important.
- **Several respondents told us that in their view formal play areas should be fenced. The reasons included to improve the play experience for children with special needs and their parents/carers, the perception of safety, and dogs (see below).** All of our play areas have been risk-assessed and those that are near to roads have fencing around them for safety. We do not generally install fencing around play areas within public parks and open spaces away from roads to enhance the play experience for a wide range of children and young people by encouraging and enabling them to explore the wider 'play landscape' of our parks and greenspaces and get closer to nature. However we will work with special needs groups to identify solutions that may include fencing in some areas but will also look at nature-based alternatives such as appropriate planting of hedges or positioning of planters for community growing to enhance sensory and natural play.
- **We received strong feedback in relation to dogs in play areas, with many community respondents saying that dogs in play areas are a significant problem, particularly in relation to dog fouling, but also in intimidating behaviour of dogs causing alarm to others in the play area.** Irresponsible dog ownership is unfortunately a problem across the county. We will aim to install 'No Dogs in Play Area' signage at play areas, where funding permits, and will continue to work with the Council's Dog Warden and Antisocial Behaviour Team to raise awareness and promote responsible dog ownership around play areas. Additional fencing may be appropriate in some areas; or nature-based alternatives as set out above.
- **The community consultation also identified issues with play provision for some specific areas around the county in particular:**
  - **North-eastern Tranent** (north of the main street, around the Sanderson's Wynd – Lindores Drive area of Tranent): the consultation feedback highlighted a shortfall in

play provision in this area, with insufficient formal play spaces. We are aware of this and we are looking to address this as a matter of priority;

- **Prestonpans**, where the existing provision was felt to be inadequate by some respondents due to anti-social behaviour issues, which were intimidating to others including families, deterring some from playing there. These are wider social issues outwith the scope of this PSA however we will follow this up with our Local Area Partnership and Anti-Social Behaviour Team to seek solutions to these wider social issues affecting some local areas;
- **Areas of Cockenzie and Port Seton**, including some of the smaller play areas near the waterfront and the provision at King George V Park, which was felt to be inadequate by several respondents. The play provision at King George V Park was subject to community consultation when the Community Centre was developed; however we will work with the Local Area Partnership to identify solutions and funding to address issues where we can;
- **Haddington Artillery Park area**, where respondents commented that the small play areas there were of poor quality / poorer provision than in the larger town parks. We will look to address this where future funding opportunities would make this possible;
- **West Barns and New Winton play areas** were also identified by the local communities as particular priorities for improvement and upgrading. We will look to work with communities to address these where future funding opportunities would make this possible.

### **Next Steps**

East Lothian Council will aim to address these findings and recommendations of this Play Sufficiency Assessment in our ongoing management and maintenance of our existing play areas, where future funding opportunities would make this possible, and we will consider incorporating these recommendations in our Local Development Plan as requirements for the future development of play areas.

## **9 Publication of the East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment**

The East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment is available to view online on East Lothian Council's website [www.eastlothian.gov.uk](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk)

The full version of the East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment comprises the following parts:

Main Technical Report

Appendix 1: Report of Findings from the Public Consultation on the Draft PSA including by Community Council Area.

Appendix 2: Report by East Lothian Play Association and Can Do: Play Sufficiency Assessment of the accessibility of selected formal outdoor play spaces for disabled children and their families in East Lothian.

Appendix 3: East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment Maps.

Appendix 4: East Lothian Formal Play Space Assessment Scores.

It is intended to produce a child-friendly version of the East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment.



**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Council

**MEETING DATE:** 23 April 2024

**BY:** Executive Director for Place

**SUBJECT:** Proposed East Lothian Local Economy Strategy

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8

## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To seek approval for the proposed Local Economy Strategy 2024-2034.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Council approves the Proposed Local Economy Strategy 2024-2034; agrees the Vision, Goals, and Objectives; supports the Action Areas outlined; and notes that:
- Progress will be reported annually, and that the Strategy will be subject to a mid-term review in 2028/29; and
  - Following approval, a 'public facing' version of the Strategy will be published with a focus of readability/accessibility including additional diagrams and infographics in place of text, relevant case examples highlighting progress made under the 2012-2022 Strategy, as well as photography.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Proposed East Lothian Local Economy Strategy 2024-2034 will replace the East Lothian Economic Development Strategy 2012-2022 (refreshed in 2018).
- 3.2 The Strategy will be the key delivery document for the Grow our Economy objective in the 2022-2027 Council Plan, for the '*Prosperous*' theme within the East Lothian Plan 2017-2027, will support the development and delivery of Local Development Plan 2, and the ongoing development of the Council's key strategic development sites.
- 3.3 The Strategy has been developed in the context of and to align with and support the delivery of the national and regional economic development goals and aspirations contained within the UK Growth Plan and Levelling

Up agenda, National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) and Regional Prosperity Framework (RPF), including resilience, wellbeing and fair work, skills for rewarding careers, just transition to net zero, entrepreneurship, productivity, and innovation.

- 3.4 The Strategy is designed to support the alignment of Council services and actions around the continued development of East Lothian's Economy. It identifies a set of principles and a shared vision developed in partnership with the key stakeholders in East Lothian's economy, which all of the local economy's stakeholders must work together to collectively achieve.
- 3.5 Development of the Strategy has been overseen by the Connected Economy Group (CEG), one of the East Lothian Partnership's Strategic Groups, and was supported by economic consultants from Stantec UK Ltd.
- 3.6 Its development has been based on consultation and analysis of relevant data and takes account of local context, as well as organisational capacity and resources, factoring in local priorities related to achieving increased job density, community wealth and fair work, economic and business sustainability and resilience, innovation and productivity, and the climate and ecological emergency.
- 3.7 The Strategy will be subject to a monitoring and evaluation framework with a planned 5-year review, delivery will be kept under ongoing development and progress reported, including via the Council's Top 50 Indicators. These will be updated as they relate to the economy, economic development, and support for business.

#### Evidence

- 3.8 The Local Economy Strategy Vision Paper, appended to this report, is based on the findings set out in the Local Economy Strategy Evidence Paper, which will be lodged in the Members' Library. The Vision Paper includes a summary of the main evidence and themes used to develop the vision, goals, objectives, and actions.
- 3.9 The paper identifies a number of significant strengths in the East Lothian economy, including a rapidly growing and well-educated population, a high quality reputation for its food & drink offer, recognition as a high quality visitor destination, natural resources and infrastructure that make the area well placed to target opportunities in renewable energy, a number of nationally and regionally important strategic development sites, high quality east-west transport links, and active and engaged private and third sectors.
- 3.10 The consultants note that their research has also identified a range of factors that could constrain the area's future development, including a shortage of technical skills, an aging population, low business productivity, poor rural and north-south connectivity links, a shortage of high-quality commercial properties and immediately available business expansion land, and constraints on development in rural areas.

### Community Wealth Building

- 3.11 The concept of Community Wealth Building (CWB) has been embedded through the strategic approach and Principles, Vision, Goals, and Objectives.
- 3.12 The Scottish Government has adopted the internationally recognised CWB approach to economic development as a key practical means by which progress can be made towards realising their wellbeing economy vision as outlined in the NSET. It is expected that new duties will be introduced to mandate the use of CWB principles (see Section 4.3).
- 3.13 A CWB approach arranges economic development activity around the concept of anchor institutions, large public, private, and third sector economic actors with significant purchasing power or employment bases, which if acting in socially and environmentally just ways can deliver benefits to residents and communities.
- 3.14 In tandem with the development of this Strategy, the East Lothian Partnership has established a working group to define Community Wealth in an East Lothian Context and work with partners to develop a CWB Charter and Action Plan. The Charter has been approved by the East Lothian Partnership Governance Group and was adopted by Council on 27 February 2024.

### Principles, Vision, and Goals

- 3.15 The Vision Paper sets out who and what should benefit, the levers by which action can be taken to achieve the Vision and Goals as well as the core principles that will underpin delivery.
- 3.16 The document includes details of the 6 Objectives that will support delivery of the Goals, as well as Areas for Action in respect of the Objectives. These will be kept under review through delivery and progress reported annually.

## **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The new Local Economy Strategy 2024-2034 will replace the East Lothian Economic Development Strategy 2012-2022 (refreshed in 2018). The Strategy will be the key delivery document for the Grow our Economy objective in the 2022-2027 Council plan and 'Prosperous' theme within the East Lothian Plan 2017-2027.
- 4.2 Work undertaken to develop the strategy will inform a revision to the Council's Top 50 Indicators as they relate to the economy, economic development, and support for business.
- 4.3 It is expected that new duties may be brought forward by the Scottish Government that will compel local authorities and others to integrate CWB principles and plans into their economic strategies or local outcome improvement plans.

## **5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment has been undertaken in respect of the new Strategy, and will be published on the Council's website at the following link: [Integrated Impact Assessments | Integrated Impact Assessments | East Lothian Council](#).

## **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial – Achievement of the goals and outcomes with the Strategy will affect the financial planning arrangements of services over the Strategy term. It may also be the case that the future financial position of the Council will impact on the ability to complete or fully achieve or support the goals and outcomes set out within the Strategy. This will be monitored annually.
- 6.2 Personnel – Significant staff time will be needed to implement, monitor, and oversee the ongoing development and delivery of the Strategy.

## **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 Proposed Local Economy Strategy 2024-2034 Evidence Paper (to be published in the Members' Library)
- 7.2 Appendix 1: Proposed Local Economy Strategy 2024-2034 Vision Paper

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# A Sustainable and Thriving East Lothian

Proposed Local Economy Strategy, 2024-2034

Vision Paper

On behalf of **East Lothian Council**



## Document Control Sheet

**Project Name:** East Lothian Local Economy Strategy

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Revision	Date	Description	Prepared	Reviewed
1	August 2023	Draft	KD, KW, SF	KW, SF
2	November 2023	Draft V2	BW, DA, AH, KW	SF, SC
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# Welcome

[Place holder for letter of introduction / forward by Monica Patterson and John McMillan]

This should:

- **Reflect on the successes of the 2012-2022 strategy period, (COVID resilience, achieving the business growth target; Council's acquisition of the Cockenzie site; progress made at Edinburgh Innovation Hub and Blindwells; East Linton Railway Station, contribution EL makes to the regional and Scottish economy etc.)**
- Reference strategic context and, explain that a lot has changed since 2012 (Covid/hybrid working; climate emergency/net zero target; emergence of new technologies etc), and that now is therefore a good time to revisit the strategy.
- **Refer to the principles of Community Wealth Building, Net Zero, Sustainability and Fairness and how these thread through the strategy.**
- Talk about the strong foundation that East Lothian must tackle the challenges ahead, noting that it is well placed to be at the forefront of the clean energy transition, and the strength of its sustainable tourism and food and drink offer.
- Outline opportunities and threats.
- **Be clear that this is a Local Economy Strategy for the whole of East Lothian to use and deliver and not just for the Council** but note that the Council will play an active role in overseeing its delivery through an enabling, leading, and values driven approach.
- **Recognise that the strategy is being launched at a time when Council resources are tight;** and emphasise the importance of new and innovative delivery models and the need for partnering and support from central governments and stakeholders in ensuring that this strategy is a success.]



# Introduction

## Purpose

The East Lothian Local Economy Strategy (2024-2034) sets out a shared vision and a set of shared objectives, actions, and performance measures for East Lothian Council and its partners to work towards over the next ten years. It aims to ensure East Lothian continues to be a sustainable and thriving place with fairness and the development of community wealth at its heart.

It is built around five key principles that the Council and its partners consider fundamental to the area's economic future:

- **Fairness**
- **Enterprising**
- **Thriving and Resilient**
- **Community Wealth Building**
- **Green and Sustainable**

It draws evidence from:

- **Socio-economic review:** a desk-based review of socio-economic data, including a review of data on demographics; economy, employment, and business; labour market characteristics; connectivity; housing and employment land; and the visitor economy.
- **Stakeholder and community engagement:** including community consultations; business stakeholder workshops plus feedback sessions; ongoing engagement with the East Lothian Connected Economy Group; one-to-one discussions with key stakeholders and Council officials; sessions with Councillors, and participation at economic development events in East Lothian.
- **Community Wealth Building (CWB) audit:** an assessment of East Lothian's current approach to CWB, based around the Scottish Government's 'five-pillars' approach, and the development of a CWB Action Plan and Charter, which supplements and complements this Local Economy Strategy.
- **Strategic review:** a review of the key national, regional, and local strategic documents that influence East Lothian's approach to developing the local economy.

The research and consultations were undertaken over the course of 2023 and early 2024.

The research identified a number of significant strengths in the East Lothian economy, including a rapidly growing and well-educated population; a high quality reputation for its food & drink offer; attractive visitor destinations; natural resources and infrastructure that make the area well placed to target opportunities in renewable energy; a number of nationally and regionally important strategic development sites, high quality east-west transport links, and an active and engaged private and third sector. It also identified a range of factors that could constrain the area's future development, including a shortage of technical skills; an aging population; low business productivity; poor rural and north-south connectivity links, a shortage of high-quality commercial properties and immediately available business expansion land; and constraints on development in rural areas.

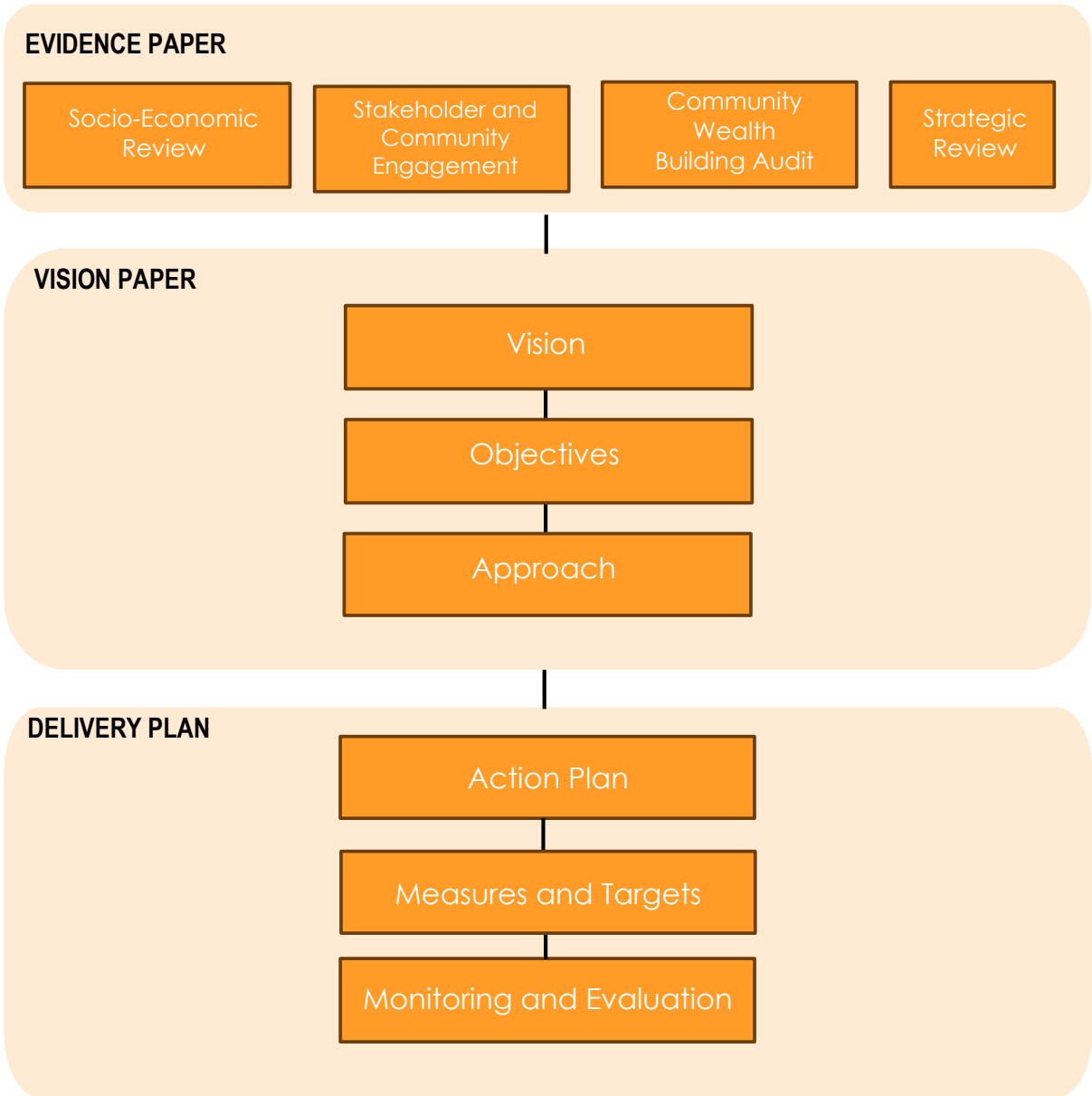
# Structure

The Strategy consists of three documents:

- **The Evidence Paper:** presents in detail the evidence gathered from the socio-economic review, stakeholder and community engagement, Community Wealth Building audit and strategic review, which supply an underlying evidence base to support this Strategy.
- **The Vision Paper (this document):** forms the basis of the new Strategy, providing a summary of the key messages from the evidence paper; presents East Lothian’s Vision, Goals, and Objectives for the next 10 years; and outlines the approach that it will take to deliver this.
- **The Delivery Plan:** to be finalised following approval of the Strategy Vision, Goals, and Objectives, this will set out in detail the actions that the Council and its partners will take to support the delivery of this strategy; how this will be measured and what targets it will seek to achieve; and its process for monitoring and assessing its performance over the next ten years.

The figure below explains how these three documents fit together.

**Figure 1: Local Economy Strategy**



# Key Findings: Socio-Economic Review

The socio-economic review considered the current geographic profile, demographic and labour market trends, business composition, labour productivity, transport and digital connectivity, visitor economy and equalities and inclusivity trends in East Lothian. The findings from this review are summarised below and set out in detail in the Evidence Paper.

## Demographics

- **Fast growing population:** East Lothian's population has grown rapidly and is now 25% higher than it was at the turn of the century. This compares to a 16% increase across the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region and an 8% increase across Scotland as a whole.
- **Growth likely to continue:** This trend is forecast to continue, with a 14.3% rise in population forecast between 2018-2043, compared to a 6.3% increase across the City Region and a 2.5% increase across Scotland.
- **Fewer young working adults:** East Lothian has relatively fewer young working adults than Scotland as a whole, with only 38.6% of its residents aged between 16 and 49, compared to 42.8% across Scotland.

## Economy, Employment and Business

- **A growing and increasingly productive workforce:** Employment growth in East Lothian has outperformed the Scotland average in almost every sector of the economy, driven largely by significant population growth. Productivity, in terms of GVA per worker, has also grown by 23% between 2011 and 2021.
- **Different sectoral composition:** East Lothian's sectoral composition differs from the rest of Scotland, with a higher proportion of the workforce employed in agriculture, construction, hospitality; and a lower proportion employed in manufacturing and the private services sector.

## Labour Market and Attainment

- **East Lothian has close to full employment:** Labour market statistics indicate that East Lothian has an unemployment rate of 1.7% and is therefore close to full employment, and that a large proportion of those employed work in small businesses.
- **Out-commuters earn more than people employed locally:** Workplace earnings are lower than both resident earnings for East Lothian, and average workplace earnings for the other comparator areas. This is largely driven by high earners commuting to work in Edinburgh and elsewhere.
- **More people with qualifications:** In 2021, East Lothian had more residents with some form of qualification than the City Region, Scotland, and Great Britain.
- **Pockets of deprivation:** While the proportion of East Lothian residents residing in areas of multiple deprivation is below the Scotland average, significant differences exist within the Council area.

## Connectivity

- **Long term increase in travel, but post-Covid uncertainties remain:** Transport volumes, in terms of road and rail, increased significantly in the lead up to the pandemic but it is currently unclear whether journeys will return to pre-pandemic rates. East Lothian ranks above the Scottish and City Region average in terms of access to a car.
- **Full-fibre broadband wide-spread, but still some blackspots:** East Lothian has strong full fibre connectivity relative to other geographies, however broadband speeds and mobile signal strengths in many areas of East Lothian are below the national average, especially rural areas.

## Housing and Employment Land

- **House prices are above the Scotland average, and growing faster:** House prices in East Lothian are above the Scottish average (£312,986 v £217,396) and are rising faster (56% over 10-years in East Lothian, over the past decade, compared to 39% across Scotland). The affordability ratio for East Lothian, 7.1, also sits above the Scottish average of 5.4.
- **Limited available office, retail and industrial space but significant amount of undeveloped employment land:** Whilst 97% of employment space is currently occupied, 59% of the local authority's total employment land is currently undeveloped.

## Visitor Economy

- **Strong destination performance:** East Lothian has a strong visitor economy with 1.22m tourists visiting in 2022. The vast majority of visitors (64%) are from Scotland and the average length of stay is 4.6 nights.
- **Changing customer preferences:** Demand for non-serviced accommodation (oncl. short term holiday let) in East Lothian has doubled in the past ten years, while demand for serviced accommodation remains broadly unchanged. Consumer trends towards slow tourism, authentic experiences, wellbeing and escaping fit the Visit East Lothian offer well.
- **Key economic contribution:** 4,124 F-T equivalent jobs supported by tourism activity. Generated £299m in the local economy in 2022.

# Key Findings: Stakeholder and Community Engagement

The Evidence Paper provides a full listing of stakeholder engagement events and consultation participants and a detailed narrative on the themes that emerged from these discussions. The themes are summarised below:

## Skills, Training, Employability and Workforce Development

- **Skills shortages reported:** Businesses reported skill shortages in the manufacturing and engineering, construction, hospitality, health, care, childcare and early years sectors. Businesses also find it difficult to recruit people with strong maths and English skills.
- **Staff cover an issue for small businesses:** Small businesses report issues around funding and providing staff cover for on-the job training. Participation in training and engagement with apprenticeships is also low.
- **Opportunity for new delivery models:** View that social enterprises, co-operatives, and employee owned businesses can play an important role in supporting skills development.
- **Short-term nature of UKG/SG funding an issue:** Many employability schemes are funded on 1-2 year contracts, which creates a challenge for workforce continuity and long-term planning for employability support.

## Business and Social Enterprise Development

- **Lack of business accommodation constraining business growth:** Businesses reported a significant shortage of serviced office and light industrial space and of available employment land in East Lothian.
- **Strategic sites offer potential:** Along with a number of private sector developments, proposals for the former Cockenzie Power Station site; Blindwells Town Centre, and Edinburgh Innovation Park all have significant potential to address this shortfall. There is also a significant opportunity to repurpose the Torness nuclear site for strategic use once decommissioning begins.
- **Opportunity for a streamlined service offering:** Businesses report that they can find public services disjointed, and feel 'bounced from person to person', they find the form filling and 'red tape' associated with accessing public sector services and support a deterrent. Public sector finances are under severe pressure impacting the scope and availability of services, the opportunity to simplify and rationalise services can be explored.

## Transport and Travel

- **Public transport connectivity can vary:** Public transport connectivity to and from Edinburgh is considered good in certain places but could be more frequent. Cross-county services and services to rural communities are often limited and intermittent, and this can impact on access to employment, training and healthcare. Transport barriers can impact on the long-term sustainability of rural settlements and cause young people to move away.
- **Town centre congestion and parking is reportedly an issue:** Particularly in North Berwick and Tranent, with implications for locals, visitor experiences, and public safety. Greater turnover of town centre parking to improve capacity is highlighted as a need.

## Broadband and Mobile Connectivity

- **Concerns around broadband and mobile connectivity:** Speed and availability of broadband and mobile connections are considered poor in many rural and some urban areas. This can create challenges for individuals and businesses based in these communities and make areas less attractive places to live for people in hybrid employment.

## Housing and Infrastructure

- **Concerns around housing mix:** While there has been substantial housebuilding activity in East Lothian in the past ten years, there are concerns in the community that too many large detached houses are being built, and that there is insufficient affordable housing and housing that meets the needs of market renters, first time buyers, key workers, and older people.
- **Concerns around speed of infrastructure development:** Stakeholders argued that the speed of infrastructure development has not always kept pace with the speed of housebuilding, and there have been particular challenges around water, drainage, and access to health and social care, dentistry, childcare and early years care.

## Town Centres

- **Competitive threats to town centres:** Stakeholders and community members reported that a limited availability and low turn over of town-centre parking spaces, competition from edge-of town retail developments, competition from Edinburgh, and changes in shopping habits have all deterred some residents from using their town centres. However, increased home working is driving increased demand for town centre service businesses and leisure opportunities.
- **Issues around narrow pavements:** It was argued that these can make town centres feel inaccessible and unsafe for older people, those with physical impairments, and pram and buggy users.
- **Businesses reporting cost pressures:** Businesses reported that rising business rates and utility costs are placing a strain on some town centre businesses.

## Rural Communities

- **Perception that rural communities are ‘punching below their weight’:** East Lothian’s rural settlements are thought to offer significant economic potential, particularly in the tourism, professional service sectors, and the development of new SMEs with hybrid working offering new growth opportunities in these areas. However, limited public transport provision, employment space and broadband connectivity remain barriers. Many rural areas have vacant buildings and unutilised land that are suitable for repurposing.
- **Pressure from national infrastructure development:** Rural communities note that they face pressure and significant negative impact from the development of national infrastructure, e.g. electricity infrastructure and battery storage systems that are given preferential development approval over the development of locally owned renewable schemes, and commercial / business developments.

## Sustainable Tourism

- **East Lothian has a strong and distinctive tourism offer:** However, there was a perception that more could be done to improve the availability and quality of visitor accommodation across the area in light of the impact of short-term let legislation.
- **Rural tourism connectivity opportunities:** Stakeholders identified opportunities to improve public transport and active travel connections to rural visitor attractions (including National Museum of Flight, Glenkinchie Distillery, long distance walking and cycle routes, beaches, and villages in the Lammermuir Hills).
- **Need for a sustainable approach:** There is potential for conflicts to occur between residents and visitors in popular tourist areas and on beaches. Future tourism development therefore needs to be sustainable and in alignment with the Visitor Management Plan.

## Clean Energy

- **East Lothian’s clean energy sector thought to have huge growth potential:** with opportunities in on-shore and off-shore wind; hydrogen; geothermal and solar energy; energy network distribution; district heat networks; nuclear decommissioning; and, in improving the energy efficiency of new and existing buildings. East Lothian’s businesses and communities will be well positioned to benefit from this growth provided that suitable land and / or business premises are available, opportunities are made for Tier 2 and 3 contractors to bid for contracts, for local workforce upskilling, and for a fair and long term approach to the investment of community benefit payments.

## Food and Drink

- **Significant opportunities in food and drink sector:** Stakeholders consider East Lothian to have a strong reputation for production of high-quality food and drink, and growth in on-line trade presents a great opportunity for businesses to market their produce to a wider audience. However, talent attraction and access to grow-on space continue to present significant barriers to growth.

# Key Findings: Community Wealth Building Audit

The Scottish Government has recently adopted the internationally recognised Community Wealth Building (CWB) approach to economic development as a key practical means by which to achieve economic objectives. Throughout this Strategy, East Lothian looks to embed the concept of CWB as a core principle and particularly in the objectives, actions, and monitoring indicators. As part of the stakeholder consultation for the development of this strategy a CWB specialist conducted a series of workshops with East Lothian Council’s CWB Working Group and conducted a current assessment for East Lothian of the five pillars found within CWB. This is summarised below with the following Red, Amber, and Green ratings to show East Lothian’s baseline position:

**Figure 2: East Lothian Community Wealth Building Audit**

Overarching Indicators	
Political Buy-In	Green
CWB Working Group	Green
Embedding CWB in Strategy	Amber

Plural Ownership of the Economy	
Local Market Understanding	Green
Co-operative and Social Enterprise Formulations	Amber
Cooperative and Social Enterprise Support	Amber

Progressive Procurement	
Spend Analysis	Amber
Procurement Working Groups	Amber
Community Benefit Procurement Frameworks	Amber
Local Market Making	Amber

Socially Just Use of Land	
Community Benefit Clauses	Amber
Land Ownership Review	Amber
Community Land Trusts	Red
Ownership Transfer	Amber

Advancing Fairer Employment and Just Labour Markets	
Employee Mapping & Re-spend	Green
Real Living Wage	Green
Workforce Health & Well-Being	Green
Direct Recruitment	Amber

Making Financial Power Work For Local Places	
Outsourcing Review	Green
Community Banks	Green
Pension Fund Influencing	Amber
Credit Union Formulation	Green

The Local Economy Strategy has CWB linked aims, objectives and measures flowing through it. The strategy is designed to:

1. Ensure that all activities bring maximum local economic benefit for East Lothian residents.
2. Maximise the amount of spending undertaken with local businesses, SMEs, and social economy organisations.
3. Ensure that all organisations with a base in East Lothian behave in socially and environmentally responsible ways.
4. Harness the potential of East Lothian’s assets (human, financial, and physical) for the benefit of the East Lothian economy, organisations within East Lothian, the people of East Lothian, and the environment.
5. Maximise the benefit of development and inward investment for the benefit of the people of East Lothian.

East Lothian’s Community Wealth Building Charter (**Appendix A**), based on this analysis, was adopted in February 2024, and includes the additional ‘pillar’ of addressing the climate and nature emergency.

# Key Findings: Strategic Review

The East Lothian Local Economy Strategy cannot be delivered in isolation. The vision, objectives and actions identified in the Strategy will need to align with a variety of existing strategy and policy documents. The key national, regional, and local strategies are summarised below.

Figure 3: Strategic and Policy Alignment



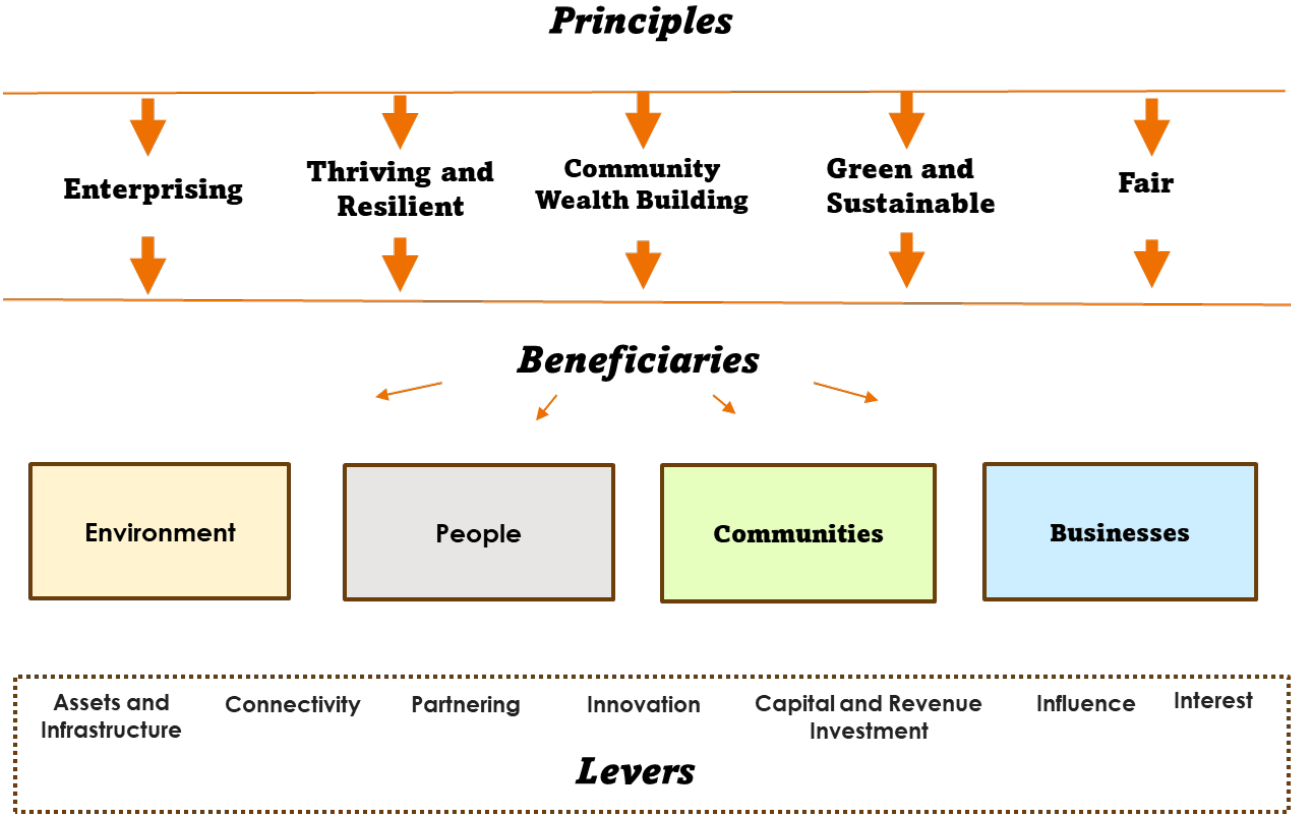
# Approach

This Strategy aims to give all East Lothian’s people, communities, businesses, and its environment (defined here as the ‘four beneficiaries’) the support they need to reach their potential and achieve their goals.

It will do this in a manner that is financially and environmentally sustainable, develops community wealth, supports a just transition to a green and sustainable economy that is enterprising, thriving & resilient and provides access to opportunities for all East Lothian residents (defined here as the ‘five principles’).

To achieve this, the Council and its partners will seek to make best use of, and further develop the area’s assets and connectivity links to build effective partnerships; foster innovation; invest its resources appropriately; utilise its influence with other economic partners; and generate interest (defined here as ‘the seven levers’).

Figure 4: Developing the East Lothian Local Economy – Overview of Approach



Further details of the stakeholders, principles, beneficiaries and levers is provided in **Appendix B**.



# Vision

Based on the evidence presented in preceding sections, East Lothian Council and its partners have developed the following vision:

*In 2034, East Lothian will be an increasingly thriving, sustainable, and inclusive economy.*

*We will adopt a joined-up approach to economic development, with all local economy stakeholders working together to give East Lothian's people, communities, and enterprises the support they need to reach their potential and achieve their goals.*

*East Lothian will be recognised nationally and internationally as a great place to live, work, visit, learn, and invest and as a leading partner in delivering regional prosperity, community wealth, and driving forward Scotland's just transition to a net zero economy.*

## Goals

There are three strategic goals in support of the Vision:

**Goal 1** To increase the number of businesses in East Lothian with growth and employment potential.

Measure Total number of businesses in East Lothian<sup>1</sup>, number of businesses with > 50 employees, number of businesses with > 250 employees.

**Goal 2** To reduce income inequality across East Lothian, and to improve access to employment in rural areas.

Measure Difference between average residential based earning and workplace-based earning in East Lothian<sup>2</sup> and the percentage of East Lothian datazones that lie in the most deprived quintile of Scottish datazones on the SIMD.<sup>3</sup>

**Goal 3** To increase the number of socially and environmentally responsible businesses in East Lothian, expand plural ownership of the economy, and grow community wealth.

Measure The number of East Lothian public, private, and third sector organisations who have signed up to the East Lothian Community Wealth Building Charter (Appendix A)<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> As recorded by the ONS Business Register and Employment Survey, this includes only those businesses registered for VAT or PAYE, so excludes smaller 'lifestyle' business or those in the early stages of establishment.

<sup>2</sup> Measures whether the jobs on offer to residents of East Lothian are as well remunerated as those within a wider regional travel to work area.

<sup>3</sup> Refreshed every 4 years, consider Income, Employment, and Access domains, target coastal and rural wards.

<sup>4</sup> Consider also, number of employee-owned businesses, number of social enterprises.

# Objectives

To achieve the Vision and Goals, East Lothian Council and its partners have set six Strategic Objectives:

**Objective 1:** To be the destination of choice for innovative, socially, and environmentally responsible businesses to set up, grow, and succeed.

Addresses: Although progress was made under the 2012-2022 Strategy, there are not enough businesses in East Lothian, and in particular businesses with a higher number of resident workers. A consequence of this is a lower jobs base, a high rate of out-commuting, and a negative difference between workplace and residence-based earnings. Growth in the business base must be targeted at socially and environmentally responsible businesses, and those who will employ local people and develop local supply chains. Businesses should subscribe to the ideal that part of their success is measured by the provision of wellbeing and prosperity for individuals and society, and protection of the environment. A key area where the Council can support business growth is through the allocation, supply, or development of land for commercial / employment activity. Land in the west at Queen Margaret University, Cockenzie, and Blindwells will continue to be key to delivery of this objective. Commercial developments must also be facilitated in and around the County's towns and villages to ensure rural East Lothian is not left behind. It is critical that a pro-business approach to Planning is taken to maximise the benefits of opportunities, especially where land is zoned or can be deemed suitable for economic use.

**Objective 2:** To provide high quality opportunities for people to learn, develop skills, and grow their potential.

Addresses: The OECD predicts that as many as six in ten workers will require retraining before 2027. Technology and digitization will continue to drive changes in the way people work, resulting in analytical and creative thinking being identified as the most important skills for workers in the coming years. There are significant opportunities for East Lothian to grow its economy, prosperity, and position in the City Region through innovation, data sciences, clean and renewable energy, construction and infrastructure, tourism, food and drink, health and social care, childcare, and agriculture. However, business report ongoing challenging in recruiting to their required skill sets locally (including maths and English), and demographics suggests that fewer younger people train, live, and work in East Lothian. East Lothian Council and its partners should focus on providing relevant high-quality opportunities for learning, upskilling, and reskilling.

**Objective 3:** To build on East Lothian's reputation as a great place to live, work, and learn by adopting a pro-business approach, seeking and supporting sustainable investment, and by empowering communities.

Addresses: Heritage, culture, and nature are key attributes for East Lothian along with the distinctiveness of its towns and villages, each having its own identity. This is an attractor for residents, visitors, and businesses alike, contributing to East Lothian's reputation and excellent quality of life. Retail trends continue to shift, but there are new opportunities for high-quality local offerings, especially linked to food, drink, and experiences, as well as more social and cultural functions in town and village centres. Sense of place is a key attribute and one which can be developed and marketed to increase economic growth and resilience. The rural economy can require specific support and faces challenges that include availability of public transport for businesses and their staff, digital connectivity, and fewer opportunities to develop commercial space for new and growing businesses. Policy interventions such as 20-minute neighbourhoods need to be interpreted in a rural context in East Lothian but provide an opportunity to further enhance the experience of living and working in the area. The Council should adopt a pro-business approach to encourage investment that can address these challenges and deliver on opportunities, and ensure communities are empowered to develop or contribute to plans for their areas.

**Objective 4:** To capitalise on the economic opportunities of and take a leading role in the just transition to a net zero economy.

**Addresses:** Facilitating a just transition towards a net-zero economy is crucial for addressing the climate and ecological emergency. East Lothian is well placed to capitalise on this transition through job creation, business creation and growth, increased investment, cost savings, and building resilience. The transition to clean energy, natural capital and regenerative agriculture, and high-quality local food and drink are key areas of opportunity for East Lothian. The area is uniquely placed to take advantage of significant amounts of renewable energy production, opportunities for the development and delivery of clean heat to homes and businesses, and opportunities linked to hydrogen production, decarbonising of industrial processes, nuclear decommissioning, and improvements in agricultural productivity and diversification.

**Objective 5:** To maximise the opportunities of being a part of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region.

**Addresses:** The 2012-2022 Strategy highlighted that East Lothian's proximity and connections to Edinburgh and QMU were amongst its main assets, but that those opportunities were not being fully maximised, as shown by deprivation levels being highest in Musselburgh, Prestonpans and Tranent. The Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal is expected to deliver capital investment of £1.3bn across Research, Development and Innovation, Skills and Employability, Transport, Culture, and Housing. It has also facilitated the Regional Prosperity Framework and Delivery Plan, identified opportunities for funding collaboration, and developed a framework for Community Wealth Building. The County's strategic sites at the Edinburgh Innovation Hub and Park, Cockenzie, Blindwells, and Dunbar are key to delivering regional prosperity. East Lothian should continue to collaborate and contribute to regional working and the development of prospectuses, programmes, projects, and funding bids with a focus on benefit realisation and securing Community Wealth for East Lothian.

**Objective 6:** To promote a successful, accessible, and sustainable tourism sector that provides quality experiences and benefits our local communities.

**Addresses:** Tourism is a significant contributor to the East Lothian and Scottish economy. Edinburgh is the key national driver for higher spending overseas visitors and East Lothian can build on its proximity to the capital city by continuing to promote the destination as Edinburgh's Coast & Countryside to maximise the benefits of that proximity. The Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Visitor Economy & Culture Programme is set to deliver ambitious cross regional working to benefit the regional visitor economy. It will be the vehicle to inform, develop and deliver regional visitor economy projects, with the aim of becoming a world-class year-round destination, delivering a forward-looking responsible approach to tourism development. This affords opportunities for East Lothian to contribute and benefit from the key investment areas including DDI, cycling and culture. Scotland Outlook 2030 is the national tourism strategy which aims to deliver responsible tourism for a sustainable future. East Lothian should continue to collaborate towards achieving this goal building on the destination offer and assets to sustainably grow a responsible visitor economy in the interest of communities, businesses, and visitors.

## Delivery

Proposed initial actions in support of the Vision, Goals, and Objectives have been grouped into five Action Areas. Following approval of the strategy, officers will finalise an operational Delivery Plan that will provide full details of the actions East Lothian Council and its partners will take to deliver the strategy and vision. It will include a finalised list of prioritised actions they will take forward, with an allocated lead service or partner, delivery timescale, financial model and funding sources, and performance measure against each action. The Delivery Plan will be a dynamic document that is kept under review with progress reported to the East Lothian Partnership Governance Group by the Connected Economy Group.

## Action Areas

### 1. Business Creation and Growth

Actions to develop new enterprise and employment sites, to prepare for the future of work through accessible workplaces and co-working spaces across the county, to focus on the creation and growth of socially and environmentally responsible business and to develop more local and circular supply chains.

#### Proposed Actions:

**Invest East Lothian - Branding and Marketing** - Develop an 'Invest East Lothian' proposition, brand, and product offer, including website, logo, and related promotional tools. Work in partnership with Scottish Enterprise, Scotland Development International and others to promote East Lothian as a business location for local, regional, national, and international entrepreneurs, inward investors, and high growth businesses, including strategic sites at the Edinburgh Innovation Park and Cockenzie. Focus on propositions that will increase domestic employment and local supply chains and are socially and environmentally responsible and promote community wealth building.

**East Lothian Incubation and Co-working network** - Support the development of a network of incubation and co-working spaces for new and growing enterprises across East Lothian by providing advice and guidance to interested parties around suitable sites, building availability, and tenant identification - link to the Council and other Anchor Institution asset rationalisation processes where appropriate.

**Progressive Procurement – East Lothian Anchor Institutions** should set up a group to enable commissioners and procurers to have a dialogue around community benefits in the design and procurement of services, to share learning, and to scope the potential for joint procurement and wider joint working. Develop programmes to support SME access to public sector procurement.

**Rural Potential - Supporting Development** - East Lothian Council to provide via its new Local Development Plan support for rural developments of appropriate scale for East Lothian, including space for enterprises in rural and coastal areas, rural / agricultural diversification, and locally owned clean energy.

**Business Finance - East Lothian Investment Ltd.** - Continue to be a values-driven, fit for purpose, investment fund, supporting more local businesses with their growth aspirations at the right time with the right offering. Adapt offering and operating model to ensure sustainability of the fund with ongoing support of ELC while seeking new sustainable and complimentary partnerships.

**Commercial Development - East Lothian Land Ltd.** - Build the ELL Board's diversity and competence as a key enabler to making sustainable use of existing ELL capital together with external capital for projects which in turn encourage investment and growth across East Lothian businesses.

### 2. Training, Skills, and Employment

Actions to help get people into employment, enable access to training and skills, attract and retain talented people, build lifelong learning, support those furthest from employment, prepare for the future of work, and promote fair work practices.

#### Proposed Actions:

**Direct Recruitment** - Working with employability services, Anchor Institutions to review recruitment policies and practices to increase opportunities for employment and recruitment to recruit locally and where appropriate from priority groups such as young people, people with disabilities and long-term health problems, people experiencing poverty, people with caring responsibilities.

**Advancing Fair Employment and Just Labour Markets** - Use the adopted Community Wealth Building Charter to ensure East Lothian Anchor Institutions are accredited Scottish Real Living Wage

employers and support advancement of fair employment and a just labour market, roll out the Charter to the wider public, private, and third sectors.

**English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)** - Deliver SQA accredited qualifications through a hybrid delivery model, employability support to meet the specific needs of ESOL learners (including migrants and refugees). ESOL delivery also includes informal language learning to enhance integration into our local communities.

**Community Benefit in Procurement** – Negotiate with contractors the delivery of a range of employability outcomes and pathways including work experience, employment, and associated qualifications including sector specific certificates.

### 3. Communities and Place

Actions to support thriving and district communities, vibrant town and rural centres, promote heritage and culture, and to encourage greater community involvement in economic development, including exploring opportunities for asset transfer, plural ownership, and social enterprise.

#### Proposed Actions:

**Land and Asset Review and Asset Transfer Action Plan** - East Lothian Council and other Anchor Institutions should undertake a review of their assets and land that includes current ownership/use, agreed investment plans and future aspirations/needs. The reviews should seek to identify opportunities to use these assets in a more effective way and for potential sustainable transfer to others. A review should also be undertaken to identify land in East Lothian that is not owned by ELC or Anchor Institutions that has the potential to be utilised to build community wealth. Following this, develop an Asset Transfer Action Plan (based on the outcome from the Land & Asset review) to accelerate the sustainable transfer of assets to Social Economy Organisations including employment spaces, visitor assets, and community and cultural assets.

**Develop an appropriate mix of housing** - Support the delivery of the Council's LHS to ensure that the local housing system delivers economic development. This may include the development of community led and place-based approach to housing investment; and actions to stimulate the supply of affordable & mid-market; first time buyer; rural and short term let accommodation. Investigate the economic impact, benefits, and disbenefits of the EL housing system.

**Place Based Regeneration - Town Centres** - Support and reinforce our town centres through considered and coordinated regenerative activity, including heritage-led regeneration activity within conservation areas. Consider how to secure funding and develop and prioritise investment and regeneration plans for towns and villages in conjunction with the development of LDP2 and Local Place Plans.

**Maximise Benefit of MFPS** - Work to secure economic benefit from the Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme, including local supply chain, community benefits in procurement, active travel and transport, and additional regeneration outcomes for Musselburgh town centre.

### 4. Infrastructure

Actions to improve East Lothian's public transport, road and rail infrastructure, broadband, and mobile connectivity; and, to ensure that the development of community and utilities infrastructure keeps pace with the rate of house building and industrial development.

#### Proposed Actions:

**Cockenzie Site** - Develop and implement a technical masterplan for the Cockenzie site, exploring opportunities to develop the site for net zero energy and economic / employment development, as well as a wider access, greenspace and landscape framework for the site. Technical study will reflect opportunities and constraints of the site and identify potential development parcels and servicing/infrastructure requirements and subsequent costs.

**Blindwells sites** - Oversee the development of the employment space elements associated with the current allocated Blindwells site (BW1) ensuring this leads to a sustainable place-making with high-value employment opportunities for residents, recognising this need complement delivery at the nearby Cockenzie site. Into the longer term, consider the benefits of an expansion of Blindwells as a location where strategic employment opportunities may be delivered.

**Edinburgh Innovation Hub and Park** - Delivery of the Edinburgh Innovation Hub and the wider Edinburgh Innovation Park on land next to Queen Margaret University. Support the delivery of the Edinburgh Innovation Hub, and the future development the wider Edinburgh Innovation Park on land adjacent to the QMU campus that will attract and support innovation-led enterprises.

**New strategic sites** - Work with site owner/operator, national agencies, and local communities to develop a phased plan for the regeneration of new strategic sites as and when these become available. This could potentially include the Torness Power Station once it enters decommissioning in 2028; land around Tarmac; and the sustainable redevelopment of ELC sites such as Prestongrange Heritage Park and Levenhall with a focus on commercialisation and revenue development.

## 5. Developing Key Sectors

Actions to support a successful and sustainable visitor economy; to continue development of the area's food and drink sector; to target innovation and opportunities in the clean energy sector; and to improve provision of healthcare, social care, and childcare.

### Proposed Actions:

**Visitor Levy Feasibility** - Undertake feasibility research and consultation to explore the cost / benefits and potential opportunities of implementing a visitor levy scheme as a mechanism for funding future visitor economy activity and other core support services / infrastructure provided by ELC.

**Net Zero Skills Accelerator** - Work with Edinburgh and South East Scotland Regional Prosperity Framework partners to assess the feasibility of establishing a Net-Zero Skills Accelerator Hub location in East Lothian. This would address green skills requirements in a variety of sectors and to grasp future 'green' job opportunities, including in renewables, retrofit, agri-environment, wider land-use, and nature.

**Heating & Powering Businesses and Communities** - Support the delivery of the actions in the Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy which have the potential to support economic development in East Lothian. These include the opportunities to develop heat networks and associated jobs and supply chains.

**East Lothian Food, Drink, Hospitality & Leisure Sector Development Programme** - Develop targeted interventions to support food, drink, hospitality & leisure sector businesses to access new markets, including building partnerships between local providers, public sector organisations and visitor destinations, and routes to market to showcase opportunities for East Lothian, attractions, businesses, and produce.

**Agritourism** - Work with the sector to promote and advise those already operating or interested in diversifying into agritourism. Ensure that work to develop the next Local Development Plan considers how such developments can be enabled. Provide advice to support farm businesses who are looking to diversify into other sectors, including retail, hospitality, and accommodation (including short-term letting to grow bedstock).

**Cycling & Walking Tourism** - A programme to support businesses to enhance their cycling and / or walking tourism facilities. This could include investment in new secure covered cycle / walking kit storage; new open cycle parking, sheltered cycle parking; drying rooms / boot cleaning; enhancement to existing cycle / walking product offer; and e-bike charging facilities. Work to maximise the potential of existing routes and product and link to the Regional Prosperity Framework and enable opportunities for cycling and walking tourism to be factored into any wider infrastructure development.

# Appendix A Community Wealth Building Charter

## East Lothian Community Wealth Building Charter

**Community Wealth Building** is a people-centred approach to local economic development. It redirects wealth back into the local economy, helps to address inequalities and puts control and benefits in the hands of local people.

Community Wealth Building uses the economic levers available to Anchor Institutions to develop resilient, inclusive local economies with more local spend and fair employment, as well as a larger and more diverse business base, ensuring that wealth is more locally owned and benefits local people.

**Anchor Institutions** are tied to a particular place by their mission, histories, physical assets, and local relationships. They are organisations that have an important presence in a place, usually through a combination of being largescale employers, the largest purchasers of goods and services, controlling large areas of land and / or fixed assets in the locality.

Examples of Anchor Institutions include local authorities, NHS Boards, universities and colleges, large local businesses, the combined activities of the community and voluntary sector and housing associations.

### Anchor Charter Mission Statement

To commit to long-term collaboration between East Lothian Anchor Institutions, supporting shared Community Wealth Building goals to improve collective wellbeing and create a strong, resilient, and inclusive local and regional economy. This includes a commitment to the embedding of Community Wealth Building principles and reporting on progress to the East Lothian Partnership.

The Partnership will:

- work with, and encourage, wider local and regional Anchor Institutions in Community Wealth Building initiatives.
- share highlights, success stories and promote best practice among Anchor Institutions and stakeholders.
- monitor the implementation of the East Lothian Community Wealth Building Charter
- review policy and practice to deliver a more inclusive economy.

**We commit to this Anchor Charter to deliver Community Wealth Building in East Lothian through these Pillar Purposes, Objectives, and Pledges**

<b>Pillar Purpose</b>	<b>Pillar Objective</b>	<b>Pledges</b>
<b>Procurement: We commit to using our spend to support a diverse local business base</b>		
Maximise economic, social, and environmental benefit for the community through development of effective local supply chains comprising local SMEs, employee-owned businesses, social enterprises, cooperatives, and other community owned enterprises.		Commit to undertaking supply chain and spend analysis and work towards increasing local spend where possible.
		Proactively engage with other Anchor Institutions to align procurement strategies and to identify and progress joint procurement opportunities, whilst supporting local businesses to bid and respond to these opportunities.
<b>Fair Employment: We commit to being a fair employer</b>		
Create fair and meaningful employment opportunities by paying the living wage, recruiting from, and supporting people from priority groups into fair and sustainable employment, and building progression routes for workers.		Work towards becoming a Scottish Living Wage accredited employer.
		Seek to recruit locally and from priority groups where appropriate e.g. young people, people with long-term health problems, people experiencing poverty, people with caring responsibilities.
		Commit to providing secure, safe employment, addressing wage gaps (gender, racial or ethnic, age, disability) and developing strategies for in-work progression and wellbeing support for all.
		Follow the Fair Work Convention ensuring workers have an Effective Voice, Opportunity, Security, Fulfilment, and Respect.
<b>Land and Assets: We commit to the productive use of our land and assets to support local communities and enterprises</b>		
Support equitable land development and ownership models, including the imaginative use of assets for community and wider social and economic use.		Undertake an asset review to identify opportunities for Community Wealth Building.
		Proactively support communities who wish to use or develop underutilised assets.



<b>Plural Ownership: We commit to supporting plural ownership of the local economy</b>	
Advance inclusive economic ownership models such as local SMEs, employee-owned businesses, social enterprises, cooperatives, community enterprises and mutually owned companies and thus enable more wealth generated locally to stay within the community.	Proactively engage with communities to co-produce local services and initiatives.
	Commit to facilitate opportunities for local SMEs, employee-owned businesses, social enterprises, cooperatives, and community owned enterprises to participate within local supply chains.
<b>Financial Power: We commit to harnessing and growing local wealth</b>	
Increase flows of investment within local economies by harnessing wealth that exists and is generated locally.	Seek to invest in ethical, environmentally sustainable, local economic development opportunities.
	Support and promote progressive finance initiatives including local credit unions.
	Encourage staff and service providers to shop locally and ethically, supporting 'Keep it Local' campaigns.
<b>Climate Change: We commit to tackling the climate and nature emergency</b>	
Take immediate and sustainable action to reduce carbon and greenhouse gas emissions and tackle the nature emergency.	Commit to a timescale for achieving net zero carbon and greenhouse gas emissions.
	Support and encourage environmentally sustainable supply chains.
	Develop and support strategies to support sustainable communities and our natural environment and biodiversity through, for example, capital investment projects, active travel, sustainable energy generation.

# Appendix B Summary of Approach

## Stakeholders

In the vision statement above 'local economy stakeholders' refers to any organisation with the potential to support the delivery of this vision. It includes:

- All Council departments.
  - The six area partnerships.
  - Community Councils.
  - Community groups.
  - Elected representatives (Councillors, MPs and MSPs).
  - National agencies (including Skills Development Scotland; Scottish Enterprise; Zero Waste Scotland; VisitScotland; Play Scotland; and Scottish National Investment Bank).
  - Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Partners (including City of Edinburgh Council; Scottish Borders Council; Midlothian Council; West Lothian Council; Fife Council; University of Edinburgh; and the Scottish and UK Governments).
  - Key employers and industry representative groups.
  - Local business, employability, and organisational support agencies (including Business Gateway; East Lothian Works; and Third Sector Interface).
  - Education providers (including schools; Queen Margaret University; and FE colleges in nearby Council areas).
  - Healthcare, social care, and childcare providers.
  - Tourism businesses (including visitor attractions; hospitality providers; and activity providers).
  - Landowners and developers.
  - Utility service providers.
  - Charities and social enterprises.
- 'People' refers to any individual who lives, works, or studies in East Lothian.
  - 'Communities' refers to any group of people in East Lothian who either live in the same area or share a common interest; and the organisations that represent them.
  - 'Enterprises' refers to self-employed individuals; companies; charities; and social enterprises.

## Principles

The strategy is to be delivered in a way that is sustainable and fair, that builds community wealth, and contributes to an enterprising and resilient net zero transition. We provide more explanation of what is meant by each of these principles below:

**Table A1: Principles Underpinning This Strategy**

Principle	Examples
Enterprising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop people and skills</li> <li>• Leverage and develop strategic assets</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance business support services</li> <li>• Active networking and innovation</li> <li>• Prepare for the future of work</li> <li>• Digital connectivity and data driven innovation</li> </ul>
<b>Thriving and Resilient</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Spreading the benefits of our tourism and energy assets</li> <li>▪ Retaining and supporting our young people</li> <li>▪ Thriving and distinctive communities</li> <li>▪ Conserving and managing natural capital</li> <li>▪ Developing financially sustainable models of support</li> <li>▪ Building resilience to future technological, environmental, demographic, and financial change</li> </ul>
<b>Community Wealth Building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Plural ownership of the economy</li> <li>▪ Making financial power work for local places</li> <li>▪ Fair employment and just labour markets</li> <li>▪ Progressive procurement of goods and services</li>   <li>▪ Socially productive use of land and property</li> </ul>
<b>Green and Sustainable</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A net zero and sustainable Council</li> <li>▪ Promoting active travel and sustainable transport</li> <li>▪ Energy efficient homes, buildings, and investment in green infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Resource efficiency and a route to zero waste</li> <li>▪ A low carbon, sustainable and green economy</li> <li>▪ Creating a more circular economy</li> <li>▪ A healthy and resilient natural environment</li> <li>▪ Encouraging low carbon lifestyles</li> </ul>
<b>Fair</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improving access to healthcare, social care, childcare and early years support</li> <li>▪ Fair and equitable access to employment opportunities</li> <li>▪ Improving income equality and addressing the east-west divide</li> <li>▪ Equal access to services and addressing the urban-rural divide</li> <li>▪ Providing affordable, energy efficient and desirable homes for all</li> <li>▪ Providing employment, housing, and leisure opportunities for all</li> </ul>

## Beneficiaries

The strategy sets out a shared vision to enhance East Lothian’s natural environment and give all East Lothian’s, people, communities, and businesses the support they need to reach their potential and achieve their goals. The table below provides details of how it will do this.

**Table A2: The Four Beneficiary Groups This Strategy Will Support**

It will help East Lothian’s <b>environment</b> by:	It will help East Lothian’s <b>people</b> by:	It will help East Lothian’s <b>communities</b> by:	It will help East Lothian’s <b>businesses</b> by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Promoting a culture of sustainable development that protects the biodiversity, landscape, and water resources (e.g. river conservation) that attracts people and enterprises to East Lothian</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increasing the number of people working in full time and higher skilled jobs</li> <li>■ Improving pay, working conditions, and offering more meaningful work to citizens</li> <li>■ Providing more flexible work opportunities at more accessible locations</li> <li>■ Improve travel around East Lothian and surrounding area</li> <li>■ Providing greater access to training and development opportunities for people at all life stages</li> <li>■ Supporting sustainable destination management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Taking actions to help engage and empower communities to take on a greater role in shaping their future</li> <li>■ Identifying and spreading good practice, and developing more innovative approaches to community ownership</li> <li>■ Building strong and resilient towns and rural communities</li> <li>■ Ensuring that people of all ages and socio-economic backgrounds have equal access to opportunities</li> <li>■ Helping our communities become more connected, both digitally and physically</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increasing provision of flexible and accessible workspaces and commercial land</li> <li>■ Helping businesses to innovate; grow; diversify and access new markets</li> <li>■ Attracting new inward investment into East Lothian, with a particular focus on anchor businesses with potential to help develop local supply chains</li> <li>■ Helping businesses attract and retain more local talent within East Lothian</li> <li>■ Maintaining and growing East Lothian’s reputation for quality and supporting excellence in the key sectors of tourism, food and drink and renewable energy</li> <li>■ Promoting a socially responsible business base with connected and circular local supply chains</li> </ul>

## Levers

East Lothian Council and its partners will deliver this strategy by making effective use of all the levers they have access to. These include:

**Table A3: Levers Which Will Support This Strategy**

Lever	Examples	Lever	Examples
<b>Assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public estate and public infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Natural capital</li> <li>▪ Visitor infrastructure (assets and accommodation)</li> <li>▪ People assets (innovation and enterprise)</li> <li>▪ Scottish Government Local Visitor Levy</li> <li>▪ Skills assets (schools, university, FE partnerships)</li> <li>▪ Strategic sites (Cockenzie, Edinburgh Innovation Park, Edinburgh Innovation Hub, Blindwells)</li> </ul>	<b>Innovation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Arms-length companies</li> <li>▪ Community asset transfers</li> <li>▪ Cooperatives</li> <li>▪ Social Enterprises</li> <li>▪ Business Improvement Districts</li> </ul>
<b>Connectivity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Travel (bus, rail, road, active travel)</li> <li>▪ Transport hubs</li> <li>▪ Broadband / fibre</li> <li>▪ Mobile / 5G</li> <li>▪ Utilities</li> </ul>	<b>Investment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Capital and revenue</li> <li>▪ Procurement and local markets</li> <li>▪ Scottish National Investment Bank</li> <li>▪ Private investors</li> <li>▪ Grants and loans</li> <li>▪ Energy Sector Community Benefit Payments</li> <li>▪ Efficiency and energy savings</li> <li>▪ Developer contributions</li> <li>▪ UK and Scottish Governments</li> </ul>
<b>Partnering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The East Lothian Connected Economy Group</li> <li>▪ Queen Margaret University</li> <li>▪ Edinburgh College and Borders College</li> <li>▪ Community Wealth Building Action Group</li> <li>▪ Third Sector Interface</li> <li>▪ NHS Lothian</li> <li>▪ Scottish Police, Fire and Ambulance Services</li> <li>▪ Community Planning Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Key Employers</li> <li>▪ Key Tourism Enterprises</li> <li>▪ Strategic Landowners</li> <li>▪ East Lothian Housing Association</li> <li>▪ Community Councils and Community Groups</li> </ul>	<b>Influence and Interest</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Planning system (approvals process and Local Development Plan)</li> <li>▪ Council strategies (Poverty, LHS, Local Heat and Energy Efficiency)</li> <li>▪ Procurement policy</li> <li>▪ Employment practices</li> <li>▪ City Region Partnerships</li> <li>▪ CWB Charter</li> </ul>



**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Council

**MEETING DATE:** 23 April 2024

**BY:** Executive Director for Place

**SUBJECT:** Climate Change Strategy Annual Update

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the fourth annual update to Council on the progress of delivering the actions and commitments in East Lothian Council's Climate Change Strategy 2020–2025.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Council is recommended to note the progress made in decarbonising the Council's services and operations and contributing to a low carbon East Lothian. Definitions of key terms used in this report can be found in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Council is recommended to note the key projects & achievements and key risks set out in this report, delivered by members of the Climate Change Planning and Monitoring Group.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 East Lothian Council's Climate Change Strategy 2020–2025 was approved by Cabinet in January 2020. Cabinet also approved the commitments to review and update the Strategy annually as further national legislative and policy changes occur, to review and update the Action Plan annually, and to seek approval from Cabinet for these revisions and updates on an annual basis.
- 3.2 In addition to the commitments set out in the Climate Change Strategy, the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 puts statutory duties on the Council to: contribute to the delivery of carbon emissions reduction targets, help deliver climate change adaptation, and act sustainably. East Lothian Council reports on these duties annually to the Scottish Government through a 'Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report'. The most recent

report can be found in the East Lothian Council Members' Library Service.<sup>1</sup>

## Key National and International Climate Reports

3.3 In June 2023, the Scottish Government published three discussion papers on the *Just Transition* towards net zero in Scotland. The focus of the three just transition papers reflect the three highest emitting sectors in Scotland, which are:

- land use and agriculture<sup>2</sup>
- built environment and construction sector<sup>3</sup>
- transport sector<sup>4</sup>

Local authorities, including East Lothian Council, have been engaged in the publication of the discussion papers. A draft of all three just transition plans will be published in 2024. These will set a route map for how Scotland decarbonises these sectors in a just and fair way. Local authorities will need to consider their role in contributing to these plans and support Scotland in its journey to net zero.

3.4 In November 2023, the UK Climate Change Committee published an independent assessment of the progress in adapting to climate change in Scotland.<sup>5</sup> The assessment is based on the second Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme (SCCAP2). The key takeaways from the report are listed below. The third Scottish National Adaptation Plan (SNAP3) is out for consultation until 24 April and is due to be published later in 2024.

- The delivery and implementation of climate change adaptation measures in Scotland are slow. Only 1 of 33 outcomes are making good progress. The rest are making insufficient progress, mixed progress, or is there is insufficient data to evaluate progress.
- For SNAP3 to be effective, it must link activities with outcomes, have clear ownership of delivery, and address the lack of a monitoring and evaluation system.
- Public and private investment needs to be unlocked to ensure successful deliver of adaptation.

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<sup>1</sup> East Lothian Council – Public Sector Climate Change Reporting 2022/23

[[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/17176/members\\_library\\_service](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/17176/members_library_service)]

<sup>2</sup> Scottish Government (2023). Just transition in land use and agriculture: a discussion paper. 20<sup>th</sup> June

[<https://www.gov.scot/publications/transition-land-use-agriculture-discussion-paper/>]

<sup>3</sup> Scottish Government (2023). Just transition for the built environment and construction sector: a

discussion paper. 20<sup>th</sup> June. [[https://www.gov.scot/publications/transition-built-environment-](https://www.gov.scot/publications/transition-built-environment-construction-sector-discussion-paper/)

[construction-sector-discussion-paper/](https://www.gov.scot/publications/transition-built-environment-construction-sector-discussion-paper/)]

<sup>4</sup> Scottish Government (2023). Just transition for the transport sector: a discussion paper. [20<sup>th</sup> June.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/transition-transport-sector-discussion-paper/>]

<sup>5</sup> UK CCC (2023). Adapting to climate change: Progress in Scotland. 21<sup>st</sup> November.

[[https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/adapting-to-climate-change-progress-in-scotland/#key-](https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/adapting-to-climate-change-progress-in-scotland/#key-messages)  
[messages](https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/adapting-to-climate-change-progress-in-scotland/#key-messages)]

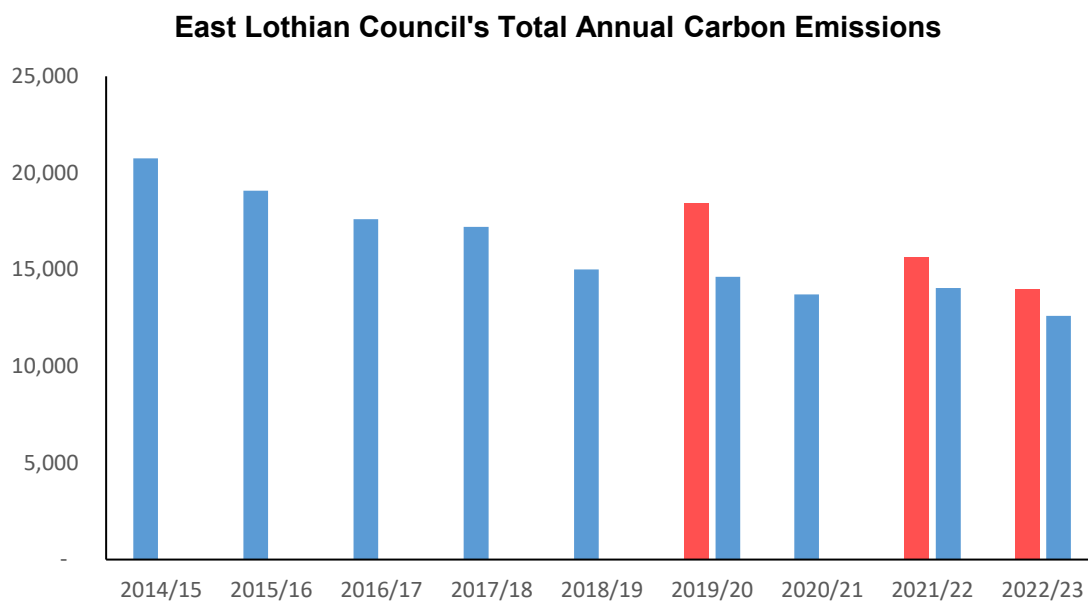


- Adaptation needs to be fully integrated across objectives on decarbonisation, health and nature.

### The Council's Emissions

3.5 East Lothian Council's emissions in 2022/23 were counted to 13,990tCO<sub>2</sub>e. This is a reduction of 10.62% compared to the 15,653 tCO<sub>2</sub>e emissions reported in 2020/21.<sup>6</sup>

3.6 See Figure 1 for an overview of the Council's greenhouse gas emissions over time, demonstrating success in achieving emissions reduction. Red bars indicate when staff commuting emissions have been included in the annual footprint, with the direct comparison with other years included alongside in blue. In all future years, commuting patterns will be captured in the data presented, as this represents a more accurate picture of the Council's overall emissions total.



**Figure 1:** East Lothian Council's annual total greenhouse gas emissions, expressed in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e). Y-axis = tCO<sub>2</sub>e, x-axis = financial year, red bars = staff commuting emissions included in the Council's carbon footprint and reported to the Scottish Government, blue bars = staff commuting emissions excluded.

### Embedding Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation in the Council

3.7 The new East Lothian Council Plan (2022-2027) includes 'Respond to the Climate Emergency' as one of its three overarching objectives. The Council Plan sets out a strategic framework for how the Council will respond to challenges.

3.8 East Lothian Council's Policy and Performance Review Committee approved the draft of the 2022-2027 Top 50 Council Plan Indicators, in

<sup>6</sup> East Lothian Council – Public Sector Climate Change Reporting 2022/23  
[[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/17176/members\\_library\\_service](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/17176/members_library_service)]

which three new indicators to tackle the climate emergency have been proposed. These indicators align with the Council's statutory Public Bodies Climate Change Duties (Mitigation, Adaptation and Act Sustainably) in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and are:

- East Lothian Council's corporate annual carbon emissions (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) reported through the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Reporting – Mitigation, contributing to the delivery of the national net zero targets;
- East Lothian Council's score on Adaptation Scotland's Capability Framework Benchmarking Assessment – Adaptation, supporting delivery of Scotland's climate change adaptation programme;
- Number of staff successfully undertaking the Carbon Literacy Training programme and being certified as Carbon Literate – Act Sustainably.

### **Key Projects & Achievements 2022/23 Addressing Climate Change**

- 3.9 The list below indicates a broad range of key projects carried out by East Lothian Council that highlight some of the achievements in relation to its Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. These cover a wide range of Council functions from governance to schools, communities, energy efficiency and heating, infrastructure, biodiversity, and procurement.
- 3.10 The Council has published its Sustainable Fleet Management Strategy. It commits to achieve zero pipeline emissions from the ELC fleet in 2035 and plays a key role in the Council's contribution to reduce emissions from transport.
- 3.11 The new Wallyford Learning Campus has been completed, designed to meet an operational energy target within Band A of the SFT funding criteria (67-83kwh/m<sup>2</sup>/annum). The performance of the building as designed equates to a carbon emissions rate (kgCO<sub>2</sub>/m<sup>2</sup>) of 42% less than the minimum building regulation requirement.
- 3.12 91 staff members commenced Carbon Literacy Training this year. The Services who have had most of their staff trained are Procurement and Planning.
- 3.13 3,372 pupils in East Lothian Schools have engaged with Bikeability's Level 1 and Level 2 training.
- 3.14 100% of East Lothian's Primary Schools engaged with the programmes delivered by the Outdoor Learning Services in 2022/23. These programmes help pupils to connect with nature and increase their confidence in active travel.
- 3.15 The Council launched its 'Net Zero for Business' website. It includes local case studies of businesses decarbonising their activities to help other local businesses do the same.

- 3.16 Kerbside collections saw an increase of 17.5% collected recyclable materials this year compared to 2019/2020.
- 3.17 The Forth Estuary Local Flood Risk Management Plan (2022-2028) was published in January 2023. The plan identifies 3 flood studies and 5 surface water management plans to be undertaken in East Lothian to strengthen its response to climate change adaptation.
- 3.18 The Nature Networks in Parks and Greenspaces project was completed by the Council's Amenity Services in 2023. The project has been key in connecting nature networks and improving biodiversity in the county to help tackling the nature emergency.

### **Key Risks Delivering the Climate Change Strategy Actions**

- 3.19 The list below indicates the key risks of successfully delivering the actions set out in the Council's Climate Change Strategy. These risks have been submitted by the Council different Service Areas in preparation of this paper.
- 3.20 The Council is operating under financial constraints and is facing the challenge of balancing solutions in environmental sustainability with cost consideration across all areas of operation. There is a recurring theme of a huge challenge, requiring costly interventions to meet the target, but limited funding available for structural change. The difficulty is Scotland-wide and not specific to East Lothian.
- 3.21 East Lothian's population is rapidly growing, and new infrastructure, developments, and services will be required to meet the demand of this growth. It makes the Council's journey towards net zero more challenging, as decarbonisation needs to keep pace with this growth. Mitigation measures are in place. These include a new benchmark of internal floor space in the Council's Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report to the Scottish Government and ongoing Asset Review of Council estate.
- 3.22 There have been strides in decarbonising transport, such as a near-trebling of the mileage travelled by electric fleet vehicles. However, we will struggle to increase the number of fleet vehicles that are zero-emissions due to financial and insurance pressures. The 'Green Travel Plan' has missed its target date of 2023 and will now be a 'Staff Travel Plan' due to be completed this year. There has also been no progress on low-carbon transport for rural communities, including community transport.
- 3.23 The Scottish Government is setting ambitious targets to decarbonise all publicly owned buildings to meet net zero heating emissions requirements by 2038 and achieve zero pipeline emissions from Council fleet by 2035. The scale of funding required to achieve these targets is currently not available at a local or national level. While decarbonising buildings and transport are vital for the Council to achieve its net zero target and

contribute to Scotland's wider net zero targets, current financial constraints place these targets at risk.

## **Conclusion**

- 3.24 The Council is making good progress on its Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. However, the Council faces a challenge to balance its sustainability goals with financial constraints. It will also be difficult to make all of East Lothian climate resilient and zero emissions when a rising population and new developments necessitate greater Council activity. This has further implications on successfully meeting all seven outcomes set out in the Climate Change Strategy (Appendix 2). East Lothian's overall carbon footprint may increase as the new facilities come on stream, despite having effective measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Our climate targets must be reached in absolute, not relative terms, but efforts to decarbonise and adapt our estates, operations, and services must be seen in the context of these circumstances.

## **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are a number of policy implications arising from this report that will be considered and incorporated in future local and regional policy development work in due course. The next Council Climate Change Strategy, which will run from 2025-2030, will guide how the Council addresses these implications.

## **5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and where negative impacts have been identified, mitigating actions have been put in place.

## **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial – The priority areas and measures that have allowed the Council to address climate change mitigation and adaptation to date are embedded within service budgets currently. However, meeting the net zero target will become more and more challenging. It is clear from the risks identified in this report that service areas across the Council face challenges in being able to undertake all the actions that will be necessary to meet the climate change target. It should be noted that climate change is a rapidly moving area of legislative and policy context and the Council will continue to work closely with the Scottish Government to shape and influence, as well as respond to, national ambitions to ensure that the necessary measures, powers, and resources are in place to deliver a just transition to net zero.

6.2 Personnel – None

6.3 Other – None

## 7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 East Lothian Council’s Climate Change Strategy 2020–2025  
[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/download/13283/climate\\_change\\_strategy\\_2020-25](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/download/13283/climate_change_strategy_2020-25)

7.2 Members’ Library Service report 126/23 East Lothian Council – Public Sector Climate Change Reporting 2022/23  
[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/17176/members\\_library\\_service](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/17176/members_library_service)

7.3 Appendix 1: Glossary

7.4 Appendix 2: The Seven Outcomes of the Climate Change Strategy

7.5 Appendix 3: Climate Change Strategy Action Plan annual update

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<b>DATE</b>	04/04/2024

## **Appendix 1: Glossary**

**Climate Change Adaptation:** Our climate is changing and Met Office projects more extreme weather, warmer/dryer summer, and wetter winters. Adaptation refers to adjustments in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities. According to the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, local authorities must contribute to Scotland's Climate Change Adaptation Programme.

**Climate Change Mitigation:** Actions to avoid/limit greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere and/or removal of these from the atmosphere. According to the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, local authorities must contribute to climate change mitigation.

**Just Transition:** For the Scottish Government a just transition is both the outcome – a fairer, greener future for all – and the process that must be undertaken in partnership with those impacted by the transition to net zero. It supports a net zero and climate resilient economy in a way that delivers fairness and tackles inequality and injustice.

**Net Zero:** The state where the emissions we put into the atmosphere and the amount we are able to take out through e.g. planting trees, restoring peatlands and carbon capture storage, equals zero.

**Scope 1 Emissions:** direct emissions from sources owned or operated by the Council, such as gas and fleet.

**Scope 2 Emissions:** indirect emissions from the consumption of purchased electricity, steam or power generated outwith the Council, such as grid electricity generation.

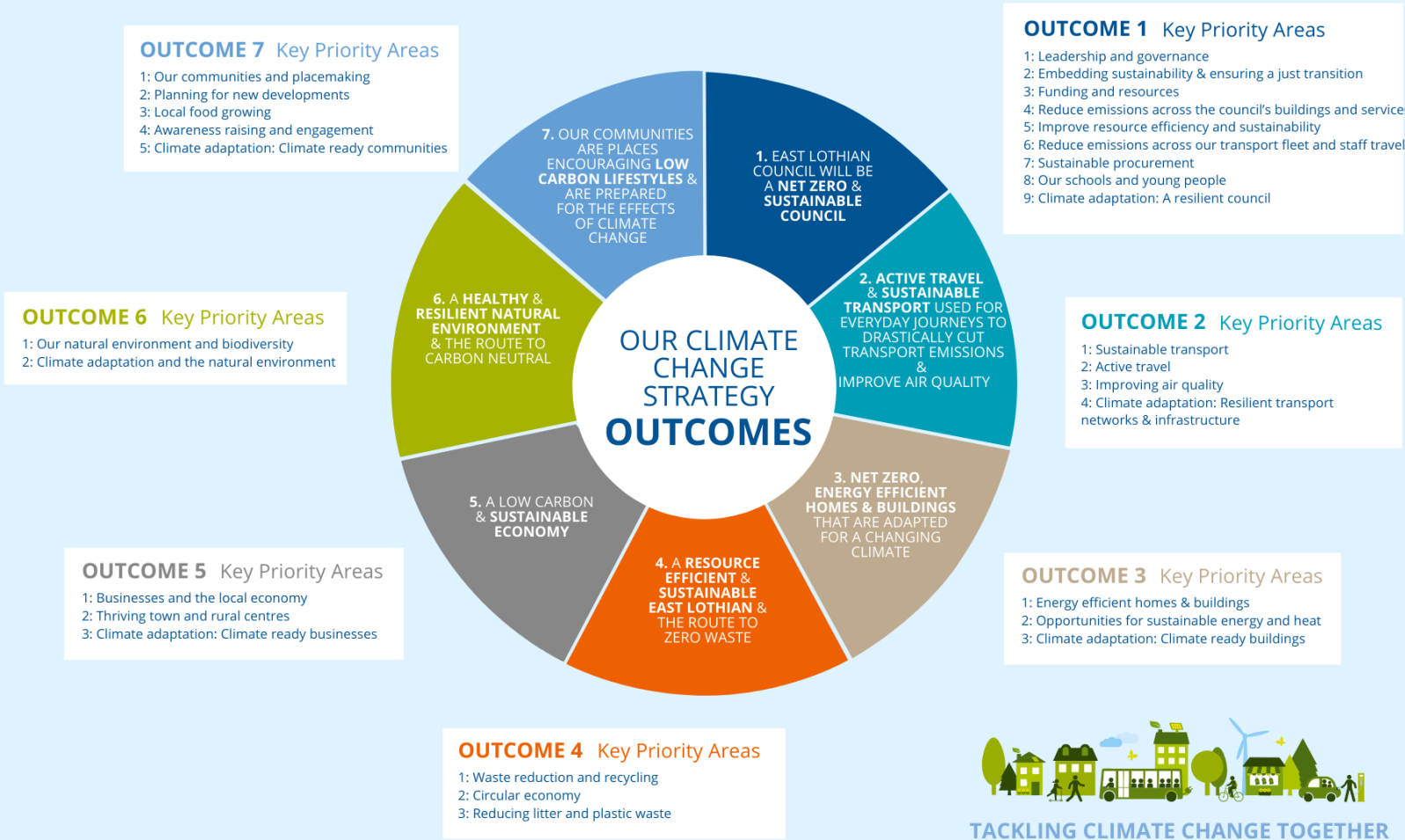
**Scope 3 Emissions:** indirect emissions that are a consequence of the operations or services of the Council, such as waste management and business mileage. Scope 3 Emissions also include procurement and staff commuting emissions. These emissions tend to be more difficult to measure. One way to identify procurement Scope 3 emissions is to investigate the Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions from the suppliers we procure from.

**Appendix 2: The Seven Outcomes of the Climate Change Strategy**



# CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

Working together in East Lothian to tackle climate change



### Appendix 3: Climate Change Strategy Action Plan annual update

#### Key to 'Tracker':

Green = action progressing / on track;

Amber = progress with action still underway but slowed or delayed;

Red = 2023 action not progressing / problem with delivery of action;

No Colour = target date not 2023

Ref	Action	Relevant Strategy / Plan	Lead Person / Service	Indicator	Baseline	Target (where applicable)	Target date	UPDATE: DECEMBER 2023	Tracker	Notes
<b>Outcome 1: East Lothian Council will be a Net Zero and Sustainable Council</b>										
<b>Key Priority Area 1: Leadership and Governance</b>										
1.1a	Work with all Council Service Areas and key partners including the Scottish Government to improve the integrity of our emissions data and reporting mechanisms, and reduce carbon emissions annually, to reach Net Zero by 2045 at the latest	Climate Change Strategy; ELC Climate Change Reporting	Chief Executive; CCPMG; partners including Scottish Government	Annual Climate Change Reporting to the Scottish Government: East Lothian Council's total annual corporate emissions	44,034 tCO <sub>2</sub> e in 2007/08	Continue to reduce carbon emissions annually to reach Net Zero as soon as possible	Annually	Ongoing. The Council's Climate Change Planning & Monitoring Group continues to drive this forward across council service areas. We are getting a clearer picture of the Council's carbon footprint by adding measures such as staff commuting emissions and getting more detailed carbon data on mileage from grey fleet. In 2022/23, the ELC's corporate emissions was estimate to 13,990.19 tCO <sub>2</sub> e.		
1.1b	Embed our aims to tackle the Climate Emergency and to achieve emission reductions within our Council Plan and Local Outcome Improvement Plan (East Lothian Plan)	Council Plan; East Lothian Plan	Policy Team; SECCO	Council Plan and Local Outcome Improvement Plan (East Lothian Plan)	Outcomes under East Lothian Plan 2017–2027	Key targets within the Council Plan	2022	The East Lothian Plan 2022-2027 includes 'Responding to the climate emergency' as one of its three overarching objectives. Three new Top 50 Indicators have also been added which helps assess the Council's response to the statutory duties set out in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009: to mitigate, adapt and act sustainably. Mitigation are monitored through the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report to the Scottish Government, adaptation by an annual workshop using the Capability Framework by Adaptation Scotland, acting sustainably by the number of staff trained and certified through the Carbon Literacy Project.		
1.1c	Annual reporting on East Lothian's overall Per Capita Carbon Emissions, within the scope of local authorities	Climate Change Strategy	SECCO; CCPMG	Data published annually by the UK Government Department of Energy and Climate Change (tCO <sub>2</sub> e) for all	Baseline data 5.2 tCO <sub>2</sub> e (2016/17)	Decreasing annual per capita carbon emissions	Annually	4.7 tCO <sub>2</sub> e reported for calendar year 2021 (most recent data available). Source: UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, 2005-2021 (published 6th July 2023)		



				UK local authority areas					
1.1d	Staff awareness and engagement: Reinstate the promotional campaign 'CRAW' ('Conserve Resources at Work'), or similar, to raise awareness amongst staff – including promotional measures and publicity (articles and updates in staff newsletter 'Inform')	Climate Change Strategy	CCPMG			Increased awareness	2020 / ongoing	Staff awareness raised through delivering the Carbon Literacy Programme in the Council ( in 2023, 91 staff members started their training and 59 have so far received their certificates). Engagement presentation on climate change is delivered quarterly through 'Welcome to the Council', hosted by the Organisational Development Service. An E-Learning on the basics of climate change is now available for all staff in LearnPro. The internal staff letter 'Inform' published green tips and stories regularly through its Green Corner function.	
1.1e	Ensure that training in carbon efficiency behaviours is provided to all new Council employees via the staff Induction process, to instil the low carbon culture of East Lothian Council	Staff Induction process	Corporate Policy & Improvement; SECCO	Introduction of Induction training in carbon efficiency behaviours for all new staff		Induction training in carbon efficiency behaviours is in place	2022	Training in carbon efficient behaviour is delivered through the Council's Carbon Literacy Programme (62 staff members certified in 2023), E-Learning in the climate emergency on LearnPro, and regular engagement presentations as part of the staff induction process 'Welcome to the Council'.	
1.1f	Inclusion of a new mandatory E-Learning module on reducing your carbon footprint, for all Council employees; explore options to make this available to community / third sector organisations, via the wider E-Learning platform		Corporate Policy & Improvement; SECCO	Production of E-Learning module on reducing your carbon footprint		E-Learning module on reducing your carbon footprint in place	2022	An E-Learning module on the climate emergency has been created and is available on LearnPro. The training is currently only voluntary and not mandatory. Next step would be to explore how the E-Learning can be mandatory as part of the induction process.	
1.1g	Work with our partner organisations to encourage them to take urgent action to reduce their own carbon footprint; add this requirement to the terms and conditions associated with grants awarded by the Council, Area Partnerships, procurement contracts etc.	Climate Change Strategy	CCPMG				2020 / ongoing	Climate change is addressed in several key strategies to influence our partner organisations to drive down their footprint. For example, in the Council's Procurement Strategy, one of the five core focus areas of the Strategy is to 'Contribute to the Council's Net Zero climate change targets'; in the East Lothian Council Plan, one of the three overarching objectives is 'Respond to the Climate Emergency'; in the East Lothian Plan, outcome 2.2 refers to 'East Lothian people can live affordably and contribute to a thriving life in a high quality environment'; The East Lothian Local Development Plan 2018 contains objectives with outcomes that help tackle the climate emergency, such as 'Promote sustainable development', 'Protect and	

								enhance the area's high quality environment and its special identity', 'Ensure adequate infrastructure capacity and an appropriate use of resources'; the East Lothian Local Housing Strategy includes Priority Outcome 5 'Fuel poverty is reduced and climate change targets exceeded'; The East Lothian Local Transport Strategy, sets an overarching of vision 'East Lothian will have well-connected; the East Lothian Poverty Plan has key actions under Priority Area 3: Having a Home, 'Increase the awareness and uptake of energy efficiency advice and improve tenant and owner understanding of energy efficiency across all tenures', 'Reduce fuel poverty'. communities with increased use of sustainable transport modes to access services and amenities'; and lastly, East Lothian Council's Sustainable Fleet Management Strategy sets the vision to '(...) provide effective fleet procurement, management, and a workshop maintenance service, with a commitment to significantly reducing our reliance on fossil fuels and to make our assets environmentally sustainable within the UK and Scottish government's timeline of key deliverables.' and aims to achieve zero tail pipe emissions from its fleet vehicles by 2035.	
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**Key Priority Area 2: Embedding Sustainability and ensuring a Just Transition**

1.2a	Produce an updated Integrated Impact Assessment procedure that is in line with current policies on equalities, human rights, sustainability and climate change; including by introducing 'Sustainability Tests; to embed equalities, sustainability and climate change mitigation into all Council policies and decision-making	Integrated Impact Assessment process	Corporate Policy & Improvement; SECCO	Production of an updated Integrated Impact Assessment procedure; revised IIA process to be used for all Council policies and decision-making	The current Integrated Impact Assessment	Production and adoption of an updated Integrated Impact Assessment procedure and implementation into all Council policies and decision-making	Completed	This action was completed in 2020. The revised Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) was published and is on ELC's Intranet for Service Managers to use. The IIA incorporates the specific requirement to include consideration of Climate Change and the Environment when making decisions about proposed policies and projects.	
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**Key Priority Area 3: Funding and Resources**

1.3a	Work with our partners including the Scottish Government to focus specific funding, measures and resources to address the Climate Emergency at local level	Climate Change Strategy	CCPMG; Scottish Government (SG); partner organisations	Specific funding, measures and resources to address the Climate Emergency at local level	N/A	Dedicated funding, measures and resources to address the Climate Emergency at local level	Annually	Officers continue to liaise with the Scottish Government and other external partners to continue to focus specific funding, measures and resources to address the Climate Emergency locally. Valuable forums for these are SSN, LHEES Forum, and Adaptation Scotland's Benchmarking Group etc., which the Council's Sustainability & Climate Change Officer is attending regularly. The Sustainable Transport Officers Group continues to work with partner organisations including Sustrans and SEStran to improve and expand active travel and sustainable transport networks. Planning Service aims to further focus the Local Development Plan on addressing climate change with the working assumption that new development should be able to conform to the Scottish Government targets for achieving net zero by 2045 and the interim target of 75% emissions reduction by 2030.		
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**Key Priority Area 4: Reduce Emissions across the Council's Buildings and Services**

1.4b	Continue the programme of energy efficiency improvements and incorporation of low carbon technologies in Council owned buildings – aiming for carbon neutral buildings	Corporate Asset Management Plan; Climate Change Strategy	Property Maintenance; Engineering & Building Standards; CCPMG	Energy efficiency measures installed		Energy efficiency measures installed in all Council buildings	2020 / ongoing	1) LED lighting has been installed in office areas altered as part of the New Ways Of Working in John Muir House and Penston House. 2) LED lighting has been installed in the areas altered in recent works in Preston Lodge High School. 3) The new Wallyford Learning Campus has been completed, designed to meet an operational energy target of 67kwh/m2/annum. The performance of the building as designed equates to a carbon emissions rate (kgCO2/m2) of 42% less than the minimum building regulation requirement. The campus incorporates solar arrays. 4) The new Blindwells and Craighall Primary Schools have been progressed to Financial Close stage and are due to start on site in February 2024. The schools have been		
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								designed to meet an operational energy target of 67kwh/m2/annum. The performance of the buildings as designed equates to a carbon emissions rate (kgCO2/m2) of 46% less than the minimum building regulation requirement. 5) The new replacement Whitecraig Primary School has been progressed to Tender stage and is due to start on site in early 2024. The school has been designed to meet an operational energy target of 67kwh/m2/annum. The performance of the buildings as designed equates to a carbon emissions rate (kgCO2/m2) significantly less than the minimum building regulation requirement and significantly less than that of the existing school. 5) We have gathered over 100 notes of interest for Solar PV and battery installations and are currently awaiting signed mandates so that work can be programmed. We are continuing to install CWI and loft top ups based on information from EPC's that have been carried out. We are also looking at 2 mixed tenure blocks for EWI.	
1.4c	Continue our Asset Management and Transformation Programme of office review of operational assets and rationalisation, and the shift towards flexible, mobile working, and collaboration internally and externally, to reduce energy costs and reduce our carbon footprint. Maximise opportunities presented by digital transformation to accelerate the shift towards more flexible, mobile working.	Council Asset Strategy & Management Plan; New Ways of Working Policy; Workforce Plan	Strategic Asset & Capital Plan Management; Transformation Team	proportion of staff undertaking flexible / mobile working		Increased asset office rationalisation as per Corporate Asset Management targets; Property Asset Strategy; increased proportion of staff undertaking flexible / mobile working; and increased sharing of assets internally and with external organisations	2020 / ongoing	<p>Homeworking and Hybrid Working policies have been adopted to support staff working from home or more flexibly.</p> <p>The Asset Rationalisation project aims to reduce the council's office building requirement and reduce the council's carbon footprint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction work at Penston House, Macmerry, to enable 'New Ways Of Working' was completed in February 2023 and two stages of phase 1 works have been completed at John Muir House, with a further stage due for completion by April 2023. This has enabled teams to move from John Muir House, Haddington to Penston House, Macmerry, and move all teams from Randall House, Macmerry into John Muir House. In addition, teams have also been moved out of less energy efficient areas in John Muir House into refurbished areas.</li> </ul>	

						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Randall House was closed, and the building handed back to the landlord, on 8 October 2023.</li> <li>• Design work for 'New Ways of Working' for John Muir House Phase 2 is progressing, and this to complete the facilities required for staff now based at John Muir House but also to further optimise office space and vacate less efficient areas of the John Muir House campus. Design works have also commenced on the office areas at MECLC, Musselburgh to utilise these spaces better and this will aid the further reduction of office space within the wider Council's office estate.</li> </ul> <p>Work is also progressing on re-purposing or marketing vacant operational properties, rationalising the Council estate. 1) The New Ways Of Working projects at Penston House and the initial phases within John Muir House have been completed to allow decant of all staff from Randall House and the handback of this leased office building back to the landlord. This is a major step in the rationalisation of office space, generating financial savings and significant reduction in carbon emissions for the Council. 2) The consultations and designs for the next phases of work at John Muir House are being progressed. Staff consultations are progressing at the Brunton Hall, to input into an options appraisal for this building, following closures of various areas due to Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC). 3) Work on disposal of vacant properties is progressing. 4) Place-making and rationalisation opportunities are being identified in Haddington and Musselburgh, in advance of the main place-making consultation work, planned to commence mid-2024. 5) The Estates team are progressing a review of non-operational properties.</p> <p>The Estates team have commenced review of the non-operational estate and will</p>	
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								progress this when they come out of business continuity and recruitment to vacant posts has been completed, enabling capacity.	
<b>Key Priority Area 5: Improve Resource Efficiency and Sustainability</b>									
1.5a	Facilities Management Services will aim to eliminate problematic or unnecessary single-use plastics by the end of 2020 as part of the UK Plastics Pact	UK Plastics Pact; Facilities Management targets	Facilities Management Service	Elimination of specific single-use plastics		Specific single-use plastics eliminated by end of 2020	2022	FMS no longer use single use plastic cutlery or plates/bowls. Food takeaway items are "Vegware" compostable clams and cups/lids. Single use plastic bottles of water are available in primary schools only if required (where a child does not have a refillable bottle) on a Friday for packed lunches. In secondary schools where possible take away cold drinks are purchased in can form however some brands are only available in bottles and given the limited choice available due to Food in Schools nutritional requirements these continue to be sold. Any cartons of milk available in primary or secondary have a paper straw.	
1.5b	Reduce ELC's waste and review recycling options within Council buildings and provide new systems where required	Conserve Resources at Work ('CRAW')	Waste Services; Facilities Management Service				2020 / ongoing	All council buildings have access to recycling for paper/card/glass/plastic/cans.	
1.5c	Reduction in ELC's paper use (printing) – 'going paperless'	Working Differently benefits	CCPMG	Reduction in printer paper order quantities		73% reduction in paper	2022	All surplus desktop printers have been removed from schools and offices – staff will either use electronic means of communication or MFD devices. Print procurement has been completed and a new contract signed with Canon. This will see devices rationalised across the Council and the fleet reduced by 18%, as well as replacing older energy hungry devices. The new contract brings in functionality to enable larger print volumes to be diverted to the Print Unit where they will be produced on more energy efficient and commercial devices. Advice on reducing print volumes and using alternative methods of communication will also be delivered with the change message. Where possible we are moving to online signatures/authorisation to avoid the need	

								to print a document, sign it, scan, and then destroy it.	
<b>Key Priority Area 6: Reduce Emissions across our Transport Fleet and Staff Travel</b>									
1.6a	Review / manage each of the following aspects of ELC estate and operations to reduce emissions towards achieving Net Zero: our Transport Fleet and Business Mileage	Climate Change Strategy; ELC Climate Change Reporting	CCPMG – all relevant Service Areas; Scottish Government	Emissions reduction towards Net Zero for Transport Fleet and Business Mileage	Business Mileage: Average Car – Unknown Fuel: 345.9 tCO2e; Bus: 35.8 tCO2e; Car – diesel: 24.2 tCO2e; HGV – average all types & sizes: 541.4 tCO2e; Van – Average (up to 3.5 tonnes) Diesel: 737.8 tCO2e	Reduce carbon emissions annually to reach Net Zero as soon as possible	Annually	Business Mileage (Diesel, Petrol, Hybrid, Electric, Unknown combined): 119 tCO2e Average Car (diesel): 6 tCO2e Average Car (hybrid): 18 tCO2e Average Car (Petrol): 6 tCO2e Bus: 40 tCO2e HGV (average all types & sizes): 731 tCO2e Van (Diesel): 511 tCO2e A review of pool car utilisation across council services being undertaken. The Fleet Strategy will undergo an update in January 2024 to capture the recent UK Government updates. Capital funding allocation still be to be confirmed for 24-25 replacement program of fleet	
1.6b	Implement an Ultra-Low Emissions Vehicles (ULEV) strategy for our Council vehicle fleet	ULEV Strategy	Transport Services	ULEV Strategy implemented		ULEV Strategy implemented	2022	Completed	
1.6c	Continue the development of ultra-low emissions vehicles (ULEV) options across the Council, including utilisation of full electric vehicle (EV) and hybrid technology for pool cars and operational vehicles	ULEV Strategy; Fleet Management; LTS	Transport Services; Roads Services	Numbers of ULEV vehicles in Council Fleet		Replace the Council's fleet with ULEV wherever feasible	2020 / ongoing	14% of fleet are ULEV.	
1.6d	Implement a 'Green Travel Plan' for all Council staff, setting out the expectation, resources and infrastructure to implement modal shift in staff travel behaviour from driving single-occupancy private cars to sustainable travel options, including use of electric vehicle (EV) pool cars, car sharing, active travel, use of public transport	Local Transport Strategy (LTS)	Roads Services	Introduce a travel plan for all ELC staff (subject to constituencies of the service)		Introduce a travel plan for all ELC staff	2023	We are part of an InnovateUK-funded project to develop a new tool called CalCommuter, which generates an individual commuting report for each user. This will be piloted across the Council in spring 2024. In addition to providing advice and information on travel for employees, this tool will enable the Council to analyse data and tailor incentives and policy accordingly.  The data collected will inform the Staff Travel Plan now due to be completed in 2024.	

1.6e	Continue the programme of installation of electric charging points for electric vehicles at all Council offices, depots and public buildings	LTS	Roads Services	Number of EV charge points installed at Council buildings	The first EV charge point was installed in 2012	Increased number of EV charge points installed at all Council buildings wherever possible	Annual	Since the last update (December 2022) we have increased the total number of EV charging devices in our estate by 110, or by 63% (164 to 274). Figure correct as of 28/2/24		
1.6f	Roll out EV training for staff	Fleet Management; LTS	Transport Services	Number of staff trained and using the Council's EV pool fleet		Increased number of staff trained and using the Council's EV pool fleet	Annual	Battery electric fleet car mileage (average car and van): 187,179 miles. On-going as part of the drive assessment program provided by Transport Services		
1.6g	Develop electric bikes / i-bike options to reduce staff dependency on the car for shorter work journeys	LTS	Roads Services	Numbers of electric bikes / i-bikes for Council staff use		Electric bikes / i-bike options for staff use at all main Council offices	2022	We are currently running a pilot pool of ebikes from John Muir House, having borrowed a fleet of bikes from West Lothian Bike Library for 5 weeks. Once the pilot has concluded, we will analyse the usage data and look to apply for funding for a permanent pool as appropriate.		
1.6h	Work to achieve Cycling Scotland's <i>Cycle Friendly Employer</i> status	LTS	Roads Services	Working towards <i>Cycle Friendly Employer</i> status		Achieve <i>Cycle Friendly Employer</i> status	2022	We have achieved Cycle Friendly Employer status for John Muir House and Penston House.		

#### Key Priority Area 7: Sustainable Procurement

1.7a	Produce and implement a revised and updated Sustainable Procurement Policy, to ensure that goods and services are procured ethically and responsibly, from ethical and sustainable sources, including through the supply chain and sub-contractors	Procurement policy	Procurement Team	Production of an updated Sustainable Procurement Policy	Previous Sustainable Procurement Policy has not been fully implemented	Production, adoption and implementation of an updated Sustainable Procurement Policy		The Procurement Strategy template incorporates a sustainability test, enabling early consideration of sustainability aspects in the procurement process. The new contract management system facilitates the inclusion and monitoring of sustainability requirements during contract management actions.		
1.7b	Produce and implement a new community benefits in procurement procedure, set out in an updated Community Benefits Strategy	Community Benefits Strategy	Procurement Team	Production of an updated Community Benefits Strategy		Production, adoption and implementation of an updated Community Benefits Strategy	2021	The updated tender pack now includes a section on community benefits for procurements, available on the ELC website. Additionally, community benefits are integrated into the new contract management system, enabling discussions during the contract management stage.		

#### Key Priority Area 8: Our Schools and Young People



1.8a	Set up an East Lothian Young People's Climate Change forum to ensure our young people's voices are heard and to support and empower young people to take action in their communities		Education; Community Learning & Development; SECCO	East Lothian Young People's Climate Change forum		East Lothian Young People's Climate Change forum in place	2020 / ongoing	Implementation of climate change questions in the SEE survey is still being progressed. This survey provides feedback from P6, S2 and S5 pupils. A UNCRC development plan has been established which places young people's voices at the centre of learning, including climate issues. A UNCRC event was held with contributions from schools across East Lothian to share learning.		
1.8b	Embed the objectives of this Climate Change Strategy with the 'Learning for Sustainability' (LFS) agenda as part of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). LFS is delivered through outdoor learning, global citizenship and sustainable development	LFS Vision 2030 as part of Curriculum for Excellence	Education; Outdoor Learning; national education partners	Climate Change Strategy objectives embedded into 'Learning for Sustainability' element of school curriculum	Engagement with Outdoor Learning within school day: Primary 47% Secondary 100% (not including P7 camp)	Climate Change Strategy objectives embedded into 'Learning for Sustainability' element of school curriculum	2023	4.6 FTE OL Teaching Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of schools engaged with ELC OLS programmes (Academic year 2022/23): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Primary - 34 of 34 schools 100%</li> <li>b. Secondary - 4 of 6 schools 67%</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Number of Pupils engaged with ELC OLS programmes (Academic year 2022/23): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. OL Teacher in Residence - 1354 pupils</li> <li>b. AWESome - 655 pupils</li> <li>c. Under the Stars - 467 pupils</li> <li>d. Skills for Adventure Sports - 863 pupils</li> <li>e. Bikeability - See 1.8f</li> <li>f. Targeted Intervention Outdoor Programmes - 84 pupils</li> <li>g. After School &amp; Holiday Adventure Activity Programmes (in Partnership with Active Schools &amp; Venturing Out) - Friday Afternoons AS Climbing, October/ Easter/ Summer Holidays Adventure Programme</li> <li>h. Staying Safe Around Water - 122 pupils</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Total number of school programmes involving adventurous activities (Academic year 2022/23) - programmes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Primary - 195 programmes</li> <li>b. Secondary - 100 programmes</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Number of Outdoor Learning staff training courses (Academic year 2022/23) - 61</li> </ul>		
1.8c	Support and expand the 'Eco-Schools' programme in East Lothian schools – potentially	Curriculum for Excellence	Education; ELC Countryside Ranger Service;	Levels of participation in the 'Eco-	In East Lothian currently 8 ELC schools have	Increased levels of participation in the 'Eco-Schools'	Annual	6 schools in East Lothian have the Green Flag award. That is one more school compared to last year.		

	with greater input from other agencies and organisations / a county wide programme to support schools and teachers with delivery of projects		external partners including Keep Scotland Beautiful	Schools' programme in East Lothian schools; eco-projects delivered in schools	Green Flags (according to Keep Scotland Beautiful website)	programme in East Lothian schools; more Green Flag Awards; more eco-projects delivered in schools			
1.8d	Improve sustainability and recycling in schools including reduction / elimination of single-use plastic packaging, a greater selection of recyclable materials across school catering services, improved recycling & food composting facilities in schools		Facilities Management; Education; Waste Services	Quantities of single-use plastic packaging purchased; quantities of recyclable materials across school catering services; recycling & food composting facilities in schools		No single-use plastic packaging in school canteens; increased quantities of recyclable materials across school catering services; recycling & food composting facilities in all schools	Annual	Any items made on the premises and packaged for sale are provided in compostable packaging. Some schools have facilities to compost food waste for the school garden.	
1.8e	Continue to source local food and achieve the Soil Association's <i>Food for Life Served Here</i> award; and promote/ensure more plant-based food options in schools, including 'meat free' days and vegan options		Facilities Management; Education	Achieving the <i>Food for Life Served Here</i> award; food options available in school canteens	Food for Life Served Here Bronze award has been achieved by ELC for past 6 years	Achieve <i>Food for Life Served Here</i> Silver award; more plant-based food options are available in schools, including promoted 'meat free' days and vegan options	Annual	ELC FMS retained their Silver Award for Soil Association FFL award in all primary schools.	
1.8f	Support schools to develop Bikeability Scotland training, to teach skills needed to cycle safely on roads, and 'Play on Pedals' (which aims to give all children the chance to learn to ride a pedal bike before they start Primary 1)	LTS	Education; Outdoor Learning; Roads Services; Connected Communities; partners	Number of East Lothian pupils undertaking Bikeability Scotland Level 1, 2 & 3 training, and 'Play on Pedals'	Number of pupils undertaking Bikeability training 2014/15: Level 1: 316; Level 2: 130; Level 3: 5.	Increased uptake of Bikeability Scotland. [In 2018/19: Level 1: 757 pupils; Level 2: 513 pupils; Level 3: 6]. Increased uptake of 'Play on Pedals'	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bikeability delivery during academic year 22-23 delivered to 100% of primary schools for the first time. This was grant funded by Cycling Scotland. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Level 1 1729</li> <li>b. Level 2 1643</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Play on Pedals update contact: Eden Blair in Early Years and Childcare Team</li> </ul>	

1.8g	Active Travel to School campaign and promotion, including parking management around schools, and supporting modal shift from school buses to active travel wherever feasible	LTS; Area Partnership Plans	Roads Services; Transport Services; Sustrans; Area Partnerships; Education	Number of pupils travelling to school by active travel modes (Sustrans Hands Up Scotland Survey data)	72.8% of pupils travelling actively to school in 2018 (Sustrans Hands Up Scotland Survey data)	Increased number of pupils travelling to school by active travel modes (Sustrans Hands Up Scotland Survey data)	Annual	No further update from previous year: Permanent 20mph speed limits approved by ELC Cabinet March 2022. Transport Scotland initiative to expand 20mph speed limits and make the default national speed limit in built up areas 20mph rather than 30mph. School travel planning prioritised with 5 new school travel plans developed and funding for behaviour change interventions focused on school travel and parking.		
1.8h	Investigate and develop opportunities for business development training / apprenticeships for secondary pupils in the 'circular economy'		Economic Development; East Lothian Works; Education; external partners	Develop a programme of business development training / apprenticeships for secondary pupils in the 'circular economy'		Programme of business development training / apprenticeships in the 'circular economy' is developed and rolled out to secondary schools	2023	Employer Recruitment Incentives continue to be offered to East Lothian businesses as part of Scottish Government's No One Left Behind funding including PERI's which provide ERI for targeted parental groups. Discussions continue with both on and offshore wind farms to understand skills requirements, timelines and volume.		
1.8i	Support and expand pupils' engagement with and value of the local greenspace through Outdoor Learning as part of 'Learning for Sustainability' (Lfs) within the Curriculum for Excellence including Award schemes (Duke of Edinburgh; John Muir Award; SQA secondary phase awards)	Curriculum for Excellence	Education; Outdoor Learning	Levels of participation in Lfs agenda	Lfs Vision 2030 from Education Scotland measured through the EVOLVE offsite education reporting system; DofE engagement data; JMA engagement data; SQA awards	All schools delivering on vision on Lfs 2030. Measured through the EVOLVE offsite education reporting system. DofE engagement data. JMA engagement data. SQA awards.	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of schools using local green space (out of school grounds) to extend their learning environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Primary - 34 of 34 (100%)</li> <li>b. Secondary - 6 of 6 (100%)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Number of schools using local green space (out of school grounds) to extend their learning environment without the direct support of ELC OLS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Primary - 17 of 34 schools (50%)</li> <li>b. Secondary - 6 of 6 schools (100%)</li> </ul> </li> <li>John Muir Award (JMA) - 18 primary Schools (53%)</li> <li>Duke of Edinburgh Award Expeditions - 41 Expeditions</li> </ul>		
<b>Key Priority Area 9: Climate Adaptation: A Resilient Council</b>										
1.9a	Implement the Corporate Risk Register and Risk Management Plans to Review the resilience of Council buildings and	Corporate Risk Register; Risk Management Plans; Corporate Asset	Protective Services; Risk Management; all relevant Services			Included within Risk Register	Annual	The Corporate Risk Register includes 1) the strategic risk of failing to meet the statutory duties set out in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, and 2) the risk associated with increasing occurrences of flooding and coastal		

	infrastructure networks to sustain and enhance the benefits and services provided	Management Plan						erosion in East Lothian. Following the Council's declaration of a nature emergency in October 2023, the nature emergency was added to the climate emergency risk in the corporate risk register..		
<b>Outcome 2: Active Travel and Sustainable Transport are used for everyday journeys, to drastically cut emissions from transport and improve air quality</b>										
<b>Key Priority Area 1: Sustainable Transport</b>										
2.1a	Work with partners and key stakeholders, including national transport agencies and local public transport providers (bus and rail transport), to implement the Local Transport Strategy, enhancing and better integrating public transport provision and connectivity	Local Transport Strategy (LTS); Local Development Plan (LDP); Developer Contributions Framework	Roads Services; Transport Services; Planning Service; partners & stakeholders	As per Local Transport Strategy (LTS)	As per Local Transport Strategy (LTS)	As per LTS	ongoing	No further update from previous year: 8 new high-profile Journey Hub bus shelters installed in town centres, which will be complemented by a new branding and wayfinding scheme next year. Bike racks will be added to the Journey Hubs.		
2.1b	Progress feasibility studies for, and progress implementation of, Sustainable Transport Hubs in East Lothian	LTS	Roads Services; partners including Transport Scotland and Energy Saving Trust	Feasibility studies for Sustainable Transport Hubs progressing		Feasibility studies for Sustainable Transport Hubs progressing; implementation of Hubs progressing	2022	The Feasibility Study identified around 30 locations for Sustainable Transport Hubs (Journey Hubs) have been identified in East Lothian (at least one in each significant settlement), and we have secured funding from InnovateUK to support the design of modular furniture for these locations. Journey Hubs at Wallyford, Musselburgh, Dunbar and East Linton will shortly see new signage installed to make them more prominent.		
2.1c	Work in partnership with our communities to identify local travel and transport solutions and to ensure a fair and just transition to a carbon neutral East Lothian; explore options for shared community transport options, particularly for our rural communities	LTS; Area Plans	Roads Services; Connected Communities; partners & stakeholders including Area Partnerships, Community Councils, Tenants & Residents Associations	Community involvement in decision-making over local transport and travel solutions	Travel and transport actions in current Area Plans	Community approved travel & transport actions embedded in Area Plans and implementation programmes underway	ongoing	Roads capital budget has been 'paused' this year due to the Council's financial pressures.		
2.1d	Continue the promotion of sustainable transport options in East Lothian, including via Area	LTS; Area Partnership Plans	Roads Services; Transport Services;	Awareness levels from Residents' Survey; number of behaviour-		Increased levels of awareness from Residents' Survey; increased number of	2020 / ongoing	We continue to promote sustainable transport options in East Lothian via the GoSESTran App, GoJauntly, Love to Ride online, and the ELC Active Travel webpage, continuing dialogue with		

	Partnerships, East Lothian On The Move, Traveline, smart technology and mobile / digital technology		Connected Communities; Area Partnerships and other external partners	change interventions produced		behaviour-change interventions produced		our On the Move/AP transport groups. The Brompton Bike hire scheme will constitute another tool in the digital space for active travel in the county. In addition, we continue to support the East Lothian Walking Festival and are developing an innovate approach to pool cars for Council staff that will see car club cars made available to the public across the county during evenings and weekends.		
2.1e	Explore options for shared community transport options, particularly for our rural communities		Transport Services; partners; Connected Communities			Proposals for shared community transport options established.	2024	No update on this - potential to be funded via Windfarm community benefits.		
2.1f	Electric East Lothian: Continue the roll-out of new Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points around the county; improve management and maintenance of existing charge points	Electric Vehicle charge point (EVCP) strategy; LTS; LDP	Roads Services; Transport Scotland; Planning Service; partners	Number of EV charge points installed and in good working order	The first EVCP was installed in East Lothian in 2012	A Journey (Rapid) charger in each of our 12 largest towns; An increasing number of on- and off-street destination chargers for residential use	2023	We have at least one Journey charging site in each of our 6 largest towns. Commercially operated alternatives are also in operation or in the deployment stage in Musselburgh, Haddington, North Berwick, Dunbar and at Gladsmuir Interchange, expected to come into operation in 2024.  In addition, we have an increasing number of On-Street and Destination chargers throughout the county, including all smaller conurbations. We have gone from 4 Destination chargers in 2017 to 221 publicly accessible chargers as of 28/2/24.		
2.1g	Electric East Lothian: support the switch to Electric Vehicles (EVs) in East Lothian	Electric Vehicle charge point strategy	Roads Services; key partners and stakeholders	The number of electric vehicles registered, as a proportion of the total number of licensed vehicles in East Lothian	0.07% EVs in 2015	15% switch to EVs by 2023	2023	According to Department for Transport (DfT) DVLA Table VEH0105 for "2023 Q3" figures show there were 65,885 Licensed vehicles registered in East Lothian of which VEH0132 identified 1,678 as Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs: battery electric, plug-in hybrid electric and "other fuels"). This equates to 2.55% of all vehicles.		
2.1h	Develop guidance for the specification and installation of EV charge points in new developments charging points (including for new flatted / communal parking in developments)	EV charge points Strategy; LTS; LDP / Supplementary Planning Guidance	Roads Services; Planning Service; partners	EV Strategy and guidance		Implementation of EV Strategy and guidance	Completed	We require 1 charger per household in residential developments, and 10% of parking spaces to have chargers in non-residential developments. This is in line with Building Standards. Our draft EV Infrastructure Strategy and Expansion Plan was put before Cabinet in 2023, and will be finalised following confirmation of funding options.		

2.1i	Work with businesses and other employment hubs to implement Green Travel Plans for staff, and work up a promotional campaign with rewards e.g., Sustrans' Scottish Workplace Journey Challenge		Roads Services; SECCO; partners; businesses	Number of Green Travel Plans for Staff produced for businesses / employers; number of staff travelling by active & sustainable modes		Increasing number of Green Travel Plans for Staff produced for businesses/employers, increasing number of staff travelling by active & sustainable modes	2022	No activity from ED for this action this year, EL Means Business event included reps from active travel / behaviour change.		
<b>Key Priority Area 2: Active Travel</b>										
2.2a	Progress implementation of the Segregated Active Travel Corridor	LTS; LDP	Planning Service; Roads Services; developers; Sustrans; SEStran	Implementation of Segregated Active Travel Corridor progressing		Segregated Active Travel Corridor being implemented and being used	2020 / ongoing	Detailed design of Dunbar to Haddington (Phases 1-3), Haddington to Tranent (Phase 5) and Wallyford Toll (Phase 7) will be complete by March 2024, and funding applications for construction of Phases 2A, 2B, 5 and 7 have been submitted to Transport Scotland and Sustrans. If these are successful, we should be able to begin construction in 2024.		
2.2b	Implement the actions in the Active Travel Improvement Plan (ATIP) (Local Transport Strategy)	LTS (ATIP); LDP; Developer Contributions Framework	Roads Services; Planning Service; Outdoor Access; Area Partnerships; Sustrans; SEStran; other partners	As per Active Travel Improvement Plan (LTS)	As per ATIP (LTS)	As per ATIP (LTS)	2020 / ongoing	We are developing a new Active Travel Infrastructure Strategy which will prioritise projects for construction.		
2.2c	Working with partners, including the East Lothian Cycle Forum and Area Partnerships, support and encourage community-initiated projects, including with funding and infrastructure	LTS / ATIP; Area Plans	Roads Services; Outdoor Access; Connected Communities; funding partners; Area Partnerships; community partners; East Lothian Cycle Forum	Community initiated projects are incorporated into Area Plans and implemented		Community initiated projects are incorporated into Area Plans and implemented	2020 / ongoing	<p>Work at Levenhall Links is complete, and the route of the John Muir Way has been amended to now follow the sea wall along a sealed surface.</p> <p>In addition to this a more direct cycle route has been surfaced in bitmac along the south side of Levenhall Links.</p> <p>Work continues in partnership with Sustrans and the Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust to investigate improving the surface and making various other improvements to the Haddington to Longniddry Railway Walk. Work continues in partnership with the National Health Service and Sustrans to extend the Haddington to Longniddry Railway Walk through the grounds of the East Lothian Community Hospital, which will link the route into Haddington town centre.</p>		

								<p>North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership has funded some improvements to the coastal path heading east out of North Berwick.</p> <p>The Access Officer is working with Economic Development and Winterfield Golf Club to fund improvements to the John Muir Way around Winterfield Golf Club.</p> <p>The Access Office is working with Dunbar Area Partnership to use some of their allocation of Amenity Services labour to provide a walking route from Tynninghame to Binning Wood.</p>		
2.2d	Continue the promotion of active travel options in East Lothian, including via Area Partnerships, East Lothian Cycle Forum, East Lothian On The Move, Traveline, smart technology and mobile / digital technology	LTS; Area Partnership Plans	Roads Services; Transport Services; Area Partnerships; East Lothian Cycle Forum; external partners	Awareness levels from Residents' Survey; number of behaviour-change interventions produced		Increased levels of awareness from Residents' Survey; increased number of behaviour-change interventions produced	2020 / ongoing	We continue to promote sustainable transport options in East Lothian via the GoSESTran App, GoJauntly, Love to Ride online, and the ELC Active Travel webpage, continuing dialogue with our On the Move/AP transport groups. The Brompton Bike hire scheme will constitute another tool in the digital space for active travel in the county. In addition, we continue to support the East Lothian Walking Festival and are developing an innovate approach to pool cars for Council staff that will see car club cars made available to the public across the county during evenings and weekends.		
2.2e	Improve management and maintenance of walking routes and the Core Path Network, and continue to improve path surfaces to ensure access for all abilities, constructed for climate resilience (e.g. porous surfaces); ensure that our places encourage walking, with well-maintained streets, paths and public spaces that are fully accessible and fit for purpose; pedestrian priority; information on walking routes; walking / pedestrian infrastructure	Core Paths Plan; LTS / ATIP	Outdoor Access; Countryside Service; Roads Services; Connected Communities; Area Partnerships; funding partners; East Lothian Local Access Forum	Core Paths Audits data		Improved management and maintenance of Core Paths Network as per Core Paths Audits	2020 / ongoing	Core Path Network continues to be well maintained post Covid with small scale enhancements by Countryside Team including apprentice Rangers and very active Path Warden volunteers		

2.2f	Work with partners to improve cycling route connectivity and safety, particularly to connect rural communities to larger settlements and/or public transport hubs and connectivity to local amenities	LTS / ATIP; Area Plans	Roads Services; Connected Communities; funding partners; East Lothian Cycle Forum	Progressing implementation of connecting cycle routes		Connecting cycle routes are being implemented and being used	2020 / ongoing	The new Active Travel Infrastructure Strategy prioritises connecting communities into Journey Hubs		
2.2g	Roll out electric bike and public bicycle hire hubs with associated infrastructure in partnership with communities / Area Partnerships	LTS	Roads Services; Connected Communities; APs; partners	Bike hubs established; e-bike usage		Electric bike hubs and bicycle hire hubs established; e-bike usage is increasing	2022	With the collapse of both the City of Edinburgh JustEat bike-share Scheme in 2022 and the Bewegen Go-Ebike scheme in 2023 (both of which had bikes in Musselburgh), we have reviewed our approach to bike hire. We are now working in partnership with Brompton Bikes on an innovative 'virtual hub' model, which will see folding e-bike and push bikes made available for hire from staffed locations in Prestonpans, North Berwick and Dunbar from March 2023.		
2.2h	Support adult cycle training throughout the county		Outdoor Learning; Roads Services	Number of adult cycle training sessions and number of participants	None at present	Increased numbers of training sessions and participants	2023	Essential Cycling Skills project yet to be set up: now referred to as Adult Cycle Training (ACT). ELC update available from Richard Kerr: project allocated funding by SESTRAN		



Key Priority Area 3: Improving Air Quality										
2.3a	Continue to comply with Air Quality Objectives (AQO) and improve air quality in Musselburgh's Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)	Local Air Quality Management Progress Reports	Protective Services (Environmental Health – Air Quality); Planning Service; partners	Local Air Quality Management – Annual Progress Reporting: Air Quality Objectives	AQOs were exceeded in 2013; this is when an AQMA was declared	Comply with all Air Quality Objectives (AQO); no exceedances of any objectives	2020 / ongoing	<p>Monitoring for the 12-month period from 01/01/22 to 31/12/22 indicates that there were no exceedances of any AQO's in East Lothian during 2022. Concentrations of Nitrogen dioxide within the AQMA are significantly below the Annual Mean Air Quality Objective of 40ug/m3.</p> <p>As there have been no exceedances of the Nitrogen dioxide Annual Mean AQO since 2016, East Lothian Council have carried out a Detailed Assessment of Air Quality in Musselburgh and the results confirm that there were no exceedances of any AQO within the AQMA since 2016. The Detailed Assessment also concludes that future exceedances are unlikely. As such, East Lothian Council has been granted approval by the Scottish Government and SEPA for the revocation of the AQMA in Musselburgh. This process is underway and will involve a period of consultation with stakeholders prior to formal revocation by ELC. It is anticipated this process will be completed by Spring 2024.</p> <p>East Lothian Council shall continue to implement measures outlined within the AQAP and also develop and publish policies that supplement CAFS2 throughout 2023 and beyond and will report progress, including monitoring of PM2.5, PM10 and NO2, in the Annual Progress Report due in June 2024.</p>		
2.3b	Investigate collaborative working with City of Edinburgh Council to identify solutions to tackle traffic congestion and air quality in Musselburgh		Roads Services	Progression of collaborative solutions for Musselburgh with City of Edinburgh Council		Progression of collaborative solutions for Musselburgh with City of Edinburgh Council	ongoing	Edinburgh LEZ will be implemented this year. It doesn't extend to Musselburgh, but will put pressure on local drivers to use lower-emission vehicles or alternative modes of transport.		
2.3c	Reduce exposure to poor air quality through urban placemaking, including appropriate green network solutions such as hedges / use of landscaping to buffer emitting development		Planning Service; Protective Services; Connected Communities; partners	Placemaking and urban planning of green solutions	The Council has already planted hundreds of urban trees	Increase green solutions as barriers / buffers to air pollution	ongoing	We continue to take opportunities to expand urban green network and landscaping opportunities including appropriate planting. Tree planting took place during the planting season (October 2022 to end of March 2023) in our communities through the Queen's Green Canopy (working with partners) and Climate Forest tree planting initiatives, including urban trees and 'street trees'.		

2.3d	Explore innovative technological solutions to improve urban Air Quality, including the latest version of the CityTree installation for Musselburgh	Local Air Quality Management Progress Reports	Protective Services (Environmental Health – Air Quality); partners	Explore ideas for innovative technical solutions to improve urban Air Quality	Phase 1 CityTree pilot project ran in 2018/19 in Musselburgh’s AQMA	Development of innovative technical solutions to improve urban Air Quality	2025	No further action		
2.3e	Expand Air Quality awareness-raising campaign to end idling of vehicles, including promoting health and wellbeing implications of cleaner air	Air Quality Management	Protective Services; East Central Scotland Vehicle Emissions Partnership; partners; communities	Air Quality awareness-raising campaign produced		Air Quality awareness-raising campaign produced and rolled out, monitoring underway	ongoing	The second focused period of advertising involving TV, radio, bus backs and social media will take place between Nov 2023 and will run until Christmas with the third and final period being in February 2024.		

**Key Priority Area 4: Climate Adaptation: Resilient Transport Networks and Infrastructure**

2.4a	Implement the Road Asset Management Plan, Corporate Risk Register and Risk Management Plans, to ensure the road, rail and active travel network infrastructure, including coastal protection for coastal transport infrastructure, is future-proofed to withstand extreme weather events / tidal surges and future changes to the climate; ensure paths are constructed for climate resilience (e.g. porous surfaces); continue to monitor and review	LTS; Road Asset Management Plan, Corporate Risk Register, Risk Management Plans	Road Services; Structures & Flooding Team; national & local partners				ongoing	In January 2023, the Forth Estuary Local Flood Risk Management Plan (LFRMP) 2022-28 was published. This plan identifies 3 flood studies and 5 surface water management plans to be undertaken within East Lothian in this period.		
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**Outcome 3: Net Zero, Energy Efficient Homes and Buildings that are adapted for a changing climate**

**Key Priority Area 1: Energy Efficient Homes and Buildings**

3.1a	Continue to improve the energy efficiency of East Lothian’s existing buildings, exploring options for low carbon and renewable heat and energy sources to meet the targets set out in the Energy Efficiency Scotland	LHEES; Local Housing Strategy (LHS); Asset Management	Strategy & Development; Projects Team; Scottish Government			Reduced Energy Consumption	Annual	2023/23 projects have commenced with CWI, EWI, new windows and doors as well as the installation of Solar PV and battery on council and privately owned properties. The respective budgets for these works are £2.5million (council) and £1.1 million (private).		
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	Programme to make Scotland's existing buildings near zero carbon wherever feasible.									
3.1b	Maximise funding opportunities for energy efficiency measures across all housing tenures in East Lothian and continue to complete fabric improvements to domestic Council and private stock	LHEES; Local Housing Strategy (LHS)	Strategy & Development; Housing Team; Property Maintenance	Number of measures installed		Increased number of energy efficiency measures installed	Annual	2023/23 projects have commenced with CWI, EWI, new windows and doors as well as the installation of Solar PV and battery on council and privately owned properties. The respective budgets for these works are £2.5million (council) and £1.1 million (private).		
3.1c	Roll out the Energy Advice Service to support occupiers to run the buildings efficiently and effectively, particularly to those households most at risk of fuel poverty.		Strategy & Development	Number of homes visited by Energy Advisors			Annual	ChangeWorks have continued to deliver the energy advice service, which aims to reduce fuel poverty, improve energy efficiency of homes and achieve financial savings for households. Waiting list numbers have remained high (98 at the end of Q2) due to demand for the service. Funding for the service was temporarily increased to allow more cases to be dealt with. Home visits have resumed for clients who are digitally excluded or for more complex cases. It has been agreed that the service will be re-tendered next year (2024).		
3.1d	Improve knowledge and understanding of Council housing stock, i.e., condition, fuel poverty, energy efficiency		Property Maintenance	Number of Council housing assets with full stock condition intelligence		All assets to be physically surveyed on a 5-year rolling programme	Annual	A 5-year rolling survey programme assessing stock condition, energy efficiency & housing quality commenced in January 2020, This was halted due to the COVID pandemic, however has now recommenced.		
3.1e	Continuing to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) while also meeting Scotland's Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing (EESH) is a priority for all social landlords. Widen the range of technologies under consideration to allow compliance with the EESH2 standard by 2032		Property Maintenance	% of housing stock compliant with the SHQS / EESH	Annual return of the Social Housing Charter (ARC)	SHQS - ongoing. EESH - December 2020.	2020 / ongoing	SHQS Compliance – 86.94% (Pass – 7918; Fail – 1009; In Abeyance 171; Exempt – 9) & EESH1 – 90.86. In the main, the significantly improved position relates to previous non-compliant alarms installations which have now been brought up to standard. The EESH element of SHQS (i.e. element 35) has improved and sits around 3% higher than the Scottish Local Authority average.		

3.1f	Identify solar PV opportunities for public and private buildings where technically feasible		Transformation Board; Strategy & Development; Property Maintenance	Number of PV installations	Zero		Ongoing	The opportunity for an increase in solar PV and batteries across East Lothian was explore during the preparation of the draft LHEES. More detailed work will be carried relating to East Lothian Council assets when details of the Private Wire PPA opportunity have been fully investigated.		
3.1g	Continue to install LED lighting in our buildings and domestic stair wells. Exploring opportunities for future smart intelligent lighting		Strategy & Development; Property Maintenance				Ongoing	No further update. New lighting in ELCs domestic housing is modernised to the new LED specification on a find and fix basis.		
3.1h	Continue to explore setting up an Energy Service Company (ESCO)		Housing; Property Maintenance; Strategy & Development; Energy Transformation Board				Ongoing	No further update. New lighting in ELCs domestic housing is modernised to the new LED specification on a find and fix basis.		
3.1i	Continue to explore opportunities for new innovative energy efficiency work streams through the Energy Transformation Board		Energy Transformation Board				Ongoing	The ETB has overseen the preparation of the LHEES. The draft report was approved by Council on 31 October 2023. The final version, along with a 5-year Delivery Plan will be reviewed by the ETB in January 2024 and presented to the Council in February. This will contain numerous innovative workstreams to delivery energy efficiency and a pathway to net zero heat.		
3.1j	Improve knowledge and understanding of private housing stock, i.e., condition, fuel poverty, energy efficiency, to help understand those properties that are failing to meet the Scottish Government's EPC target and help facilitate Scottish Government funding to those who are eligible for energy efficiency measures		Strategy & Development	Number of private properties with energy efficiency data		All assets to be surveyed and validated through systems such as Home Analytics and physical surveys	Annual	2023/23 projects have commenced with CWI, EWI and the installation of Solar PV and battery on privately owned properties. Our budget this year is £1.1 million. An LHEES officer has been appointed and a draft LHEES completed.		

3.1k	Review and update the Council's affordable housing specification and design guide to ensure all future developments are low carbon and sustainable		Strategy & Development			To review and update the Affordable Housing specification and design guide by March 2022	2022	The writing of the Local Housing Strategy 2024-29 has delayed the review of the SPG. The LHS has included the review of the SPG as one of the actions to be completed. It is now estimated that the SPG will be reviewed in 2023/24 alongside the preparation of the LDP2.	
<b>Key Priority Area 2: Opportunities for Sustainable Energy and Heat</b>									
3.2a	Participate in the Scottish Government's pilot Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) Programme and respond to proposals to create a statutory framework for LHEES	LHEES	Strategy & Development; SECCO; Planning; Transformation Team; Scottish Government	Production of an East Lothian Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) with identified actions		Production, adoption and implementation of an East Lothian Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES)	2023	The LHEES Officer began work in May 2023. An intensive period of internal and external stakeholder consultation followed. The draft LHEES was approved by Council on 31 October 2023. Further changes are currently being made alongside the preparation of the Delivery Plan. This is on course to be completed and published in February 2024.	
3.2b	Explore with local communities to pursue local renewable energy schemes / Community Energy Schemes with local benefits, following on from LHEES	LHEES; Planning	Strategy & Development; SECCO; Planning; Transformation Team; Area Partnerships; Community Councils			To be developed during LHEES process	2025	The LHEES Officer began work in May 2023. An intensive period of internal and external stakeholder consultation followed. The draft LHEES was approved by Council on 31 October 2023. Further changes are currently being made alongside the preparation of the Delivery Plan. This is on course to be completed and published in February 2024. LHEES identifies areas with opportunity for community energy schemes.	
3.2c	Research opportunities to utilise local water bodies for renewables including local reservoirs and rivers		Energy Transformation Board				Ongoing	A sea source heat pump is being considered as one of the potential heat sources to underpin the LHEES. Local use of the Esk and Tyne rivers may also be an option for certain communities.	
3.2d	Work with partners to continue projects to explore the use of low carbon District Heat Networks in order to capture and utilise waste heat from industry, Energy from Waste plants, ground-source heat from disused mines, other heat sources	LHEES; Local Development Plan (LDP)	Strategy & Development; Planning Service; SECCO; Transformation Team; external partners	Number of District Heating Networks in place and number of buildings etc. connected to them	Need to establish a baseline	Increased number of District Heating Networks in place and increased number of buildings etc. connected to them	2023	Hargreaves have carried out a series of studies on the feasibility of using mine water as the heat source for a heat network to supply the Blindwells site. ELC has undertaken further study of mine water opportunities at Cockenzie. This demonstrates the scope for a modest scale heat network. Viridor is working with ELC as part of the LHEES to explore the use of heat from the Dunbar EfW site.	
3.2e	Introduce a Planning Condition for developers to report on their actions	LDP; Climate Change Strategy	Strategy & Development; Planning		0		2020 / ongoing	For all relevant development proposals, planning officers encourage developers to submit their proposals to reduce carbon emissions with their	

	taken to reduce the carbon emissions from the build and from the completed development		Service; Building Standards					planning application. Where this has not been done, then the Council imposes a condition requiring details of measures to reduce carbon emissions to be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development.	
3.2f	Ensure all new build affordable housing delivered directly by the Council is as sustainable and low carbon as possible		Strategy & Development	Number of new builds delivering renewable technology		All affordable new build projects as a minimum must meet the Scottish Government's Greener Standard and beyond where possible	Ongoing	All New Build Projects with building warrants dated after this month will benefit from zero emission heating systems. Prospective developments at Wallyford and Herdman flat are currently either at planning preparation or submission stage. All will benefit from zero emissions heating and enhanced building fabrics. The New Build Team will continue to ensure that wherever possible all affordable housing will benefit from enhanced environmental standards through the use of zero carbon emission heating systems, electric vehicle charger points, photovoltaic panels, increased insulation and modern methods of construction MMC.	
<b>Key Priority Area 3: Climate Adaptation: Climate Ready Buildings</b>									
3.3a	Increase the awareness of the impacts of climate change and what individuals / homeowners / employers can do to adapt, by setting up a website central hub linking to information from ELC and relevant partner agencies	Climate Change Strategy; Resilient Communities initiative	SECCO; Strategy & Development; Web Team; external partners including Adaptation Scotland	Website Hub set up; number of 'hits' on website	None at present specifically for East Lothian	Website Hub set up; number of 'hits' on website increasing	2022	East Lothian Council has a couple of websites providing information on climate action. For example, the 'Net Zero for Business' website which provides local businesses with case studies on the opportunities associated with climate action, the 'Climate Emergency' website with general information on the Council's work towards tackling the climate emergency, the Fuel Billing Advice which helps residents improve the energy efficiency, and East Lothian on the Move which guides people on more sustainable travel options in the county.	
3.3b	Continue to ensure that all Council properties meet Scottish Housing Quality Standards and Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing (ESSH) targets, which ensure homes are better adapted for a changing climate	Local Housing Strategy	Strategy & Development; Housing Team; Property Maintenance; Scottish Government	% of housing stock compliant with the SHQS / ESSH	Annual return of the Social Housing Charter (ARC)	SHQS - ongoing. ESSH - December 2020.	2020 / ongoing	ESSH compliance has continually improved year-on-year most recently from 90% in 2022 to 91% in 2023, which is 3% high than the Scottish Local Authority average.	

3.3c	Work with partners to explore innovative options for adapting buildings and the urban environment for a changing climate, e.g., green roofs, green walls, ventilation adaptations, sustainable drainage systems		Strategy & Development; Housing Team; external partners and developers	Buildings / developments incorporating innovative green climate adaptation technologies	No baseline at present	Increase in number of buildings / developments incorporating innovative green climate adaptation technologies	2025	All new housing developments designed with Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) since about 2015. New projects underway or progressing: Fa'side Lodge and Windygoul, Tranent, Lempockwells and - including installation of heating systems with zero carbon emissions and electric vehicle charge points. Scottish Government Affordable Housing benchmarks have increased and allow for additional greener measures, these are being applied for in addition to other funding to assist with overall costs. Enhanced environmental standards and innovative methods are being considered at all forthcoming projects.		
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#### Outcome 4: A Resource Efficient and Sustainable East Lothian and the route to Zero Waste

##### Key Priority Area 1: Waste Reduction and Recycling

4.1a	Increase waste recycling in East Lothian to meet the 2025 target	Waste Management	Waste Services	% of total household waste that is recycled (national targets)	51.8% (2016/17)	70%	2025	53.1% (2022) Total waste generated in 2022 fell to 49,488 tonnes with 26,245 tonnes recycled. Dry summer reduced the amount of garden waste managed by 11.5% (964 tonnes). Food waste generated has returned to post pandemic levels. Amount of construction type waste brought to the recycling centres reduced by 1900 tonnes		
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4.1b	Work with Scottish Government to set interim targets for being a Zero Waste County		Waste Services; Scottish Government				As soon as possible, by 2025	Landfill rate 9.3% Landfill used only as a contingency for planned and unplanned EfW plant outages.		
4.1c	Work with partners to progress installation of public taps / water fountains for refilling water bottles		Work with partners including Scottish Water / Planning Service	Number of taps installed		Increased number of taps installed	Annual	No progress has been made,		
4.1d	Support communities to progress towards and achieve Plastic Free Community status	Climate Change Strategy	SECCO; Waste Services; community partners					Inclusion in Climate Change strategy - enabling communities to achieve objective one on Local Governance. Single use plastic ban in Scotland effective from August 2022. UK wide plastic packaging tax in force from April 2022.		
4.1e	Continue to assist businesses and event organisers to implement resource efficiency, energy efficiency and waste reduction measures		Economic Development; Resource Efficient Scotland (RES); businesses	Number of energy/resource efficiency measures installed; cost saved to		Increased uptake of energy/resource efficiency measures by businesses; increased cost savings	ongoing	'Net Zero' expert help pilot program for local enterprises completed during 22/23, rolled out during 23/24. Working at regional level (RPF) on development of a 'Net Zero Skills Hub' to address opportunities around green jobs. ELC's Sustainability & Climate Change Officer is working together with Legal &		

				businesses - as per RES data					Licensing to support framework for no single-use plastic and waste reductions in business and event sector.		
4.1f	Develop and implement a Zero Waste Events policy		Economic Development & Strategic Investment; partners	Development of a Zero Waste Events policy	No policy currently in place	Zero Waste Events policy established	2025		ELC's Sustainability & Climate Change Officer is working together with Legal & Licensing to support framework for no single-use plastic and waste reductions in business and event sector. Some Zero Waste Refill shops and local ReUse events have been supported through community funding from ELC.		
4.1g	Progress revision of licencing / permits so lease-holders / activities are required to cut single-use plastic and strongly encouraged to attempt a zero waste activity and demonstrate carbon reduction strategies		Legal & Licensing; SECCO	Revised licencing / permits progressing	To be established	Progressing revision of licences / permits to reduce single-use plastic use and encourage zero waste ethos	2025		Climate Strategy section and advice on reusable cup scheme and limit to single use plastic added to the east Lothian Licensing Board Statement of Licensing Policy published 1st Nov 2023. Lasts until Oct 2028.		
4.1h	Continue to reduce the Carbon Impact of household waste generated and managed for East Lothian	Waste Management	Waste Services	Carbon Impact of household waste generated and managed for East Lothian (tCO2e) - from SEPA national data	In 2018: 110,686 tCO2e. Carbon Impact per tonne of household waste managed in 2018: 2.21.	Continued reduction in Carbon Impact per tonne of household waste managed (from SEPA data)	2025		2022: 106,544 tCO2e impact per tonne of waste managed was 2.15 reduction in the total amount of waste generated meant that the carbon impact per person has fallen from 1.05 to 0.95. Scottish average was 1.02		
<b>Key Priority Area 2: Circular Economy</b>											
4.2a	Work with partners to progress Circular Economy options for East Lothian's communities - including expanding 'Zero Waste' initiatives into all of East Lothian's communities		Waste Services; Economic Development & Strategic Investment; SECCO; partners including Zero Waste Scotland	Circular Economy initiatives / Zero Waste hubs progressing	Zero Waste Hubs currently in Musselburgh and Dunbar	Progressing Circular Economy initiatives / Zero Waste hubs in all of East Lothian's communities	2025		Temporary closure of Macmerry Recycling Centre in October 2023 has reduced the number of Recycling Centres to three.		
4.2b	Work with partners to support the establishment of Repair Cafés / facilities in each community, including the provision of storage facilities so that tool		Waste Services; Economic Development & Strategic Investment; SECCO; Connected Communities; partners	Establishment of circular economy facilities progressing	Tool Library already established in Musselburgh	Increased number of circular economy facilities across the county	2025		Temporary closure of Macmerry Recycling Centre in October 2023 has reduced the number of Recycling Centres to three.		



	shares, toy libraries and household equipment libraries can be hosted									
4.2c	Businesses: Work with partners including Zero Waste Scotland to encourage circular economy business models among East Lothian's businesses		Waste Services; Economic Development & Strategic Investment; SECCO; partners including Zero Waste Scotland; businesses	Number of businesses using circular economy business models	Need to establish baseline	Increasing number of businesses using circular economy business models	2025	'Net Zero' expert help pilot programme for local enterprises completed during 22/23, rolled out during 23/24. Working at regional level (RPF) on development of a 'Net Zero Skills Hub' to address opportunities around green jobs.		
<b>Key Priority Area 3: Reducing Litter and Plastic Waste</b>										
4.3a	Prepare a Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (COPLAR)		Amenity Services	Preparation of Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (COPLAR)		Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (COPLAR) prepared	2025	We are continuing to work with partner organisation Keep Scotland Beautiful to progress LEAMS / LMS new litter management system as this becomes available through Zero Waste Scotland. Ongoing.		
4.3b	Reduction of litter through promotion / awareness-raising and initiatives, including supporting the work of local groups in reducing littering	COPLAR	Amenity Services; SECCO; external partners	To be established once Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (COPLAR) developed			2025	Ongoing promotion and awareness-raising. We continue to support local litter-picking groups and individuals. ELLi (East Lothian Litter Initiative) still in place and promoted on the Council's website. We also continue to liaise with external partners.		
4.3c	Work with partners to implement practical and cost-effective solutions for reducing and eliminating micro plastic granule loss into the environment from all our artificial sports pitches	Climate Change Strategy	SECCO, Sports Development; Fidra; other external partners	Number of artificial sports pitches with solutions to reduce / eliminate micro plastic granule loss implemented	No sports pitches currently have installations to reduce / eliminate micro plastic loss	Increase number of Artificial sports pitches to have installations to reduce / eliminate micro plastic loss	Annual	2 x re-surfaced 3G pitches with mitigation measured complete. One further pitch due for completion in Dec 23 with remaining 3 to be delivered from 24/25.		
<b>Outcome 5: A Low Carbon and Sustainable Economy</b>										
<b>Key Priority Area 1: Businesses and the Local Economy</b>										
5.1a	Implement Economic Development Strategy refresh: Take opportunities to encourage low carbon innovation, research, new business opportunities – e.g., in renewables	Economic Development Strategy (EDS)	Economic Development & Strategic Investment; partners	Development of low carbon innovation / research / new business opportunities: number of Business Gateway starts in this sector		Increasing number of Business Gateway starts in this sector and Business Gateway growth meetings. DDI (Data Driven Innovation) City Deal project offers innovation	Annually to 2025	New Local Economy Strategy due for approval by end 23/24. emerging principles include sustainability, community wealth, and net zero transformation'		

				and Business Gateway growth meetings		opportunities, exploratory stage.				
5.1b	Work with partners to develop training and development opportunities in the low carbon technologies and renewables sectors to future-proof our county and our workforce for the technological advances of the future	EDS	Economic Development & Strategic Investment; partners	Development of training and development opportunities in the low carbon technologies and renewables sectors: Look to run Business Gateway workshops on Environmentally Sustainable business model – number each year with attendees		Increasing number of training and development opportunities in the low carbon technologies and renewables sectors	Annually to 2025	Ongoing discussions with both on and offshore wind farms to develop a skills pipeline including clarification around job roles, skills and timelines. ELW and Economic Development members of the Energy Forum Group chaired by MSP Paul McLennan.		
5.1c	Work with partners to build low carbon planning, energy efficiency and sustainability advice into the East Lothian business support ecosystem, and continue to support businesses to reduce their carbon footprint, improve energy and resource efficiency, and increase sustainability in their processes, supply chains, packaging, distribution	EDS	Economic Development & Strategic Investment; partners including Resource Efficient Scotland	Number of businesses supported to improve energy/resource efficiency, as recorded by ELC's resource efficiency consultant		Increased number of businesses supported to improve energy/resource efficiency	Annually to 2025	See action 4.1e and 4.2c		Jan 2022: Cabinet confirms combining action 4.1e and 4.2c into this action
5.1d	Support the faster roll out of Superfast Broadband, including required infrastructure for new developments	EDS	Economic Development & Strategic Investment; partners	% of East Lothian properties with Superfast Broadband (30Mbps - National target)	85% (2016/17)	100% (2022)	2022	ED Officer working across rural and urban areas to address fixed broadband connectivity and speeds, and mobile not-spots. Significant progress made in community and individual connectivity issues, including Whittinghame, East Saltoun, and Dirleton.		

5.1e											ACTION DELETED IN JAN 2021
5.1f	Promote and add a new Business Gateway course on 'Running a Sustainable Business'	EDS	Economic Development & Strategic Investment; partners	Implementation of a Business Gateway course on 'Running a Sustainable Business'; number of participants	No course at present; need to establish baseline for minimum number of participants to make course viable	Business Gateway course on 'Running a Sustainable Business' implemented and promoted; minimum number of participants achieved	2025	Business Gateway continues to develop and provide resources for businesses of all stages and sizes in terms of sustainability, moves towards net zero and looking at the circular economy. We've developed and run throughout the year a range of webinars/online sessions, from the very basics of explain sustainability and why it's important to all businesses, to more in-depth sessions around incorporating net zero and sustainability into your marketing plans. Sustainability and net zero questions are also now incorporated into our downloadable business plan templates.			
5.1g	Industry: Engage with local industry and work in partnership to support and encourage our local industries and national agencies to reduce emissions from industry (including exploring carbon off-setting projects), supporting the Scottish Government's targets		Economic Development & Strategic Investment; partners	Emissions from Industry sector, from UK Government data	2017 data for East Lothian: Industry & Commercial Electricity: 73.1 ktCO2; Industry & Commercial Gas: 38.4 ktCO2; Large Industrial Installations: 589.7 ktCO2; Industrial & Commercial Other Fuels: 33.7 ktCO2	Decrease in emissions from Industry sector	Annual	2021 data for East Lothian from UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, 2005 to 2021, Table 2.1: Local Authority territorial carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions estimates 2005-2020 (ktCO2e) - Full data set:  Industry Electricity = 34.6 ktCO2e Industry Gas = 31.4 ktCO2e Large Industrial Installations = No data Industry 'Other' = 17.9 ktCO2e			
5.1h	Agriculture: Engage with farmers and landowners and work in partnership to support and encourage our local agriculture sector and national agencies to reduce emissions from agriculture and promote biodiversity and sustainability, supporting the Scottish Government's targets		Economic Development & Strategic Investment; Countryside Services; partners	Emissions from Agriculture sector, from UK Government data	2017 data for East Lothian: Agriculture: 19.1 ktCO2	Decrease in emissions from Agriculture sector	Annual	The Biodiversity Officer & Landscape Officers continue to work with landowners to promote biodiversity within woodland creation schemes. Land owners & Farmers are represented on the East Lothian Biodiversity Partnership by NFU Scotland, Game & Wildlife Construction Trust & Scottish Land & Estates.			
5.1i	Work with partners to explore opportunities to develop the Carbon Capture, Utilisation and, potentially, Storage (CCUS) sector in East Lothian		Economic Development & Strategic Investment; partners			Cockenzie – NPF3 for renewable energy, ongoing engagement with potential investors	2025	On hold. ELC's Sustainability & Climate Change Officer attended a workshop with University of Edinburgh and other local authorities in southeast Scotland to explore carbon capture storage potential and sites last year. Awaiting re-engagement from these stakeholders.			

Key Priority Area 2: Thriving Town and Rural Centres										
5.2a										Action combined with 5.2a as of December 2021.
5.2b	Vibrant Low Carbon Local Economies – continue to support locally driven improvements to access, retail, service, and visitor experience in town and rural centres enhancing the circular economy ('shop local', farmers' markets, making connections to East Lothian Food & Drink, broad based business support, active and sustainable travel).	EDS; LTS; Town Centre Strategies; Area Plans	Economic Development & Strategic Investment; Connected Communities / Area Partnerships and other partners	As per EDS	As per EDS	As per EDS; linkages with Visit East Lothian channels	2020 / ongoing	ED has completed their 'Net Zero for Business', which gather case studies of local businesses tackling climate change. These are available with more tips on a new website for the public. Business Gateway continues to develop and provide resources for businesses of all stages and sizes in terms of sustainability, moves towards net zero and also looking at the circular economy.		
5.2c	Provide specific support and signposting for low carbon, zero waste, sustainable, and social enterprise / community wealth building business models.	EDS; Town Centre Strategies	Economic Development & Strategic Investment; Town Centre partners	As per EDS	As per EDS	As per EDS	2020 / ongoing	Business Gateway continues to develop and provide resources for businesses of all stages and sizes in terms of sustainability, moves towards net zero and looking at the circular economy. We've developed and run throughout the year a range of webinars/online sessions, from the very basics of explain sustainability and why it's important to all businesses, to more in-depth sessions around incorporating net zero and sustainability into your marketing plans. Sustainability and net zero questions are also now incorporated into our downloadable business plan templates.		
5.2d	Work with partners to investigate options for local business hubs / co-working spaces, and support local co-working initiatives, if demand is identified.	EDS; Town Centre Strategies	Economic Development & Strategic Investment; Town Centre partners	Number of local business hubs / co-working spaces progressing		Increased number of local business hubs / co-working spaces progressing. If demand is identified, then work with partners to realise this demand, based on funding, commitment from businesses, and availability of premises.	Annual	Emerging theme for support in the new Local Economy Strategy 2024/34		

5.2e	Continue to develop, deliver, and support town, local, and village centre regeneration initiatives including the repair of and improvements to the insulation and energy efficiency of private and local authority business premises, and the reuse of vacant / derelict buildings and land for mixed use development.	LHS; LPD; EDS; Town Centre Strategies	Economic Development and Strategic Investment; Planning Service; Connected Communities / Area Partnerships and other partners	As per LHS, EDS, LDP, and Town Centre Strategies	As per LHS, EDS, LDP, and Town Centre Strategies	As per LHS, EDS, LDP, and Town Centre Strategies	2020 / ongoing	Actions from 2022 update ongoing, Dunbar CARS launched and allocating funds to TC regeneration, including Ridge projects that also cover skills and employability. Place Based Programme funding to be utilised over next 2 years with other funds to deliver TC Regeneration, e.g., completion of Cockenzie CARS by 2023 and Dunbar Cars to 2025/26. Opportunities via multiple benefits from MFPS / MAT and other schemes, UKSPF investment plan includes communities and place funding opportunities, e.g. to support reuse and regeneration of buildings in a sustainable manner.		Action combined with 5.2a as of December 2021.
5.2f	Enterprising Communities - Support local efforts to enhance East Lothian's town, local, and village centres, helping deliver community-led regeneration.	EDS; LDP; LHS; Town Centre Strategies; Area Plans	Economic Development and Strategic Investment; Planning Service; Connected Communities / Area Partnerships and other partners	As per LHS, EDS, LDP, Local Area Plans, and Town Centre Strategies	As per LHS, EDS, LDP, Local Area Plans, and Town Centre Strategies	As per LHS, EDS, LDP, Local Area Plans, and Town Centre Strategies	2020 / ongoing	UKSPF funding made available to support community led project feasibility and delivery. Additional funding made available to VCEL to enhance locality worker coverage and support.		
5.2g										Jan 2022: Cabinet confirms combining action with 5.1d
5.2h	Proactive Planning – Encourage well connected, sustainable, low carbon town, local, and rural centre development, and recognising shifting retail and working trends, support mixed uses in centres to enhance sustainability and resilience	LDP; EDS; LHS; Town Centre Strategies	Planning Service; EDSI; Connected Communities / Area Partnerships and other partners	As per LDP, EDS and Town Centre Strategies	As per LDP, EDS and Town Centre Strategies	As per LDP, EDS and Town Centre Strategies	2020 / ongoing	The Planning authority in our decision making supports the principle of uses appropriate to our town and local centres, as well as well connected, sustainable, low. carbon town, local, and rural centre development. NPF4 has brought stronger support for town centres and this will be reflected in planning decision going forward.		
<b>Key Priority Area 3: Climate Adaptation: Climate Ready Businesses</b>										

5.3a	Work with partners to encourage and support business, public sector and third sector organisations and other institutions prepare for the challenges and opportunities presented by climate change, including preparing Business Continuity Plans		SECCO; Economic Development & Strategic Investment (EDSI); partners including Adaptation Scotland	Number of businesses, public sector organisations and other institutions prepared for climate change impacts; number of Business Continuity Plans in place		Increasing number of businesses, public sector organisations and other institutions prepared for climate change impacts; increasing no. of Business Continuity Plans in place	2025	The website 'Net Zero for Business' was launched in 2023, providing local businesses with case studies to better understand the opportunities of taking climate action. A Capability Framework workshop was also carried out in March 2023 to assess the Council's response to climate change adaptation. Economic Development was both interviewed and part of the workshop to discuss collaboration with e.g., businesses to build resilience to climate change.		
5.3b	Work with partners to raise awareness of climate change impacts on businesses / climate adaptation measures		SECCO; EDSI; partners including Adaptation Scotland	Number of articles / events		Increase number of promotional articles and events attended	2025	Net Zero for Business has been run by the Council's Economic Development Team to map opportunities for businesses on taking climate action. Several case studies have been produced to share learnings on carbon management plans and their benefits for businesses. The Council's Sustainability & Climate Change Officer also attended the 'Meet the Council' event to talk with local businesses about the climate emergency. Working to engage with businesses around the MFPS to promote benefits of the scheme.		
5.3c	Engage local businesses with the Resilient Communities initiative and the Council's Severe Weather Emergency Planning, to identify where they can provide support for our local communities in times of hardship due to climate and severe weather impacts	Resilient Communities initiative	Economic Development; SECCO; Protective Services; Emergency Planning, Risk & Resilience Team; businesses	Production of Emergency Response / Community Resilience plans to include local businesses		All Emergency Response / Community Resilience plans include local businesses	Ongoing to 2025	Business continuity and emergency planning advice provided to local businesses through support and online resources.		
<b>Outcome 6: A Healthy and Resilient Natural Environment and the route to Carbon Neutral</b>										
<b>Key Priority Area 1: Our Natural Environment and Biodiversity</b>										
6.1a	Progress an extensive annual native Tree Planting and maintenance programme in East Lothian to offset carbon	Biodiversity Action Plan	Sport, Countryside & Leisure; Connected Communities /	Number of native trees planted / hectares of new woodland	To be established (tree planting underway for many years)	Increased tree planting	annually	Ongoing. Encouraged and supported by Amenity Services / Tree Officer and Countryside Service / Countryside Rangers on Council-owned land. Until end of March 2023 the Council was part of the steering group for the Queen's Green Canopy tree planting		

	emissions, in appropriate locations		Area Partnerships and other partners; volunteers	planted annually				initiative in East Lothian (led by the Lord Lieutenancy) which resulted in considerable interest and planting of trees by local communities, schools, businesses and landowners, in addition to tree planting on Council land. We produced a Draft Tree and Woodland Strategy for East Lothian, which will inform further Climate Forest tree planting locations. 'TreeTime East Lothian' tree planting initiative is underway, working with partners Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust. We are also undertaking further tree planting as part of our 'Nature Networks' project in our parks & greenspaces, which is ongoing.		
6.1b	Prepare a Woodland and Forestry Strategy for East Lothian, as required by Scotland's new planning act		Sport, Countryside & Leisure; Planning Service	Preparation of a Woodland and Forestry Strategy for East Lothian		Woodland and Forestry Strategy for East Lothian prepared, adopted and implemented	2025	The Forestry and Woodland Strategy (renamed the 'Tree and Woodland Strategy for East Lothian) was consulted on between June and October 2023. Responses were received from the public, community groups, key agencies and community councils. Officers are considering the responses and intend to finalise the strategy and related assessments for Cabinet decision in January.		
6.1c	Plant 40,000m <sup>2</sup> of wildflower meadows in East Lothian each year to improve biodiversity and increase pollination	Biodiversity Action Plan	Sport, Countryside & Leisure; Connected Communities / Area Partnerships and other partners; volunteers	Area of wildflower meadows planted	30,000m <sup>2</sup> (2019)	40,000m <sup>2</sup> annually	annually	Ongoing – we continue to progress this. New opportunities are being taken wherever possible, including working with local community groups to plant wildflower areas and identifying opportunities to re-wild areas.  During 2023 Amenity Services undertook a Nature Networks in Parks and Greenspaces project, with funding via Greenspace Scotland from the Scottish allocation of the Levelling Up Parks Fund provided to the Scottish Government by the UK Government (report and action plan on 'Improving Nature Networks for East Lothian's Communities' is on the Council's website) which identified areas for biodiversity enhancements in our parks & greenspaces that are supported by the public. This included wildflower meadow areas. We continue to implement these across our communities and to raise awareness through publicity & promotion and signage on site.		

6.1d	Review and update actions in ELC Countryside Site Management Plans to ensure they reflect best practice in site management for carbon sequestration / carbon storage potential – particularly for Aberlady Bay, John Muir Country Park, Gullane Bay; subject to the appropriate Habitat Regulations Assessment	ELC Countryside Site Management Plans	Countryside Service	Production of revised Countryside Site Management Plans that reflect best practice in carbon sequestration / storage potential	Current actions in Countryside Site Management Plans	All Countryside Site Management Plans have actions that reflect best practice in carbon sequestration / storage potential	2025	Two planned updates scheduled for 2023 are still in progress. Measures will be included to lower carbon footprints and incorporate Climate Emergency positive actions through site management prescriptions and Ranger actions.	
6.1e	Implement actions in revised ELC Countryside Site Management Plans to ensure countryside sites / natural habitats are in prime condition to sequester and store carbon; subject to the appropriate Habitat Regulations Assessment	ELC Countryside Site Management Plans	Countryside Service; partners; volunteers	Condition of Countryside Sites indicator	Baseline Condition has been established for all relevant sites	Increased Condition of Countryside Sites indicator score; countryside sites / natural habitats are in prime condition to sequester and store carbon	2025	Management plans set out actions to ensure habitats are well managed. to ensure resilience, enhancement of biodiversity, and optimise carbon sequestration and storage where appropriate. Rangers tasked with managing access and habitats to a high standard across a wide range of Countryside sites to agreed policies and procedures.	
6.1f	Produce an updated Biodiversity Action Plan to tackle the Ecological Emergency	Biodiversity Action Plan	Countryside Service	Production of updated Biodiversity Action Plan		Updated Biodiversity Action Plan published	2022	The East Lothian Biodiversity Partnership was reconvened in Autumn 2023 with the specific aim of progressing an update of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan. The Partnership includes both internal and external partners, including relevant statutory bodies, environmental non-government organisations, specialist naturalist groups, community representatives and ELC colleagues. The Partnership is currently identifying locally important priorities for action to tackle the nature emergency which align with the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy delivery plan and other broader environmental outcomes including climate change adaptation & flood resilience.	
6.1g	Implement the Biodiversity Priorities in the East Lothian Biodiversity Action Plan across East Lothian	Biodiversity Action Plan	Countryside Service; partners; volunteers	As per Biodiversity Action Plan			Ongoing / 2025	Remains ongoing. Key successes this year include: - Our Agri-Environment Climate Scheme funding application was successful to support the conservation grazing programme at Barns Ness, North Berwick Law	



							<p>&amp; Traprain Law. The impact of this was monitored in 2023 by Countryside staff and volunteers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sea Buckthorn management at Gullane &amp; Yellowcraig to support the recovery of Sand Dune habitat. This was funded through the Nature Restoration Fund direct allocation.</li> <li>- Creation of new ponds at Barns Ness to support wading birds</li> <li>- Completion of the Levenhall Links restoration which included the creation of new wetlands for waders &amp; an invertebrate meadow.</li> </ul> <p>Rangers, with the support of Seasonal Rangers, undertook species monitoring at countryside sites to increase the understanding of biodiversity and contribute to national monitoring schemes. This included butterfly transects, bird surveys, and Eider monitoring.</p>		
6.1h	Naturalise amenity grassland to enhance local biodiversity, improve natural habitats and support wildlife	Biodiversity Action Plan	Countryside Service; volunteers	% of amenity grassland naturalised		10% of amenity grassland naturalised	2022	<p>Ongoing – we continue to progress this. New opportunities are being taken wherever possible, including working with local community groups to plant wildflower areas and identifying opportunities to re-wild areas. Grassland management continues at Countryside sites including Gullane Bents, Longniddry Bents, areas at Aberlady Bay, Yellowcraig and Levenhall Links, using the cut &amp; lift machinery purchased through Nature Restoration Funding 2021/22 allocation.</p> <p>Areas of amenity grassland have been identified and relaxed in most communities. During 2023 Amenity Services undertook a Nature Networks in Parks and Greenspaces project, with funding via Greenspace Scotland from the Scottish allocation of the Levelling Up Parks Fund provided to the Scottish Government by the UK Government (report and action plan on ‘Improving Nature Networks for East Lothian’s Communities’ is on the Council’s website) which identified areas for biodiversity enhancements in our parks &amp; greenspaces that are supported by the public. This included wildflower meadow areas. We continue to implement these across our communities and to raise awareness through publicity &amp; promotion and signage on site.</p>	

6.1i	Protect the status of designated sites, and enhance the natural resource (particularly woodland, saltmarsh, peatland and other carbon rich soils which function in carbon sequestration), working with national partners	Biodiversity Action Plan, LDP, Green Networks Strategy SPG	Countryside Service; partners	As per national site condition monitoring indicators	Baseline established as per national site condition monitoring indicators	As per national site condition monitoring indicators	Ongoing / 2025	<p>The Countryside Ranger Service continue to manage designated sites where owned/managed by the Council, including much of the coastline (part of the Firth of Forth SPA &amp; SSSI). This was supported in 2023 by Seasonal Rangers (funded through the Better Places Fund). Management seeks to conserve, restore and enhance habitats to increase their resilience to climate change and carbon sequestration potential.</p> <p>The Biodiversity Officer worked with Planning colleagues, Scottish Wildlife Trust &amp; The Wildlife Information Centre to develop a monitoring programme for our Local Biodiversity Sites to better understand their current condition and identify management opportunities to enhance these sites.</p> <p>Countryside Officers &amp; Rangers attended oil spill response training which included consideration of such an event on our internationally designated coastline.</p>		
6.1j	Woodland creation / enhancement, native tree planting and hedgerow planting in and around our communities (in appropriate locations) to offset the carbon emissions and traffic pollution in urban areas	Green Networks Strategy SPG; OSS; Forestry & Woodland Strategy; LDP	Sport, Countryside & Leisure; Strategy & Development; Connected Communities / Area Partnerships and other partners	Areas of native woodland planted; number of native urban/street trees planted	As per ELC Tree Management (Amenity Services) baseline	Increased areas of woodland in and around towns; increased numbers of urban/street trees	Ongoing / 2025	<p>Ongoing. We continue to take opportunities to expand urban green network and tree planting opportunities. Various tree planting initiatives have been underway, including Queen's Green Canopy tree planting in our communities and 'TreeTime East Lothian' initiative, which is ongoing, working with partners Edinburgh &amp; Lothians Greenspace Trust. We are also undertaking further tree planting as part of our 'Nature Networks' project in our parks &amp; greenspaces, which is ongoing.</p> <p>The Countryside Ranger Service have undertaken native tree planting, funded by the Nature Restoration Fund direct allocation including hedgerow creation in North Berwick and tree planting in Levenhall Links.</p>		
6.1k	Work with farmers and landowners to maximise carbon storage potential of land-use by planting of woodland or individual trees; peatland restoration and conservation projects; wetland creation; carbon sequestration, working with national agencies	Biodiversity Action Plan; Green Networks Strategy	Countryside Service; national and local partners	National indicators; implementation of conservation projects working in partnership	As per national indicators	As per national indicators, Conservation projects implemented working in partnership	Ongoing	Continue to work with the East Lothian Climate Forest project team and to progress. Countryside Services & the Landscape team work with Scottish Forestry & landowners to support tree planting on private land		
6.1l	Undertake projects to improve and encourage		Sport, Countryside &	Number of local biodiversity	As per Wildlife	Increased number of local biodiversity	Ongoing	Funding from Scottish Government (Nature Restoration Fund) has supported the delivery of		

	biodiversity & wildlife and enhance natural habitats in and around our communities and urban areas, including managing amenity greenspace for biodiversity / pollinators, riverside habitats, grasslands	Biodiversity Action Plan; OSS	Leisure; the Wildlife Information Centre (TWIC); partners; volunteers	projects supported; records / surveys of urban wildlife	Information Centre records; Biodiversity Action Plan	projects supported; increased records of urban wildlife		<p>projects to enhance biodiversity including sand dune restoration, woodland management and wetland creation.</p> <p>During 2023 Amenity Services undertook a Nature Networks in Parks and Greenspaces project, with funding via Greenspace Scotland from the Scottish allocation of the Levelling Up Parks Fund provided to the Scottish Government by the UK Government (report and action plan on 'Improving Nature Networks for East Lothian's Communities' is on the Council's website) which identified areas for biodiversity enhancements in our parks &amp; greenspaces that are supported by the public.</p> <p>The Nature Networks project sought to identify opportunities for biodiversity enhancements across our urban greenspaces to diversify habitats and support connectivity. Projects were thereafter undertaken including changes in grassland management, tree planting, wildflower meadow creation and bulb planting.</p> <p>The Biodiversity Officer and Countryside Rangers have further supported community projects to enhance biodiversity including participating in a BioBlitz at the East Lothian Community Hospital, working with Climate Action East Linton and LiL to deliver local nature networks.</p>	
6.1m	The Council's Countryside Ranger Service to interpret / educate / raise awareness of climate change mitigation, adaptation and sequestration as part of their remit	ELC Countryside Ranger Service Roles and Remit	ELC Countryside Ranger Service	Inclusion and implementation of interpretation / education / awareness-raising about climate change mitigation, adaptation and sequestration in ELCRS remit	Currently undertaken as required / when opportunities arise	Inclusion of interpretation / education / awareness-raising about climate change mitigation, adaptation and sequestration in ELCRS remit and being implemented	2022	Staff have undergone climate literacy training and share learnings during interpretation, group sessions and education groups where applicable. Message delivered during events with both adults and children through formal and informal education events. The rangers delivered a total of 20 events across East Lothian in 2023.	
6.1n	Work in partnership to look after the marine environment, including East Lothian's coast and beaches (e.g., beach cleans), including the responsible use and enjoyment of the coast	Countryside Site Management Plans	ELC Countryside Ranger Service; partners; volunteers	Actions in Countryside Site Management Plans; number of beach cleans / promotional events etc.	As per actions in Countryside Site Management Plans	As per actions in Countryside Site Management Plans, maintain & increase numbers of beach clean events /	Ongoing	ELC Countryside staff regularly coordinate staff and volunteers to undertake coastal clean-ups. Following just one extreme swell event, approximately 300 bags of litter have so far been removed from East Lothian beaches by rangers following clean-ups by Countryside Volunteers, members of the public and landowners. On top of this they have also removed over 200 creels	

						promotional events etc. as appropriate		<p>off beaches after recent storms. This is in addition to the usual litter picks and beach cleans we undertake. We have also created litter picking station at several beaches, where members of the public can help and leave bags for us to uplift.</p> <p>Assistance has also been provided with a sea grass establishment trial.</p> <p>Messages relating to responsible access and 'leaving no trace' delivered as core part of Ranger duties, as well as through Social Media channels, to support enjoyment of the coast and countryside and encourage responsible use of the outdoors.</p>		
6.1o	Investigate the impacts of increasing recreational pressures on East Lothian's coast, including recreational disturbance to habitats and wildlife, and the cumulative impacts		Sport, Countryside & Leisure; Economic Development; partners; Planning Service	Production of study into impacts of increasing recreational pressures on East Lothian's coast		Production of study into impacts of increasing recreational pressures on East Lothian's coast, to inform future management	2025	<p>Countryside Services are working with the RSPB to take forward a recreational impacts study and are currently seeking funding for this work, based on the brief previously produced in 2021. This would seek to coordinate a study across all local authority areas around the Firth of Forth with the aim of identifying mitigation measures that could be undertaken across authority boundaries.</p> <p>Recreational disturbance continues to be monitored on an ad hoc basis by Countryside Rangers, supported by Seasonal Rangers during Summer 2023. Rangers engage with visitors where appropriate if observed to be disturbing wildlife and signage/interpretation is in place at particularly sensitive sites (e.g., where designated as part of the Firth of Forth Special Protection Area for wading birds) to recognise the importance of this wildlife and encourage responsible access. The Rangers &amp; Access Officer also undertake path repairs with the volunteer Path Wardens and identify new opportunities for path creation to manage recreational impact on habitats.</p>		
<b>Key Priority Area 2: Climate Adaptation and the Natural Environment</b>										
6.2a	Promote and facilitate the adaptation of the natural environment by enhancing natural habitats and landscape features e.g., coastal dune systems, saltmarsh; subject to the appropriate Habitat Regulations Assessment	Countryside Site Management Plans; Green Networks Strategy	Countryside Service; partners	As per Countryside Site Management Plans; Biodiversity Action Plan	As per Countryside Site Management Plans; Biodiversity Action Plan	As per Countryside Site Management Plans; Biodiversity Action Plan	Ongoing	<p>Coastal grassland management continues to protect and enhance dune systems, in line with site management plans. Dune restoration was undertaken at two sites (Yellowcraig/Gullane) as part of the 22/23 Nature Restoration Fund grant allocation.</p> <p>Countryside Service supported the Senior Flood Officer to submit funding bids to undertake feasibility studies that include the use of nature based solutions to address future coastal flood risk.</p>		

6.2b	Work with landowners to create connected blue networks and progress natural flood management, natural river flood protection measures / floodwater storage by improving and creating natural riverine habitats, including freshwater marshland, wetlands and Sustainable Drainage System opportunities	Flood Risk Management Strategy; Flood Protection studies; Green Networks Strategy	Structures & Flooding Team; Countryside Service; landowners	Opportunities are taken to work with landowners to improve blue networks and natural flood management; Progression of natural river flood protection measures	As per Flood Risk Management Strategy; preliminary studies underway	Increased blue network connectivity and areas of natural flood management identified; natural river flood protection measures and habitat improvements progressing	2025	All flood studies identified within the Forth Estuary LFRMP will aim to provide actions that provides the most sustainable set of actions to mitigate flood risk, this assessment/option appraisal will include natural flood management.  All flood protection schemes and studies consider climate change within their option appraisal..		ACTION NOW COMBINED WITH ACTION 6.2E - Cabinet approved, Jan 2021
6.2c	Plant trees and hedgerows around urban areas to create natural areas of shade and shelter	Forestry & Woodland Strategy; Biodiversity Action Plan; Green Networks Strategy	Sport, Countryside & Leisure; Connected Communities / Area Partnerships and other community partners	Length of hedgerows planted; number of urban/street trees planted	As per ELC Tree Management (Amenity Services) baseline	Increased length of hedgerows planted; increased numbers of urban/street trees	2025	Ongoing. Tree planting and hedgerows incorporated into new developments where appropriate. We produced a Draft Tree and Woodland Strategy for East Lothian, which has further identified suitable areas for planting both trees and hedgerows in urban areas and will inform further Climate Forest tree planting locations. 'TreeTime East Lothian' tree planting initiative is underway to undertake tree planting in our communities, working with partners Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust. We are also undertaking further tree planting as part of our 'Nature Networks' project (see above) in our parks & greenspaces, which is ongoing. 600 hedgerow trees were planted in North Berwick Glen in January 2023, as part of the 2022/23 Nature Restoration Fund grant allocation. Tree & hedgerow planting continues at Levenhall Links, working with the Friends of Levenhall, volunteers and the local community.		
6.2d	Continue to control invasive species	Countryside Management Plans	Sport, Countryside & Leisure; partners	Eradication of non-native invasive plant species	As per management of invasive species	Work towards eradication of non-native invasive plant species	Ongoing / 2025	Rangers undertake removal of Piri-piri-bur, Rosa rugosa, Himalayan Balsam and Sea Buckthorn where appropriate from countryside sites to maintain natural habitats. Countryside staff are working in partnership with neighbouring landowners at some sites to encourage and support INNS control.  Community volunteer groups in partnership with ELC continue to control Giant Hogweed alongside the River Tyne. This project has now expanded to survey Hogweed and other invasive species along the River Esk. Amenity services continue to control hogweed along the Esk.		
6.2e										ACTION DELETED IN JAN 2021

6.2f	Incorporate into LDP and implement the climate change adaptation measures for new developments as set out in East Lothian's Green Network Strategy Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)	LDP; Green Networks SPG	Planning Service; Sport, Countryside & Leisure	As set out in Green Network Strategy SPG	As set out in Green Network Strategy SPG	Development of adaptation measures as set out in Green Network Strategy SPG	Ongoing / 2025	NPF4 has been approved by the Scottish Government and is now part of the development plan. 8. Aim to combat flooding through natural environment measures: this is included within NPF Policy 3 Biodiversity section (bii) which requires nature-based solutions to be integrated into new development wherever feasible. We consider this would apply to flooding. 9. Protect key green network assets when planning and providing flood/erosion defences. The designers of Musselburgh Flood Protection scheme are considering how to incorporate key green network assets around the Esk into the scheme. 10. Consider water management holistically, including implementing multi-functional SUDS. NPF4 Policy 22 on flood risk and water management c(ii) requires that all proposals should manage all rain and surface water through sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS), which should form part of and integrate with proposed and existing blue [1] green infrastructure. All proposals should presume no surface water connection to the combined sewer. This will be implemented through planning decisions. 11. Consider climate change when designing landscaping schemes and tree planting. NPF4 Policy 2 on climate adaptation says, "Development proposals will be sited and designed to adapt to current and future risks from climate change." This will be implemented through planning decisions. 12. Consider the use of green walls and green roofs in urban areas to address climatic changes. NPF Policy 3 (a) and (bii) on encouraging nature-based solutions could encourage this. 13. Design public realm in urban areas to create comfortable environments in a changing climate, for example places and routes that offer shelter and shade. This was included in the Design Standards for New Housing Areas SPG.	
6.2g	Reinforce path networks alongside rivers by willow setting (a natural riverbank stabilisation technique with green network benefits for biodiversity)	Core Paths Plan	Countryside Team; volunteers	Use this technique for core paths improvements / stabilisation wherever possible	Already underway	Continue to use this technique for core paths improvements / stabilisation wherever possible	Ongoing / 2025	Ongoing where feasible.	

**Outcome 7: East Lothian's Communities are places encouraging a Low Carbon Lifestyle and are prepared for the effects of Climate Change.**

**Key Priority Area 1: Our Communities and Placemaking**

7.1a	Work in partnership with our communities to support our communities towards becoming Net Zero Carbon, including enabling community initiatives for carbon cuts, sequestration and adaptation, and delivering improvements to the public realm in towns	Scottish Government's updated Climate Change Plan, once published	SECCO; Strategy & Development; Connected Communities; partners including Scottish Government	To be confirmed by Scottish Government's updated Climate Change Plan	To be confirmed by Scottish Government's updated Climate Change Plan	Reduction in Carbon Emissions	Annual	The Council has supported the East Lothian Climate Action Network to secure funding for a Climate Hub in East Lothian. The Network is currently in the process of recruiting new staff to set up and run the hub. The Council continues to communicate closely and support the Hub to be created were feasible. The Hub is also an important part of realising the Scottish Government's Net Zero Nation Strategy.		
7.1b	Implement the Green Network Strategy to ensure connectivity, accessibility and enhancement of green spaces and green networks, including native tree planting / hedgerow planting in urban areas, wild spaces for nature, linked with blue networks and Sustainable Drainage Systems	Green Networks Strategy SPG; LDP; Open Space Strategy (OSS)	Sport, Countryside & Leisure; Planning Service; Strategy & Development	Greenspace connectivity in our settlements and new developments; 'Quality of Urban Greenspace' environmental indicator: Landscape Audit Management System (LAMS) score	Current LAMS score for our urban greenspaces as per OSS	All settlements have connected green networks close to where people live; LAMS score increasing	Ongoing	Ongoing. We continue to progress delivering actions in our communities and take opportunities wherever we can. The Green Network Strategy, having been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance, should be referred to by Development Management officers in deciding planning applications. Following the Council's declaration of a Nature Emergency we will be reviewing the role of the Green Networks Working Group and relevant strategies across Council service areas.		
7.1c	Ensure that Core Path network, active travel network and wider path network are integrated and connect residential areas (including new developments) with settlement amenities, destinations, parks/open space, transport hubs; path networks in and around settlements should include shorter recreational circuits; paths should be constructed for climate resilience (e.g., porous surfaces)	Core Paths Plan; LTS / ATIP; LDP; Developer Contributions Framework	Outdoor Access; Countryside Service; Roads Services; Planning Service	Length of Core Paths and length of promoted active travel routes; path and active travel connectivity	Current length of Core Paths and length of promoted active travel routes	Increased length of paths & active travel routes; particularly in urban/semi-urban areas; increased path & active travel connectivity	ongoing	A new bridge has been built across the St Laurence House Burn connecting the new housing development at Letham to Burnside. An informal route for the right of way has been agreed with the developers as part of this project. Work continues to try to establish a link between the new development at Saltcoats and Gullane.		
7.1d	Ensure connectivity of residential areas with local	LTS	Roads Services; Transport	As per LTS	As per LTS	As per LTS	ongoing			

	sustainable transport modes, including buses / bus stops, to reduce reliance on the car; maps of routes available to new residents to encourage active travel		Services; Planning Service; Connected Communities / Area Partnerships and other partners					The new Journey Hubs will raise the profile of public transport services and will serve as focal points for community information and sustainable travel maps.  Spokes Cycling Maps are routinely made available to community groups and members of the public at events where the Active Travel team engages with the general public.		
7.1e	Implement the objectives of the Open Space Strategy to ensure Quality Open Space (amenity open space), which functions in climate change mitigation and adaptation	Open Space Strategy (OSS)	Sport, Countryside & Leisure	'Quality of Urban Greenspace' Landscape Audit Management System (LAMS) score		All amenity open space at 60% quality standard; all parks at 70% quality standard; maintain and improve LAMS scores	ongoing	Ongoing. We continue to implement the Open Space Strategy and achieve these objectives, as evidenced by successful 'In Bloom' entrants for example. The Open Space Strategy is currently under review and work has commenced on our next Open Space Strategy, which will include key outcomes and actions in relation to tackling the Climate and Nature Emergencies, including climate change mitigation and adaptation.		
7.1f	Vacant or Derelict Sites: Encourage the local community to identify vacant or derelict sites and work in partnership to improve these to the benefit of the appearance of the local area, biodiversity and potentially community growing projects	LDP; Vacant and Derelict Land Survey; Open Space Strategy (OSS); Area Plans	Sport, Countryside & Leisure; Connected Communities; Area Partnerships; partners				2025 / ongoing	Community gardens promoted and supported by some of the APs, some also funded by our One Council Partnership Fund. Not many Council-owned vacant sites, although community groups have come forward interested in progressing this at some locations and we are working to support them where possible and feasible. Demand for community gardens, allotments/ food growing. East Lothian Friendly Food Network will be helpful to promote these opportunities, encourage healthy eating and reduce food waste.		
7.1g	Support community led regeneration, including bringing empty properties back into use, to improve town centres and rural areas	Local Housing Strategy (LHS)	Housing Strategy; Economic Development				2023	Dunbar CARS launched 2023 to support fabric repair, empty properties, and fuel poverty/carbon emission in Dunbar TC..		
7.1h	Support community initiatives such as cooking classes, community kitchens, food growing, community entertainment to reduce the need to travel and support vibrant and sustainable communities	Area Plans	Area Partnerships: Connected Communities Food Friendly East Lothian network established	Community initiatives supported by the Council		Number of community initiatives supported by the Council	Ongoing	ELFFN now well established. Promotes food hygiene training and good practice in delivering food projects, e.g., breakfast clubs, pantries etc. EL Foodbank seeing huge increase in demand. Discussions with NB Kindness Co-op to develop as an independent constituted charity to access external funds. New Musselburgh community pantry run by volunteers well established, based at MECLC.		



7.1i	Work with partners to promote sustainability and reducing the carbon footprint of local sporting activities in our communities		Sports Development; partner organisations	Number of sports clubs implementing 'sustainability statements'		Increasing number of local sports clubs implement 'sustainability statements'	Ongoing	'Kit Stop' remains in place with items distributed and in use. Examples of sports club sustainability coming forward with further discussions required through CSH forums.	
7.1j	Awareness-raising campaign aimed at homeowners / occupiers to enhance garden ground to tackle climate change mitigation, adaptation and sequestration, and enhance biodiversity (including the planting of native trees / appropriate shrubs; provision of food growing space / fruit trees); encourage homeowners not to replace garden ground with hard-standing or artificial turf		SECCO; partners	Publicity campaign implemented	No publicity campaign in place	Publicity campaign implemented to raise awareness	2025	During 2023 Amenity Services undertook a Nature Networks in Parks and Greenspaces project, which identified areas for biodiversity enhancements in our parks & greenspaces that are supported by the public. This included communication and publicity including a public consultation to promote Nature Networks, including development of a brand/logo and web page on the Council's website. The web page includes suggestions of ways that individuals can help with nature recovery in their own garden/greenspace. We continue to raise awareness through publicity & promotion and signage on site.	
7.1k	Work with partners to take opportunities to improve water management, including rainwater harvesting and grey water harvesting, and creation and enhancement of blue infrastructure for both carbon off setting and natural flood management	LDP; SUDS Guidance; Green Network Guidance	Amenity Services; Planning Service; Sport, Countryside & Leisure	Development Proposals / Pre-Application advice; open space enhancement	LDP Delivery Programme, Open Space Strategy	Number of watercourses enhanced, or SuDS implemented in an environmentally sympathetic manner	2025	Countryside Service continues to support the delivery of Restoration Forth including the planting of Seagrass in Spring 2023. Two ponds were created at Barns Ness, funded by the Nature Restoration Fund 2022/23 grant allocation to enhance a naturally wet area. Ongoing discussions with adjacent landowner to improve water management across the site. Amenity Services are looking at opportunities to create and enhance biodiversity habitats including blue infrastructure and wetland habitats in parks and greenspaces through our Nature Networks project. Public consultation identified that respondents were supportive of seeing more freshwater habitats and presence of water within parks and greenspaces, including raingardens, bog gardens and wetlands. These will be progressed in the coming years where possible. Blue/green network and blue/green infrastructure enhancements under consideration by internal Green Network Working Group, including natural flood management opportunities. All SuDS Designs in Planning Applications are assessed for compliance with Council's SuDS Design SPG. Countryside Rangers supporting the delivery of Restoration Forth, which aims to restore and enhance seagrass meadows at Tynninghame.	

Key Priority Area 2: Planning for New Developments										
7.2a	Enforce Planning Condition for all relevant development proposals to report on the actions to be taken to reduce the Carbon Emissions from the build and from the completed development, including the provision of renewable technology and infrastructure for new car charging points	Planning Condition	Planning Service; Building Standards	Reports submitted on actions to reduce carbon emissions from new developments		All relevant development proposals to submit reports on the actions to be taken to reduce carbon emissions	2020 / ongoing	Where possible, the Planning Authority encourage applicants to submit their carbon emission reduction reports as part of their planning application. Planning officers continue to seek to ensure that our carbon emission reduction condition is complied with and would consider whether it was expedient to take enforcement action should the condition be breached.		
7.2b	Progress embedding the Just Transition to Net Zero into the planning process through our next Local Development Plan for example by pursuing low carbon heating from the groundwater heat source from our coalfields, and Climate Resilient new developments adapted for future climate change impacts	Next LDP; National Planning Framework	Planning Service; national partners	Just Transition to Net Zero is being embedded into next LDP		Progress embedding Just Transition to Net Zero into next LDP	2025	The East Lothian Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted in September 2018. Consultation is taking place on the Local Heat and Energy Strategy. NPF4 includes policy to support heat networks and LDP will include appropriate policy and spatial strategy to reflect the LHES once adopted. They may include use of heat from mine water. The Planning Policy and Strategy team is completing a work package on integrating climate change issues into the LDP.		
7.2c	Implement the Local Development Plan policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance on Green Networks, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), open space, allotments, active travel and sustainable transport connectivity in new developments, Travel Plans for residential and non-residential developments, green corridors for people and wildlife; encourage developers to facilitate the restoration of degraded	LDP and Supplementary Planning Guidance; Green Network Strategy SPG; Design Standards for New Housing Areas SPG (in prep); Open Space Strategy	Planning Service; Sport, Countryside & Leisure	As per LDP policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance	As per Local Development Plan policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance	As per LDP policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance	Ongoing to 2025	Ongoing. NPF4 contains policy on Green Networks, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), open space, allotments, active travel and sustainable transport connectivity in new developments, Travel Plans for residential and non-residential developments, green corridors for people and wildlife, blue infrastructure. This will be implemented through planning decisions as part of the development plan.		

	watercourses, where possible								
7.2d	Include key elements of Design Standards for New Housing Areas Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and Green Network Strategy in next LDP. Until such time implement SPG in new development.	LDP	Planning Service	Design Standards for New Housing Areas SPG prepared and implemented	Draft produced in 2018/19	Design Standards for New Housing Areas SPG implemented	2020 / ongoing	As Dec 2022: Ongoing, Central Scotland Green Network remains as a national development in NPF4 (as laid before Parliament). There is reference to Green Networks and green and blue infrastructure throughout the document. NPF4 has now been approved.	
7.2e	Explore Net Zero town of the future, including by pursuing low carbon heating from the groundwater heat source from our coalfields, and a Climate Resilient new town that is adapted for future climate change impacts	City Deal	Development Planning; partners				2025	The Blindwells Business Case is under development as a basis to explore if and how a Blindwells expansion may be unlocked. A Cockszie Technical Masterplan is in development. Any allocation here will be a matter for the review of the East Lothian Local Development Plan 2018. In terms of any potential Blindwells expansion, renewable energy and heat studies are being developed by Hargreaves and Taylor Wimpey. The Council's mine water geothermal feasibility study for this area focuses on Cockszie and is now complete. The Council's study has revealed two potential abstraction sites at / for Cockszie, with scope for two District Energy Networks, in addition to the potential at Blindwells. Together the energy opportunity in that area is circa 6-9MW (circa 2.5-3.5MW at Cockszie and 5-6MW at Blindwells). Hydrological connectivity between Blindwells and Cockszie is a high probability, so too the need to agree how to share heat and off take. Discussion with Hargreaves, the Coal Authority, Zero Waste Scotland and SEPA have highlighted this interrelationship to ensure a willingness to consider abstraction from two locations in same mine block area, and associated issues. Key issue for the Council is to consider the design of DENs and any scope for ELC off-takers for both sites, and to engage on associated business case development. The Cockszie Technical masterplan, due to be concluded Summer 2024, will incorporate these potential opportunities as a basis to further develop the proposition.	

7.2f	Explore the opportunity to include a policy requirement for developments to plant native woodland to mitigate against climate change and off-set emissions	Next LDP	Planning Service; Sport, Countryside & Leisure; national partners	Work to inform new policy development			2025	This will be considered during the development of the Local Development Plan and the Tree and Woodland Strategy for East Lothian. NPF4 Policy 1 requires significant weight to be placed on climate change mitigation and adaptation issues. Policy 3 on biodiversity notes that for national, major and EIA development assessment of effects is required which will be suitably mitigated according to the mitigation hierarchy, including enhancement of nature networks within and beyond the development. This is likely to result in woodland creation in relation to development being easier to achieve. The Tree and Woodland Strategy may include requirement to offset carbon stored in trees or woodland that is removed, as well as their replacement with a younger tree, as this does not have the same climate mitigation impact as a mature tree.		
7.2g	Evaluate our next LDP with a view to achieving the Net Zero Carbon emissions target by assessing development location in relation to transport, preventing loss of trees and topsoil areas, and woodland planting proposals linked to development	Next LDP	Planning Service; partners	Evaluation process progressing			2025	This will be considered in due course through the LDP process.		
<b>Key Priority Area 3: Local Food Growing</b>										
7.3a	Prepare and implement a Local Food Growing Strategy for East Lothian, to ensure that allotment sites in East Lothian are of a sufficient quantity and quality to meet the needs and aspirations of local residents, including in new developments; support and promote local food growing initiatives		Amenity Services	Preparation of Local Food Growing Strategy		Local Food Growing Strategy implemented	2022	Local food growing initiatives are supported in our communities by the Area Partnerships, and community-led initiatives are underway across some communities. Lack of staff capacity has impacted on timescales for development of the Local Food Growing Strategy. We have a bank of existing allotments that we maintain but recognise the need for further / additional opportunities for food growing. We are always seeking to identify suitable sites for allotments and food growing spaces and we are committed to achieving that through the Food Growing Strategy and the delivery of our next Local Development Plan.		
7.3b	Plant and manage community orchards / community fruit growing in partnership with communities, including planting apple trees alongside core paths –	Local Food Growing Strategy (in prep); Area Plans	Sport, Countryside & Leisure; Area Partnerships; communities	Number of apple trees / fruit trees planted and managed		Increased number of apple trees / fruit trees planted and managed	2025	Ongoing. Encouraged and supported by Amenity Services. Investigating opportunities for additional orchard / fruit tree planting through Climate Forest tree planting and where local communities come forward with proposals.		

	'Apple Core Paths' – for community benefit								
7.3c	Investigate options for working in partnership with our communities to bring areas of suitable urban land into use for local food growing, including private gardens and vacant land	Local Food Growing Strategy (in prep)	Sport, Countryside & Leisure; Area Partnerships; communities	Progressing options		Progressing options to bring areas of suitable urban land into use for local food growing	2025	Local food growing initiatives are supported in our communities by the Area Partnerships, and community-led initiatives are underway across some communities. Land availability for new allotment sites is an issue, as much of the potentially suitable land is in private ownership, however we are always seeking to identify suitable sites for allotments and food growing spaces and we are committed to achieving that through a Food Growing Strategy and the delivery of our next Local Development Plan.	
7.3d	Work with partners to investigate opportunities for implementing a distribution network for surplus food growing production		Amenity Services; local partners	Progressing opportunities		Progressing opportunities for food distribution network	2025	Fareshare up and running linked to many community food projects - will also be linked with ELC's food growing strategy when this is developed.	
<b>Key Priority Area 4: Awareness Raising and Engagement</b>									
7.4a	Explore options to identify how best to engage and ensure representation across all sectors of East Lothian's community, to involve our communities in the local planning of our Climate Emergency Response (e.g., Citizens' Assembly; Climate Change Forum / Network)		CCPMG; SECCO; external partners	Options appraisal involving all sectors of East Lothian's community		Appropriate citizens' engagement forum is established and functioning	2022	The East Lothian Climate Action Network has successfully managed to secure funding from the Scottish Government this year to set up a Climate Hub in 2024.	
7.4b	Produce a Communications Plan setting out our awareness-raising and engagement proposals		SECCO; Corporate Communications	Production of Communications Plan		Communications Plan produced and implemented	2022	Several actions are being taken to strengthen the internal communication and engagement on climate change: a 'Green Corner' has been formed in ELC's internal staff newsletter inform, engagement presentations are part of the staff induction and are delivered quarterly on the 'Welcome to the Council' sessions, Officers in the Climate Change Planning & Monitoring Group are regularly updated on the latest climate projects by colleagues and external key activities by IPCC and UK CCC, and E-Learning on the	

								climate emergency is available for all staff on LearnPro and Carbon Literacy Training sessions are being delivered regularly. The Carbon Literacy Training requires staff to make individual and group pledges on climate action.	
7.4c	Develop an East Lothian Climate Change Charter, setting out what the Council will do and what communities / individuals can do to tackle climate change and reduce emissions		SECCO; Corporate Policy & Improvement	Production of East Lothian Climate Change Charter	Currently promoting the #make a difference theme	Publication of East Lothian Climate Change Charter	2022	Rather than a charter, the Council has worked on updating its climate change website to include tips for communities and businesses on climate action. The latter is also complemented by the new Council website 'Net Zero for Business'. There is an opportunity to make the Council's climate emergency website more user friendly and create a Climate Change Charter with suitable graphics if external funding is secured. Good examples of Council websites that include a form of Charter are City of Edinburgh and Dundee City Council. A next step could, for example, be to reach out to these and use learnings to secure relevant funding pots and deliver.	
7.4d	Support and help to promote national campaigns, including the Scottish Government's 'Greener Scotland' campaign, to consider the carbon footprint of our everyday lifestyle and behaviour choices		SECCO; Corporate Communications ; partners	Participation in national promotional campaigns; social media engagement	Currently participate in Scotland's Climate Week, Earth Hour etc.	Participation in national promotional campaigns; social media engagement	Ongoing to 2025	ELC helped promoting Scotland's Climate Week on social media September - October this year.	
7.4e	Work in partnership with Community Councils, Area Partnerships, TRAs and other local groups and organisations to encourage and assist all areas of East Lothian to become involved in taking forward sustainability and promoting a low carbon lifestyle in their local area	Area Plans: Community Council plans etc.	SECCO; Strategy & Development; Connected Communities / Area Partnerships and other partners; Corporate Policy & Improvement	Actions incorporated into Area Plans and other community plans	Several Area Plans already include actions to tackle climate change	All Area Plans and other community plans include sustainability / plans to tackle climate change	Ongoing to 2025	The Sustainability & Climate Change Officer continues supporting Area Partnerships to integrate climate action in their Area Plans. A climate emergency workshop was held with Musselburgh AP in June 2023 and a climate conversation evening with Preston Seaton Gosford AP in October 2023 for these purposes. Active travel and sustainability a priority for APs, reflected in Area Plans. Connected Communities teams working with Roads colleagues to identify external funding to assist in delivering projects (noting Roads Capital budgets to APs have been cut this year - future provision unclear)	
7.4f	Set up a network of 'Green Champions' in our communities to help		SECCO; Waste Services; CCPMG;	Network of community 'Green	Many local groups etc. already	Network of community 'Green Champions' set up	2022	Several sustainability community groups are operation in East Lothian: Tranent Wombles, On the Move PSG, On the Move NBC, Sustaining Musselburgh, Sustaining NBC and	

	promote sustainability, raise awareness and encourage engagement with the move to a low carbon lifestyle		community partners	Champions' set up	taking this agenda forward				Sustaining Dunbar. The East Lothian Action Network also managed to secure funding this year from the Scottish Government to set up a local Climate Hub in 2024. East Lothian's Cycle Forum and Accessibility Forum are also active in encouraging cycling and access to nature in the county. The Council's Connected Communities Team and the Sustainability & Climate Change Officer are regularly in touch with the groups, networks and forums to support where feasible.	
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7.4g	Set up a dedicated page on the Council's website to function as a central information point for directing people to information on the transition to a low carbon lifestyle and a Net Zero East Lothian; increase awareness of the impacts of climate change and what individuals / homeowners / employers can do to adapt	Climate Change Strategy; Resilient Communities initiative	SECCO; Corporate Communications; partners	Central information point set up on Council's website	Climate change information & links currently on Council website	Central information point set up on Council's website	2022	Action Completed. Several websites are available: the Climate Emergency website for general information to the public, the Net Zero for Business website for local businesses in East Lothian, the On the Move site for advice on more sustainable travel in the county.	
7.4h	Undertake an awareness raising campaign to promote tackling climate change, reducing emissions and how everyone can <b>#makeadifference</b> ; including information provision and promoting behaviour change		SECCO; Corporate Communications	Awareness levels measured via Scottish Household Survey	74% of adults in 2018	Increasing levels of awareness	Ongoing to 2025	No campaign has been delivered in 2023. However, several other engagement events have taken place. For example, the Sustainability & Climate Change Officer held a climate emergency workshop with Musselburgh AP in June and a climate conversations evening with Preston Seaton Gosford AP in October. Climate Week was promoted to the public during September and October by the Council's Corporate Comms team. A campaign was also delivered as part of the East Lothian Nature Networks to encourage residents to join the Council in improving green spaces (from gardens to parks) for biodiversity.	
7.4i	Work with partners to provide information, training and support for residents, communities and businesses and share best practice to help inspire action across the county		CCPMG; SECCO; external partners	Awareness levels measured via Residents' Survey	74% of adults in 2018	Increasing levels of awareness	Ongoing to 2025	Net Zero for Business was launched in 2023 to share examples of climate action among local businesses. Sustainability community groups such as Sustaining Dunbar and Sustaining North Berwick are delivering regular climate cafes to raise local awareness. The East Lothian Climate Action Network is becoming more established and managed to secure funding from the Scottish Government to establish a local Climate Hub. The Council's Sustainability & Climate Change Officer continues to engage with	

								communities, delivering climate emergency workshops (e.g., Musselburgh AP in June 2023) or climate conversations (e.g., Preston Seaton Gosford AP in October 2023) to support literacy in climate change. Two staff members in the Connected Communities Services have also been trained in Carbon Literacy to support inspiration of low carbon living.	
7.4j	Community Events, Education and Training Programme: Continue to support the use of greenspaces and community meeting places by local groups and organisations for holding appropriate local events and activities, promote opportunities to encourage a sustainable lifestyle, undertake education and awareness-raising activities and training.	Open Space Strategy (OSS)	Sport, Countryside & Leisure; partners	Number of local events, training and initiatives; number of participants at events / training		Increased number of local events, training and initiatives; increased number of participants at events / training	Ongoing to 2025	Amenity Services continue to support community events and activities in our parks and greenspaces across our communities.	
7.4k	Community Involvement: Encourage and support the formation of local volunteer groups, such as "friends of" or "in bloom" groups to support the enhancement of specific open space	Open Space Strategy (OSS); Countryside Site Management Plans	Sport, Countryside & Leisure; local groups; partners	Local volunteer groups, such as "friends of" or "in bloom" groups underway	As per OSS and Countryside Site Management Plans	Local volunteer groups, such as "friends of" or "in bloom" groups underway and supported; as per OSS	Ongoing to 2025	'Rangers work with our volunteers and those from East Lothian Countryside Volunteers on a range of environmental enhancement and access projects. We have also created two new volunteer groups within East Lothian - these are in the Longniddry/Gullane and Tranent/Pencaitland/Ormiston areas. We also work with local businesses who offer a staff volunteering day a year.  We continue to support 'In Bloom' groups and 'Friends Of' groups as required and actively support local groups involved with the EL Climate Action Network on natural heritage matters. ELCV work to enhance countryside sites and path networks which we work in partnership with.	
<b>Key Priority Area 5: Climate Adaptation: Climate Ready Communities</b>									
7.5a	Increase community and individual resilience	Resilient Communities network	Protective Services; Emergency Planning, Risk & Resilience Team; Connected Communities	Proportion of Community Councils with local Community Resilience Plans (currently 40% in 2018/19)	10% (2016/17)	75% (2022)	2022	On 2nd November The Emergency Planning & Risk Team held a workshop for all Resilient Communities SPOCs/Deputy SPOCs and Connected Community Managers, including a severe weather tabletop exercise, presentation on roles and responsibilities and guidance on how to produce their own Emergency Resilience Plans.	



7.5b	Set up a Climate Change Adaptation network for East Lothian, based upon the Resilient Communities network already established	Climate Change Strategy; Resilient Communities network	SECCO; Protective Services; Emergency Planning, Risk & Resilience Team; Connected Communities / Area Partnerships and other community partners	Establishment of a Climate Change Adaptation network for East Lothian	Resilient Communities network	Climate Change Adaptation network is set up for East Lothian	2022	The East Lothian Climate Action Network has successfully managed to secure funding from the Scottish Government.	
7.5c	Community Councils will be encouraged to elect Single Points of Contact (SPoCs) for Climate Change Adaptation		SECCO; Protective Services; Emergency Planning, Risk & Resilience Team; Connected Communities / Area Partnerships and others	Single Points of Contact (SPoCs) identified for Climate Change Adaptation		Every Community Council has a Single Point of Contact (SPoC) for Climate Change Adaptation	2022	An engagement session was held with the Association of East Lothian Community Councils to address the importance of SPoCs as part of the community councils to address climate change adaptation. Further work is being carried out by the Sustainability & Climate Change Officer, Emergency Planning and Connected Communities to strengthen community resilience to climate change.	
7.5d	Work in partnership to support and assist our communities to prepare Climate Ready Response Plans for their area		SECCO; Connected Communities; Protective Services; Emergency Planning, Risk & Resilience Team	Climate Ready Response Plans in place for communities	Community Resilience Plans already in place in several communities	Climate Ready Response Plans in place for all communities	2022	So far, the Council's Sustainability & Climate Change has delivered a Climate Emergency workshop to North Berwick Coastal and Musselburgh AP to help integrating climate action in their Area Plans. A Climate Conversation evening was also held in collaboration with Connected Communities to Preston Seaton Gosford AP to deliver the same outcomes as the Climate Emergency Workshops.	
7.5e	Raise awareness and understanding of climate change impacts among East Lothian's communities, and improve capacity to respond to climate risks; work in partnership with local employers, landowners, voluntary groups, and community planning partners including Emergency Responders	Climate Change Strategy; Severe Weather Response Plan	SECCO; Connected Communities; partners including Adaptation Scotland, community planning partners	Climate Adaptation awareness-raising campaign / promotion; awareness levels among local population (measured in Residents' Survey)		Climate Adaptation awareness-raising campaign / promotion in place; awareness levels increasing among local population (measured in Residents' Survey)	Ongoing to 2025	A Capability Framework workshop was delivered in partnership with Adaptation Scotland to key Services in the Council. The process leading up to the workshop included interviews with 14 different services on their understanding and response to climate change adaptation and an engagement presentation to the Council Officers in the Climate Change Planning & Monitoring Group. The Capability Framework was completed together by staff participating in the workshop (ranging from Economic Development, IT, Environmental Health etc.). Further, an engagement presentation was held by the Sustainability & Climate Change Officer to East Lothian's Association of	

								Community Council. A Climate Emergency Workshop was delivered to Musselburgh AP, which included discussions on climate change adaptation, and an evening of Climate Conversations with the Preston Seaton Gosford AP was delivered jointly with Connected Communities, the Councils Sustainability & Climate Change Officer, Behaviour Change Roads Officer, and Nature Networks delivery Officer.	
7.5f	Progress the Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme	Flood Risk Management Strategy	Structures & Flooding Team; national & local partners	Progress implementation of Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme		Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme is progressed	Ongoing to 2025	<p>Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme is currently at Stage 4 - Outline Design.</p> <p>A number of public consultations have taken place in 2023, culminating in an exhibition in June 2023 which presented ELC's initial preferred outline design. This was attended by 900 residents with over 500 feedback forms filled in.</p> <p>ELC's Preferred Outline Design will be presented for approval, alongside a non-technical summary of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), at full Council in January 2024.</p> <p>If approval is gained, ELC will formally publish / notify the Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme in March 2024; this triggers a period of 28 days whereby those affected can formally object.</p>	
7.5g	Progress the Haddington Flood Protection Scheme	Flood Risk Management Strategy	Structures & Flooding Team; national & local partners	Progress implementation of Haddington Flood Protection Scheme		Haddington Flood Protection Scheme is progressed	Ongoing to 2025	<p>A Natural Flood Management Report has been completed for Haddington.</p> <p>Progress of the Haddington FPS is dependent on funding mechanisms.</p>	

**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Council  
**MEETING DATE:** 27 February 2024  
**BY:** Executive Director for Council Resources  
**SUBJECT:** Appointment of Chief Planning Officer

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**10**

## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To advise of the requirement for the Council to appoint a Chief Planning Officer, to seek formal approval of the appointment of Keith Dingwall as the Council's Chief Planning Officer (as set out in Section 3.4 of this report), and to seek approval of the consequential changes to the Scheme of Delegation (as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report).

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Council is asked:
- to note the requirement of the Council to appoint a Chief Planning Officer, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended);
  - to approve the appointment of Keith Dingwall to the statutory post of Chief Planning Officer; and
  - to approve the changes to the Scheme of Delegation to take account of the establishment of the role of Chief Planning Officer (as set out in Appendix 1).

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) requires that each planning authority in Scotland must appoint a Chief Planning Officer.
- 3.2 The appointment and role of the Chief Planning Officer becomes a statutory requirement in April 2024, to advise authorities on planning and other functions relating to development. The post of Chief Planning Officer

is to help strengthen leadership on planning and corporate recognition of the importance and positive influence of planning within their authorities.

- 3.3 As required by the Act, guidance on the role of Chief Planning Officer was produced by the Scottish Government in March 2024. A copy of this guidance is contained as a background paper to this report. Planning authorities must have regard to the appropriate qualifications and experience outlined in this guidance when making an appointment to the role.
- 3.4 Keith Dingwall was appointed as temporary Service Manager for Planning in October 2019. In May 2022, Mr Dingwall was confirmed as the preferred candidate for the permanent post of Service Manager for Planning and was duly appointed to that role. In taking up his post, Mr Dingwall has in effect assumed the role of the Council's Chief Planning Officer. Mr Dingwall has a degree in town planning and is a chartered member of the Royal Town Planning Institute. It is considered that he has the relevant skills and experience that are necessary for the role. The Council is therefore asked to approve Mr Dingwall's appointment to the statutory position of Chief Planning Officer.
- 3.5 As a number of the specific duties and responsibilities associated with the role of Chief Planning Officer have, until now, sat with the Council's Head of Development, a number of changes to the Council's Scheme of Delegation are required. These are set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

## **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None

## **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 – There are no direct financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report with all posts provided for within approved budgets.
- 6.2 Personnel – None other than those set out within this report.
- 6.3 Other - None

## **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 East Lothian Council Standing Orders

## 7.2 Scottish Government Statutory Guidance on Chief Planning Officers

<b>AUTHOR'S NAME</b>	Morag Ferguson/Ray Montgomery
<b>DESIGNATION</b>	Head of Corporate Support/Head of Development
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<b>DATE</b>	15 April 2024

## Appendix 1 – Proposed Amendments to the Scheme of Delegation

### New section in the Scheme of Delegation

#### **X. Specific Duties and Responsibilities Delegated to the Chief Planning Officer**

##### **A. General**

- X.1 The Chief Planning Officer is designated by the Council as the proper officer responsible for carrying out certain duties and functions in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended), and other related planning legislation.

##### **B. Specific Delegated Functions**

- X.2 Taking decisions on planning applications and enforcing planning laws, subject to the protocol set out in Section 18 of this Scheme of Delegation
- X.3 Monitoring planning permission and other permissions, and taking enforcement action under Part V1 and V11 of the 1997 Act, including serving notices, taking direct action and prosecuting people for not keeping to such notices
- X.4 Determining requests to undertake work to trees that are either protected by a Tree Preservation Order or are within a Conservation Area; and determining applications for Tree Preservation Orders where there are no outstanding objections
- X.5 Providing the Council's view as planning authority on planning applications and other consultations from neighbouring planning authorities and the Scottish Government. The only exception to this is consultation responses on applications made under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 (see Section 18.5)

##### **C. Proper Officer Delegation**

- 5.8 The Service Manager for Planning will act as the Chief Planning Officer. In their absence, suitably qualified and experienced officers within the Planning Service are authorised to carry out the duties of the Chief Planning Officer.

## Amendments to existing sections in the Scheme of Delegation

### **12. Specific Duties and Responsibilities Delegated to the Head of Development**

#### **A. General**

12.1 The Head of Development is authorised to carry out all functions and responsibilities (except where a specific professional qualification is required to be held) in terms of all relevant legislation and regulations, and within policy and budget, for the following services:

- Business Development
- Economic Development
- Growth
- Heritage and Monuments
- ~~Planning~~
- Street Naming and Numbering
- Tourism
- ~~Regeneration~~
- Note: the Head of Development shall have line management and budgetary responsibilities for the Planning Service, but operational matters will be the responsibility of the Chief Planning Officer

#### **B. Specific Delegated Functions**

~~12.2 Taking decisions on planning applications and enforcing planning laws, subject to the protocol set out in Section 18 of this Scheme of Delegation~~

~~12.3 Monitoring planning permission and other permissions, and taking enforcement action under Part V1 and V11 of the 1997 Act, including serving notices, taking direct action and prosecuting people for not keeping to such notices~~

~~12.4 Determining requests to undertake work to trees that are either protected by a Tree Preservation Order or are within a Conservation Area; and determining applications for Tree Preservation Orders where there are no outstanding objections~~

~~12.5 Providing the Council's view as planning authority on planning applications and other consultations from neighbouring planning authorities and the Scottish Government. The only exception to this is consultation responses on applications made under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 (see Section 18.5)~~

- 12.6 Taking decisions in relation to grants for economic development, business development, tourism, and regeneration activities, to both the private and third sectors
- 12.7 Determining applications for grant assistance under a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme



## 18. Scheme of Delegation for Planning Applications

### 18.1 Decisions in relation to planning applications

- a. Delegated Decisions – ‘Local Developments’ as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2008 shall be determined by the ~~Service Manager—~~[Planning Chief Planning Officer](#) without reference to Members, subject to 18.1(b) below. Such determination shall include, where appropriate, authority for the Council to enter into any legal agreement in terms of Section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 or otherwise and authority for the Council to take enforcement action in instances where retrospective planning permission is refused for unauthorised development.
- b. Scheme of Delegation List – A list of reports on applications to be decided under delegated authority in terms of 18.1(a) above which raise important planning issues and/or are subject to any amount of public objection shall be circulated each week to Members, who then shall have seven days in which to request referral to the Planning Committee, otherwise the officer decision shall be issued by the ~~Service Manager—~~[Planning Chief Planning Officer](#) in terms of 18.1(a) above. The Member who has requested referral to the Planning Committee shall prepare the Statement of Reasons for issue by the Planning Authority giving the reasons why the Planning Committee and not the ~~Service Manager—~~[Planning Chief Planning Officer](#) should determine the application.

### 18.2 Appeal to Scottish Ministers against the failure to take a decision on a planning application

In cases where an applicant has appealed to Scottish Ministers against the failure to take a decision on a planning application, the ~~Service Manager—~~[Planning Chief Planning Officer](#) shall have authority for submitting the Council’s submission on the appeal, as a Council Officer statement.

### 18.3 Decisions in relation to enforcement of planning control

- a. Authority for service of Planning Contravention Notices and Breach of Condition Notices will be delegated to the ~~Service Manager—~~[Planning Chief Planning Officer](#) and will be reported for Members’ information to the Members’ Library.
- b. Committee Expedited List – reports recommending service of Enforcement Notices, Stop Notices and Notices under Section 179 (‘Land Adversely Affecting Amenity of Neighbourhood’) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 shall be circulated each week to Members, who then shall have seven days in which to request referral to the Planning Committee, otherwise the officer recommendation is deemed to be accepted and the ~~Service Manager—~~[Planning Chief Planning Officer](#) shall be authorised to proceed on that basis.

**18.4 Decisions in relation to the variation, modification or discharging of planning obligations**

- a. The ~~Head of Development~~[Chief Planning Officer](#) shall have authority to determine applications to vary, modify or discharge planning obligations, in terms of the Town and Country Planning (Modification and Discharge of Planning Obligations) (Scotland) Regulations 2010
- b. The ~~Head of Development~~[Chief Planning Officer](#) shall have authority to determine applications to vary modify or discharge Good Neighbour Agreements, in terms of the Town and Country Planning (Modification and Discharge of Good Neighbour Agreements) (Scotland) Regulations 2010.
- c. The ~~Head of Development~~[Chief Planning Officer](#) shall have authority to modify or discharge planning obligations through written agreement with all parties providing that there is no reduction in the scale or level of obligation or financial contribution to the Council or any non-applicant.

**18.5 Consultation requests under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989**

Consultation responses on applications made under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 shall be circulated on the Committee Expedited List to Members, who shall have seven days to request referral to the Planning Committee, otherwise the officer consultation response is deemed to be accepted and the ~~Service Manager for Planning~~[Chief Planning Officer](#) shall be authorised to proceed on that basis.

## 19. Statutory Appointment of Officers

- 19.1 Under various laws, the Council must appoint officers for a variety of purposes. Officers appointed to perform these roles are authorised to take the actions that are an essential part of their roles. The 'statutory appointments' that the Council has made are set out in this section.

Relevant Law	Role	Proper Officer
<b>Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982</b>		
Section 113	Proper officer for keeping evidence of management rules	Head of Corporate Support
<b>Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015</b>		
Section 22	Proper officer for receiving participation requests	Head of Communities
Section 79	Proper officer for receiving asset transfer requests	Head of Communities
<b>Data Protection Act 2018</b>		
Chapter 4, Sections 69-71	Proper officer for monitoring compliance; for informing and advising the data controller of their obligations; for co-operating with the supervisory authority in respect of (1) East Lothian Council, and (2) East Lothian Licensing Board	Team Manager – Information Governance
<b>Environmental Protection Act 1990</b>		
Section 149(1)	Proper officer for dealing with stray dogs in the area	Head of Communities
<b>Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000 (Register of Interests Regulations) 2003</b>		
Section 7(1)	Proper officer for setting up and keeping the register of councillors' business, personal and financial interests, and making these available to the public	Monitoring Officer / Service Manager – Governance / Team Manager – Democratic and Licensing
<b>Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005</b>		
Schedule 1, para. 8(1)(a)	Proper officer to act as the Clerk to the Licensing Board	Service Manager – Governance
Section 13	Proper officer for supervising compliance by licence-holders, mediating, issuing notices and applying for premises licence reviews	Licensing Standards Officer
<b>Local Authorities (Contracts) (Scotland) Regulations 1997</b>		
Regulation 4	Proper officer for certification purposes (powers to enter into a contract of other matters)	Head of Finance
<b>Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973</b>		
Section 33a	Proper officer for receiving councillors' declarations that they accept their role (declaration of acceptance of office)	Chief Executive
Section 33a(3)	Proper officer that the declaration of acceptance of officer can be made to	Chief Executive / Monitoring Officer /

		Service Manager – Governance / Team Manager – Democratic and Licensing
Section 34	Proper officer for receiving councillors' resignations	Chief Executive
Section 40	Proper officer for receiving general notices from councillors about any financial interest in a matter, and for recording the councillors' interests	Monitoring Officer / Service Manager – Governance / Team Manager – Democratic and Licensing
Section 43 and para. 1(4) of Schedule 7	Proper officer for receiving requests for special Council meetings	Chief Executive
Section 43 and para. 2(1) of Schedule 7	Proper officer for signing summonses to special Council meetings	Chief Executive
Section 43 and para. 2(2) of Schedule 7	Proper officer for receiving a councillor's notice of an alternative address	Head of Corporate Support
Section 50b	Proper officer for preventing reports containing sensitive information from being available to the public, and for providing documents to the press	Chief Executive / Executive Director for Council Resources / Head of Corporate Support
Section 50c	Proper officer for providing a written summary when the minutes of a meeting cannot be made available to the public	Head of Corporate Support
Section 50f	Proper officer for deciding which documents are not open to inspection	Chief Executive / Executive Director for Council Resources / Head of Corporate Support
Section 92	Proper officer for transferring securities	Executive Director for Corporate Resources / Head of Finance
Section 95	Proper officer for managing the Council's financial affairs	Executive Director for Council Resources
Section 145	Proper officer for asking Ordnance Survey for information	Executive Director for Place
Section 190	Proper officer for serving notices on behalf of the Council and starting legal proceedings	Chief Executive / Executive Directors / Head of Corporate Support / Service Manager – Governance
Section 191	Proper officer for signing any claim on behalf of the Council in any sequestration, liquidation, and similar proceedings where the Council is entitled to make a claim	Chief Executive / Executive Director for Council Resources / Head of Corporate Support /

		Service Manager – Governance (in consultation with Head of Finance)
Section 193	Proper officer for signing notices and orders	Relevant Executive Director or Head of Service responsible for the service relating to the notice/order or the Service Manager – Governance / designated Principal or Senior Solicitor
Section 194	Proper officer for signing deeds and using the Council's seal	Chief Executive / Head of Corporate Support / Service Manager – Governance / designated Principal or Senior Solicitor
Section 197	Proper officer for arranging for documents to be inspected and filed	Head of Corporate Support
Section 202	Proper officer for confirming that byelaws are valid and for sending copies to other relevant authorities	Service Manager – Governance
Section 202B	Proper officer for putting valid byelaws in the register of byelaws	Service Manager – Governance
Section 204	Proper officer for providing certificates as evidence of byelaws	Service Manager – Governance
Section 206	Proper officer for keeping a register of people who are made 'freemen' of the area	Head of Corporate Support
Section 231	Proper officer for asking the Sheriff about matters arising from the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973	Chief Executive / Executive Directors / Head of Corporate Support (in consultation with the Service Manager – Governance)
<b>Local Government and Housing Act 1989</b>		
Section 2	Proper officer for keeping lists of posts that are politically restricted	Head of Corporate Support
Section 4	Proper officer to act as the Head of Paid Service	Chief Executive
Section 5	Proper officer to act as the Monitoring Officer	Head of Corporate Support
<b>Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011</b>		
Section 1(2)(a)(i)	Proper officer for the management of the Council's public records	Head of Corporate Support / Service Manager – Governance
Section 1(2)(a)(ii)	Proper officer for ensuring compliance with the Records Management Plan	Team Manager – Information Governance

<b>Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2002</b>		
Section 6	Proper officer for authorising directed surveillance	Executive Director for Place / Head of Communities / Service Manager – Protective Services
Section 7	Proper officer for authorising covert human intelligence sources	Executive Director for Place / Head of Communities / Service Manager – Protective Services
<b>Representation of the People Act 1983</b>		
Section 41	Proper officer to act as the Returning Officer	Chief Executive
<b>Scottish Local Government Elections Order 2007</b>		
Rule 57	Proper officer for receiving all election-related documents following an election	Chief Executive
<b>Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968</b>		
Section 3	Proper officer to act as the Chief Social Work Officer	Head of Children's Services
<b>Weights and Measures Act 1985</b>		
Section 72(1)(a)	Chief inspector of weights and measures	Executive Director for Place

- 19.2 The proper officers appointed for the roles set out in Section 19.1 cannot delegate their duties to other officers. However, if they cannot carry out their delegated duties because they are not available, the following officers will carry out their duties:

<b>Proper officer appointed for the roles set out in Section 19.1</b>	<b>Officer(s) who will carry out duties if the proper officer is not available</b>
If the Chief Executive is not available to act as Head of Paid Service	Executive Directors, as agreed
If the Returning Officer is not available for election purposes	Depute Returning Officer
If the Executive Director for Council Resources is not available to act as Section 95 Officer	A suitably qualified and experienced person from within the Finance Service
If the Head of Children's Services is not available to act as Chief Social Work Officer	A suitably qualified and experienced person from within the following services: Children's Services Adult Statutory Services Adult Community Services
If the Head of Corporate Support is not available to act as Monitoring Officer	Service Manager – Governance Team Manager(s) – Democratic and Licensing (in relation to matters concerning the Councillors' Code of Conduct)
<a href="#">If the Service Manager – Planning is not available to act as Chief Planning Officer</a>	<a href="#">A suitably qualified and experienced person from within the Planning Service</a>

If an Executive Director is not available	Relevant Head of Service
If the Service Manager – Governance is not available to act as Clerk to the Licensing Board	A suitably qualified and experienced person from within the Legal Service
If the Executive Director for Council Resources is not available to act as the Senior Information Risk Officer	Head of Corporate Support
If the Team Manager – Information Governance is not available to act as Data Protection Officer	Head of Corporate Support / Service Manager – Governance / Team Leader – Information Governance





**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Council

**MEETING DATE:** 23 April 2024

**BY:** Executive Director for Council Resources

**SUBJECT:** Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Places/Amendment to Polling Place Scheme

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**11**

## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To inform Members of the outcome of the statutory review of polling districts and polling places and seek approval for the consequential changes to take effect after the next UK General Election.
- 1.2 To seek approval to relocate a polling place from Trevelyan Hall, Pencaitland to Pencaitland Bowling Club with immediate effect.
- 1.3 To seek approval to relocate a polling place from Fenton Barns (portacabin) to Dirleton Church Hall with immediate effect.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 To note the representations received during the recent consultation on the statutory review of polling districts and places as detailed in Appendix 1, together with the Returning Officer's comments.
- 2.2 To approve the amended polling scheme for Lothian East constituency as detailed in Appendix 2, noting that changes as a consequence of this review will not take effect until after the next UK Parliamentary Election.
- 2.3 To note that polling districts and polling places will continue to be reviewed on an ongoing basis and that the next statutory review of polling districts and polling places will require to be carried out by the end of January 2030 and on a 5-yearly basis thereafter.
- 2.4 To agree, with immediate effect, to move electors from Fenton Barns (polling district EL4D) to Dirleton Church Hall (polling district EL4C), as detailed in paragraphs 3.4 below; and,

- 2.5 To agree, with immediate effect, to move the polling place in polling district EL5J from Trevelyan Hall, Pencaitland to Pencaitland Bowling Club, as detailed in paragraph 3.5 below.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Local authorities are required to review their polling districts and polling places for UK parliamentary constituencies every five years, in accordance with section 18C of the Representation of the People Act 1983. The Council agreed to initiate the current review at its meeting on 31 October 2023. In agreeing the current review, Council agreed that the criteria to be used to assess polling places was as follows:

- Availability of polling places
- Accessibility of polling places
- Safety of polling places, for both voters and staff
- Current electorate
- Projected electorate
- Number of postal voters

- 3.2 The consultation period ran from 4 December 2023 – 29 January 2024 and the initial proposals were as set out in Appendix 3.

Links to the documents on the Consultation Hub on East Lothian Council's website, were sent direct to all Elected Members, Constituency MP & MSPs, Political Parties, Community Councils, Area Partnerships, Connected Communities Groups and Disability Groups and the review was promoted on social media. Copies of the documentation were made available for public view at John Muir House, Haddington and Brunton Hall, Musselburgh. Representations on the proposals were invited by 29 January 2024.

Eighteen representations were received and copies of these are set out in Appendix 1, along with a note of the Returning Officer's comments/responses.

- 3.3 Members will note that there were a number of references to the requirement to vote by post if a polling place is relocated. The Returning Officer will ensure that the option to vote by post or proxy will be clearly communicated to all areas affected by the merging of polling districts.

Comments were also made regarding the need for more than one polling place in Prestonpans, Musselburgh and Tranent, contrasting the situation with that in North Berwick, Haddington and Dunbar, which each currently have only one polling place. This suggestion will be taken forward to the next review and considered further at that time.

A number of comments were made on the loss of income for village halls. The fee paid, per election, is £220 and this is not considered to be a factor that outweighs the agreed criteria used to assess polling places.

Taking account of the criteria agreed for this review, the representations received and the Returning Officer's comments/responses, Members are asked to approve the amended Polling Scheme for the Lothian East constituency, noting that this will not take effect until after the next UK General Election.

- 3.4 As part of the statutory review, it was proposed that the Portakabin currently used as the polling place at Fenton Barns (EL4D), when assessed against the agreed criteria, may be unsuitable due to accessibility and safety issues. Feedback from poll staff also highlighted safety issues, in particular when elections take place later in the year. It is proposed that, as part of the amended Polling Scheme, this polling district will be merged with EL4C (Dirleton Church Hall). However, given the current uncertainty around the date of the next UK General Election and the possibility that it will take place in the autumn or winter months, it is proposed that, while the polling districts will remain unchanged until after the UK Parliamentary Election, a separate polling station for Fenton Barns voters will be set up within Dirleton Church Hall as an interim measure. The change of polling place will be highlighted on poll cards.
- 3.5 The review did not propose a move of polling place from Trevelyan Hall to Pencaitland Bowling Club. However, responses received as part of the review highlighted the problem with parking at Trevelyan Hall. Feedback from poll staff also stated they receive complaints from voters regarding the lack of parking. Officers therefore considered whether there may be a suitable alternative. Pencaitland Bowling Club was visited and found to be large enough to accommodate the electorate, meets the accessibility requirements and has a large car park.

The views of Local Members and Pencaitland Community Council were sought. Three of the four local members approve the move; no comment was received from Pencaitland Community Council. The proposal is to implement this change with immediate effect, rather than wait for the wider changes to take effect after the next UK General Election.

## **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The requirement to regularly review polling places is a statutory obligation to ensure that all voters have access to such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable and that factors such as accessibility are fully considered.

## **5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and no negative impacts have been identified. The IIA will be published on the Council's website at: [Integrated Impact Assessments | Integrated Impact Assessments | East Lothian Council](#)

## **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial – an overall reduction in number of polling places will lead to a reduction in costs for the administration of elections in future.
- 6.2 Personnel - there will be a reduction in the number of polling staff required if the revised polling scheme is agreed. This is important given the challenges in recruiting staff to work at elections.
- 6.3 Other - none

## **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 Appendix 1 - Representations Received with RO Comments/Responses
- 7.2 Appendix 2 – Proposed Polling Scheme
- 7.3 Appendix 3 – Consultation Proposals

<b>AUTHOR'S NAME</b>	Morag Ferguson
<b>DESIGNATION</b>	Head of Corporate Support
<b>CONTACT INFO</b>	mferguson@eastlothian.gov.uk
<b>DATE</b>	8 April 2024

<b>Representations Received with RO Comments/Responses</b>			
<b>(copies of representations attached)</b>			
<b>NO.</b>	<b>REPRESENTATION FROM</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>	<b>RO RESPONSE</b>
1	Constituent	Comments received on Wards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 - see page 1 of consultation document	No alternative venues were proposed, therefore, based on the criteria used to assess polling places, the recommendation to implement the proposals remains as set out in appendix 3.
2	Cllr Donna Collins	Comments received on Wards 1, 2, 3 & 6 - see pages 2-4 of consultation document	No alternative venues were proposed, therefore, based on the criteria used to assess polling places, the recommendation to implement the proposals remains as set out in appendix 3. The suggestion to move West Barns electorate to Bleachingfield, Dunbar will be considered as part of the next review.
3	Cllr George McGuire	Comments received on Wards 1, 2, 3 & 5 - see page 5-6 of consultation document	The Session Room, Main Street, East Saltoun was visited to assess suitability as an alternative polling place. However, it does not meet the criteria in relation to size and accessibility. Based on the criteria used to assess polling places, the recommendation to implement the proposals remains as set out in appendix 3.
4	East Lothian Conservative Association	Comments received on Wards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 - see pages 7 - 16 of consultation document	Comment on Blindwells area having its own polling place - this will be kept under review and revisited when more houses have been completed and are occupied. No alternative venues were proposed, therefore, based on the criteria used to assess polling places, the recommendation to implement the proposals remains as set out in appendix 3.

5	Martin Whitfield MSP	Comments received on Wards 2 & 5 - see page 17 of consultation document	Comment on Blindwells area having its own polling place - this will be kept under review and revisited when more houses have been completed and are occupied. Comment on the option of postal voting - increased publicity will take place, especially in areas affected by the merging of polling places, to make people aware of, and promote the take up of postal voting. Comment on an alternative venue for Fletcher Hall - we were advised that the Church in East Saltoun had no appropriate space. The Session Room, Main Street, East Saltoun was visited to assess suitability as an alternative. However, it does not meet the criteria in relation to size and accessibility. Based on the criteria used to assess polling places, the recommendation to implement the proposals remains as set out in appendix 3.
6	Cllr Kenny McLeod	Comments received on Ward 2 - see page 18 of consultation document	noted
7	North Berwick Coastal Labour Party Branch	Comment received on Ward 4 - see page 19 of consultation document	Noted - support of proposal to move electors from Fenton Barns to Dirleton Church Hall
8	Bolton Community Association	Comment received on Ward 5 - see page 20 of consultation document	No alternative venue was proposed, therefore, based on the criteria used to assess polling places, the recommendation to implement the proposals remains as set out in appendix 3.
9	Constituent	Comment received on Ward 5 - see page 21 of consultation document	No alternative venue was proposed, therefore, based on the criteria used to assess polling places, the recommendation to implement the proposals remains as set out in appendix 3.
10	Constituent	Comment received on Ward 5 - see page 22 of consultation document	No alternative venue was proposed, therefore, based on the criteria used to assess polling places, the recommendation to implement the proposals remains as set out in appendix 3.
11	Constituent	Comment received on Ward 5 - see page 23 of consultation document	No alternative venue was proposed, therefore, based on the criteria used to assess polling places, the recommendation to implement the proposals remains as set out in appendix 3.
12	Constituent	Comment received on Ward 5 - see page 24 of consultation document	No alternative venue was proposed, therefore, based on the criteria used to assess polling places, the recommendation to implement the proposals remains as set out in appendix 3.
13	Constituent	Comment received on Ward 5 - see page 25 of consultation document	No alternative venue was proposed, therefore, based on the criteria used to assess polling places, the recommendation to implement the proposals remains as set out in appendix 3.

14	Constituent	Comment received on Ward 5 - see page 26 of consultation document	No alternative venue was proposed, therefore, based on the criteria used to assess polling places, the recommendation to implement the proposals remains as set out in appendix 3.
15	East Lammermuir Community Council	Comment received on Ward 6 - see page 27 of consultation document	The Church in Oldhamstocks is not accessible, therefore, based on the criteria used to assess polling places, the recommendation to implement the proposals remains as set out in appendix 3.
16	Oldhamstocks Community Association	Comment received on Ward 6 - see page 28 of consultation document	The Church in Oldhamstocks is not accessible, therefore, based on the criteria used to assess polling places, the recommendation to implement the proposals remains as set out in appendix 3.
17	Constituent	Comment received on Ward 6 - see page 29 of consultation document	Parking is taken into account when assessing polling places. Consideration will be given to cone off parking for voters.
18	Dunpender Community Council	Comment received on Ward 6 - see page 30 of consultation document	Noted - support of proposal to move electors from Allison Cargill House, Whittingehame to Stenton Village Hall and Tynninghame Village Hall to East Linton Hall.





[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 January 2024 13:29  
**To:** Elections Office  
**Subject:** Polling Stations Consultation

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Sir,

It is reported that East Lothian Council plans to close seven polling stations in rural communities throughout East Lothian. These include the closure of polling stations in Bolton, Oldhamstocks, Spott, East Saltoun, Tynninghame and Whittingehame.

While the Council has declared a 'climate emergency' and a 'nature emergency', these changes would force residents from these villages to drive up to 50-minute round-trips to vote. In many of these communities the alternative would be spending over 1-hour to travel by public transport, which will be challenging and inconvenient, particularly for elderly residents in those villages where public transport is either limited or unavailable.

Voters in rural areas should not be penalised and should have equal access to voting as those in urban areas. To do otherwise is discriminatory and creates disparity. Indeed, it is inequitable that it is planned that Tranent, for example, would continue with two polling stations which are a 5-minute walk apart. Elsewhere, Prestonpans will retain two polling stations and Musselburgh four, even though North Berwick, Haddington and Dunbar each manage with just one polling place.

Three quarters of those eligible to vote do so in person and, therefore removing any village polling station will negatively impact on voter's ability to exercise their democratic voting rights. The Council should therefore think again and keep rural polling stations open. If they want to close polling stations in East Lothian to make savings, the situation in Musselburgh, Tranent and Prestonpans should be looked at first.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

L

**From:** Collins, Donna  
**Sent:** 25 January 2024 10:43  
**To:** Elections Office  
**Subject:** Polling Station Consultation

Dear Sir / Madam,

I write in regards to your proposed changes to the polling stations within East Lothian.

I would like to go through proposals which I feel are unsuitable within my ward.

**EL6A Allison Cargill House to merge with Stenton EL6D**

**Because you believe the hall to be a safety risk as it is without WIFI or Landline.**

I disagree with this as there is no evidence of safety issues for staff. Rural electorate should not be penalised for living in rural locations and should not be expected to travel greater distances to exercise their voting rights, there needs to be parity with those within town areas.

Not only that Mobile signal for that area is excellent for the 4 main providers as can be seen in the map below. Which is actually more secure as all copper based landlines will be turned off in 2025 and if power does go down at any point any broadband based landlines will be un useable !

Stenton however is rather patchy in regards to signal and in a power failure more of a security risk that Alison Cargill House !

I therefore believe that Alison Cargill House should remain as a polling station and not be merged !





**EL6C You wish to merge Tynninghame with East Linton EL6B.**

75 % of the electorate of Tynninghame vote in person and of those the majority walk to the hall to do so. A tight knit community well used to using their village hall, there is no need to change the current status. Increased vehicle journeys should not be being encouraged. Parking in East Linton by polling station is an issue and the bus service back is every 2 hours! Meaning voters would be stuck in the village for 2 hours. Not good in bad weather and would be discouraging to voters !

I therefore believe Tynninghame should not be closed and merged with East Linton.

**EL6G Spott Community Centre to merge with Dunbar Bleaching Field EL6F**

This is 3 miles away from Spott ! 80% of registered voters here vote in person, expecting them to journey across the A1 into the centre of Dunbar is unacceptable.

There are limited public transport options ! This alone will lead to huge disparity between urban and rural voters and their ability to get easily to a polling station.

May I suggest that you merge West Barns with Dunbar. West Barns is on a main bus route with a frequent service . Therefore Closing West Barns is a more sensible option to Spott .

**EL6H Merge Innerwick with Oldhamstocks EL6I . Closing Oldhamstocks.**

75 % of the electorate vote of Oldhamstocks in person ! Requiring the electorate of Oldhamstocks to travel to another village via unmarked country roads 3.5 miles away is unacceptable.

There are ZERO public transport options !!

Closing Oldhamstocks will lead to voter apathy and voters deciding that it is just “too difficult” to get out and vote. Disparity between urban and rural voters should not be being encouraged. These hillfoot rural communities already feel underrepresented and over looked, a move such as this will only reinforce this belief. Put simply the proposals for rural merging are inequitable and should not be supported.

Also Oldhamstocks still have not agreed what is happening with the hall and a refurbishment is still on the table I believe.

Our Outlying rural villages feel isolated and disconnected as it is from Local Government.. Especially when at the far end of the county ! Closing polling stations will further highlight this feeling and I believe disengage the public from any future engagement in both Local and National democratic processes.

If the Council are looking to consolidate polling stations, I would instead encourage the Council to look at merging polling stations in Tranent, Prestonpans and Musselburgh. The Fraser Centre in Tranent is a 5-minute walk from the Loch Centre which is in a central location and has the capacity for all voters in Tranent. In Prestonpans, the Pennypit Community Centre is difficult to access and there is limited parking availability, and I would encourage the Council to consider having all residents of Prestonpans vote at Prestonpans Community Centre.

In Musselburgh, it is very challenging to park at North Esk Parish Church, whereas Musselburgh Rugby Club has the capacity to take these electors and has good public transport and walking routes to the corresponding ELMN1B polling district.

I believe it is incumbent upon Council to ensure that there is no disparity between voters who live within our towns and those in the more rural parts of the county and I believe the proposals which seek to reduce the number of rural polling stations and merge them with existing town stations leads to voter inequalities.

Yours Sincerely,

Councillor Donna Collins

**From:** McGuire, George  
**Sent:** 26 January 2024 15:07  
**To:** Elections Office  
**Subject:** Closure of Rural Polling Stations - East Lothian

Representing the large, rural ward of Haddington and Lammermuir, I would like to object to these proposals in the strongest possible terms.

The closure of East Saltoun's polling station would severely jeopardise the ability of some residents to vote. The location of Trevelyan Hall is already questionable, there is limited parking, it is on a busy road junction by traffic lights and voters struggle to find a safe place to park close to the hall. The proposed change will only make it more challenging for voters to access parking here, with an increase of 359 in-person voters from East Saltoun. A not insignificant number of residents in the EL5B polling district can walk to Fletcher Hall, however changing the polling district would require residents to drive to Pencaitland or take public transport which would be a round-trip of at least an 1-hour. I do not believe that when the council have announced a climate emergency to be making proposals which will force many voters into their cars is sensible or reasonable.

The proposal of having Bolton voters vote in Gifford is also unacceptable. Bolton's electorate is predominantly more elderly than the average and many residents rely on public transport or being able to walk a short distance to the polling station at Bolton Village Hall. Public transport between Bolton and Gifford is poor and a round trip to Gifford in order to vote would take over an hour.

East Lothian Council proposes Morham residents should vote in Garvald, however there are no public transport links between Morham and Garvald, no safe walking routes and indeed the rural winding roads are not the easiest to navigate.

It is wholly unacceptable that rural communities are being overlooked and potentially penalised by East Lothian Council in favour of having more polling stations in urban areas. Haddington has 6,418 in-person voters. This is similar to the number of in-person voters in Tranent and Prestonpans, yet while Haddington has one polling station these towns have two. I would therefore request that the Council consider merging stations in these areas and consider the closure of the North Esk Parish Church, Pennypit Community Centre and Fraser Centre polling stations in order to maintain vital polling stations in rural communities within Haddington and Lammermuir ward.

George McGuire

Councillor George McGuire  
Haddington & Lammermuir Ward  
Conservative & Unionist Party



[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 24 January 2024 15:30  
**To:** Elections Office  
**Subject:** Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places  
**Attachments:** Polling Places Proposals.pdf

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On behalf of the East Lothian Conservative Association please find attached our thoughts, suggestions and opposition to East Lothian Council Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places proposals.

To summarise the details given in the attached document, we believe that the proposals which seek to merge predominately rural polling stations with those in towns or larger villages is inequitable, creates disparity between the rural and urban electorate, could arguably create safety issues, and encourages the use of additional and longer car journeys. We cannot support the proposals for which no reasonable arguments have been given. Such changes will only lead to voter suppression, lower turn out rates and disparity which is wholly inappropriate.

We would urge caution in merging these rural polling stations and have suggested other areas where merging stations would be more equitable and practicable.

Please do keep us informed of any advancements in this matter.

Kind Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] 4, Church Street Haddington EH41 3EX Tel: 01620 248060 [www.eastlothianconservatives.com](http://www.eastlothianconservatives.com) Twitter @ELConservatives

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EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL

STATUTORY REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

WARD	POLLING DISTRICT	POLLING PLACE	TOTAL ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	STATION (in person) ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	POSTAL VOTERS (as at 1/9/23)	RETURNING OFFICER'S COMMENT	PROPOSAL
Ward 1 Musselburgh	EMN1A	Musselburgh Rugby Club 3A Stoneyhill Farm Road, Musselburgh, E-21 6RN	4805	3428	1377 (28%)	UK Boundary changes determine ELMN1A move to the Edinburgh East Burgh constituency for UK Parliamentary Elections	Suitable polling place
Consider merging EMN1B & 1C (minus 300 moving to ELMN1D) into one polling location total combined voters approx 6K aligned with Haddington & Dunbar which each have one station.	EMN1B	North Esk Parish Church Hall 16 Bridge Street, Musselburgh, EH21 6AG	3409	2531	878 (25%)	UK Boundary changes determine ELMN1B move to the Edinburgh East Burgh constituency for UK Parliamentary Elections	Suitable polling place
	EMN1C	Our Lady of Loretto Church Hall 17 Newbigging, Musselburgh, EH21 7AJ	2849	2015	834 (29%)	UK Boundary changes determine the bulk of ELMN1C move to the Edinburgh East Burgh constituency, for UK Parliamentary Elections, leaving approx 300 electors with Lothian East Constituency	Voters in the part of ELMN1C that will remain within the Lothian East constituency, amounting to just under 300, to move into ELMN1D
	ELMN1D	Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre Haddington Road, Musselburgh, EH21 8JJ	4338	3288	1050 (24%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate the move of approx 300 electors from ELMN1C	As above – change in polling district to include the remainder of ELMN1C



WARD	POLLING DISTRICT	POLLING PLACE	TOTAL ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	STATION (in person) ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	POSTAL VOTERS (as at 1/9/23)	RETURNING OFFICER'S COMMENT	PROPOSAL
Ward 2 Preston, Seton and Gosford	EL2A	Pennypit Centre Double Dykes Road, Rope Walk, Prestonpans, EH32 9BN <b>DISAGREE; if changes are required and savings are to be made, then the council rather than creating disparity between rural and urban areas should also look at urban areas as a means of making savings. Consideration should be given to combining Prestonpans polling into one place ie all voters to vote at Community Centre. A total of 6K vote in person which aligns with the likes of Haddington &amp; Dunbar.</b>	3947	3071	876 (22%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place <b>Merge EL2A with EL2B</b>
	EL2B	Prestonpans Community Centre Preston Road, Prestonpans, EH32 9QS	3729	2929	800 (21%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place <b>Merge with EL2A and both vote at PP CC</b>
	EL2C	Port Seton Community Centre South Seton Park, Port Seton, EH32 0BQ	4263	3258	1005 (23%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate the move of electors from the Blindwells area of EL2D	<b>Amend polling district EL2C to include Blindwells area of EL2D</b>
	EL2D	Longniddry Community Centre Seton Road, Longniddry, EH32 0LD	2606	1811	795 (30%)	The current polling place will not accommodate the projected additional electorate within Blindwells. Consider altering this polling district to move Blindwells from EL2D to EL2C	<b>Amend polling district EL2D to move Blindwells area into polling district EL2C (Port Seton Community Centre) AGREE although consideration should be given to Blindwells having its own station. Given it is a new town it should have the facilities to match &amp; there are currently no direct public transport links between it &amp; PS.</b>

WARD	POLLING DISTRICT	POLLING PLACE	TOTAL ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	STATION (in person) ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	POSTAL VOTERS (as at 1/9/23)	RETURNING OFFICER'S COMMENT	PROPOSAL
<b>Ward 3 Tranent, Wallyford and Macmerry</b>	EL3A	The Fraser Centre 3a Winton Place, Tranent, EH33 1AF	2821	2211	610 (21%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place <b>Merge with EL3B and close Fraser Centre for polling</b>
<b>There is no requirement to have two stations in Tranent they should be merged, the Loch Centre has the capacity to absorb voters from EL3A</b>	EL3B	Loch Centre Off Blawearie Road, Tranent, EH33 2JX	6203	4901	1302 (20%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place <b>Merge with EL3A and close Fraser Centre for polling</b>
	EL3C	Elphinstone Community Centre Main Street, Elphinstone, EH33 2LX	477	390	87 (18%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL3D	Macmerry Miners' Welfare Club Main Road, Macmerry, EH33 1QF	1326	1077	249 (18%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	ELMN3E	The Village Hub 72 Whitecraig Avenue, Whitecraig, EH21 8PB	998	764	234 (23%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	ELMN3F	Wallyford Learning Campus Mason's Way, Wallyford, EH21 8BF	3260	2610	650 (20%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place

WARD	POLLING DISTRICT	POLLING PLACE	TOTAL ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	STATION (in person) ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	POSTAL VOTERS (as at 1/9/23)	RETURNING OFFICER'S COMMENT	PROPOSAL
Ward 4 North Berwick Coastal	EL4A	The Stables Main Street, Aberlady, EH32 0RB	1355	1009	346 (25%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL4B	Gullane Community Association Hall Hall Crescent, Gullane, EH31 2HA	2313	1588	725 (31%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL4C	Dirleton Church Hall 5d Manse Road, Dirleton, EH39 5EL	816	581	235 (28%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate EL4D, as below.	As EL4D below, merge polling districts EL4C and EL4D.
	EL4D	<b>DISAGREE</b> Three quarters of those eligible to vote do so in person, removing the local station could negatively impact their ability to vote. No evidence to suggest safety of staff is issue in this rural setting. No public transport to Dirleton. Expecting rural residents from furthest eastern/southern part of ward boundary to travel to Dirleton is a significant increase in journey distance and is unlikely to be on any resident's homeward journey from work or school run.	353	261	92 (26%)	A Portakabin is currently used as a polling place. Accessibility is not appropriate and safety of poll staff in the rural setting is a concern	Merge polling district EL4D with EL4C. There is adequate space within Dirleton Church Hall to accommodate this increase in electorate
	EL4E	North Berwick Sports Centre Grange Road, North Berwick, EH39 4QS	6467	4281	2186 (33%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL4F	Whitekirk Village Hall Whitekirk, EH42 1XS	312	252	60 (19%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place

WARD	POLLING DISTRICT	POLLING PLACE	TOTAL ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	STATION (in person) ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	POSTAL VOTERS (as at 1/9/23)	RETURNING OFFICER'S COMMENT	PROPOSAL
Ward 5 Haddington and Lammermuir	EL5A	Humbie Village Hall Humbie, EH36 5PJ	310	236	74 (23%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL5B	Fletcher Hall East Saltoun, EH34 5DX <b>DISAGREE:</b> Three quarters of electorate vote in person, to expect them to travel to Pencaitland will negatively impact some voters' ability to vote. Budget cuts mean upgrading works to village halls at risk of being cut and should therefore not be relevant in this scenario. Location of Trevelyan Hall is already questionable with limited parking positioned on a busy road junction by traffic lights, voters already struggle to find safe parking close to the hall an increase in numbers is inadvisable. Most residents of East Saltoun where the majority of this polling district electors live can and will walk to vote at Fletchers Hall, however this proposal will mean that <u>all</u> will need to travel by car to Pencaitland. Public transport is insufficient both in terms of frequency and timings.	484	359	125 (25%)	Fletcher Hall is earmarked for upgrading works, therefore there is a risk the hall may become unavailable as a polling place. There are no alternative venues within East Saltoun	Merge polling district EL5B with EL5J (Trevelyan Hall, Pencaitland). There is adequate space within Trevelyan Hall to accommodate this increase in electorate
	EL5C	Bolton Village Hall Under Bolton, EH41 4HL <b>DISAGREE:</b> Bolton residents have already contacted local MSP Craig Hoy and are unhappy about the proposals. The vast majority of residents vote in	168	134	34 (20%)	This polling district currently has 134 station voters. It is a rural polling place with no landline or wifi	Merge polling district EL5C with EL5G (Gifford Bowling Club). There is adequate space within Gifford

		person (80%) and this proposal will negatively impact their ability to vote in person. A large proportion of residents here are more elderly and the ability to walk is important. Limited public transport options.					Bowling Club to accommodate this increase in electorate
	EL5D	Aubigny Sports Centre Mill Wynd, Haddington, EH41 4DB	9036	6418	2645 (29%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL5E	Athelstaneford Village Hall Main Street, Athelstaneford, EH39 5BE	497	360	137 (27%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL5F	Morham Village Hall Morham, EH41 4LQ DISAGREE; Other than the number of electors being relatively low no reason is given to merge with a polling station a significant distance away. No public transport from Morham to Garvald. Roads are very windy, are rural back roads (B roads) which older residents do not like to drive, especially if dark. There is no logic to this proposal, other than numbers. It is inequitable.	125	71	54 (43%)	This polling district currently has 71 station voters. Consider merging with another district.	Merge EL5F polling district with EL5H (Garvald Village Hall). There is adequate space within Garvald Village Hall to accommodate this increase in electorate.
	EL5G	Gifford Bowling Club Station Road, Gifford, EH41 4QL	879	642	237 (26%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate electorate from EL5C	As EL5C above, merge polling districts EL5C and EL5G
	EL5H	Garvald Village Hall Garvald, EH41 4LN	259	208	51 (19%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate electorate from EL5F	As EL5F above, merge polling districts EL5F and EL5H
	EL5I	Ormiston Community Centre George Street, Ormiston, EH35 5JB	2100	1671	429 (20%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place

	EL5J	Trevelyan Hall 9 Wester Pencaitland, Pencaitland, EH34 5HA	1747	1318	429 (24%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate electorate from EL5B	As EL5B above, merge polling districts EL5B and EL5J
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WARD	POLLING DISTRICT	POLLING PLACE	TOTAL ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	STATION (in person) ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	POSTAL VOTERS (as at 1/9/23)	RETURNING OFFICER'S COMMENT	PROPOSAL
Ward 6 Dunbar and East Linton	EL6A	Allison Cargill House Whittinghame, EH41 4QA <b>DISAGREE, there is no evidence of safety issues for staff. Rural electorate should not be penalised for living in rural locations and should not be expected to travel greater distances to exercise their voting rights, there needs to be parity with those within town areas. Reasonable mobile coverage available.</b>	162	119	43 (26%)	This polling district currently has 119 station voters. It is a very rural polling place with no landline or wifi, therefore poll staff safety is a concern	Merge EL6A with EL6D (Stenton Village Hall). There is adequate space within Stenton Village Hall to accommodate this increase in electorate
	EL6B	East Linton Community Association Hall 73 High Street, East Linton, EH41 2BQ	1932	1444	488 (25%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate electorate from EL6C	As EL6C below, merge polling districts EL6C and EL6B
	EL6C	Tynninghame Village Hall Tynninghame, EH42 1XL <b>DISAGREE; Three quarters of the electorate vote in person &amp; of those the majority walk to the hall to do so. A tight knit community well used to using their village hall, there is no need to change the current status. Increased vehicle journeys should not be being encouraged. Parking in ELinton by polling station is an existing issue &amp; should not be made worse. Public transport timings mean residents would be stuck</b>	179	131	48 (26%)	This polling district currently has 131 station voters. Consider merging with polling district EL6B	Merge EL6C with EL6B (East Linton). There is adequate space within East Linton Hall to accommodate this increase in electorate

		in the EL for over an hour after voting before being able to start the journey back to Tynninghame. This is inequitable and will cause voter apathy.					
	EL6D	Stenton Village Hall Stenton, EH42 1TE	265	213	52 (19%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate EL6A	As EL6A above, merge polling districts EL6A and EL6D
	EL6E	West Barns Bowling Club Edinburgh Road, West Barns, EH42 1UH <b>DISAGREE, Consider merging with EL6F. The link between West Barns both in terms of distance &amp; public transport is considerably stronger/greater than the outlying rural EL6G polling district. There is capacity to merge with Bleachingfield and consequently leave the rural polling stations as is.</b>	526	431	95 (18%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place <b>DISAGREE Consider merging with EL6F.</b>
	EL6F	Bleachingfield Centre Countess Crescent, Dunbar, EH42 1DX	7993	5945	2048 (25%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate EL6G	As EL6G below, merge polling districts EL6G and EL6F <b>DISAGREE Merge EL6E with EL6F</b>
	EL6G	Spott Community Centre Spott, EH42 1RJ <b>DISAGREE; 80% of registered voters here vote in person, expecting them to journey across the A1 into the centre of Dunbar is unacceptable. There is limited public transport options, and this will lead to huge disparity between urban and rural voters and their ability to get easily to a polling station.</b>	251	200	51 (20%)	This polling district currently has 200 station voters. Consider merging with polling district EL6F	Merge EL6G with EL6F (Bleachingfield). There is adequate space within Bleachingfield to accommodate this increase in electorate <b>DISAGREE Merge EL6E with EL6F</b>

	EL6H	Innerwick Village Hall Innerwick, EH42 1SE	372	293	79 (21%)	Suitable polling district with sufficient space to accommodate EL6I	As EL6I below, merge polling districts EL6H and EL6I
	EL6I	Oldhamstocks Village Hall Oldhamstocks, TD13 5XN <b>DISAGREE; Three quarters of the electorate vote in person, requiring the electorate of Oldhamstocks to travel to another village via unmarked country roads is unacceptable. Very limited public transport options will lead to voter apathy and voters deciding that it is just "too difficult" to get out and vote. Disparity between urban and rural voters should not be being encouraged. These hillfoot rural communities already feel unde-represented and overlooked, a move such as this will only reinforce this belief. Simply put, the proposals for rural merging are inequitable and should not be supported.</b>	165	120	45 (27%)	There are plans for Oldhamstocks Village Hall to be demolished and a replacement built, therefore, there is a risk the hall may become unavailable as a polling place.	Merge EL6I with EL6H (Innerwick Village Hall). There is adequate space within Innerwick Hall to accommodate this increase in electorate



[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 January 2024 11:19  
**To:** Elections Office  
**Subject:** STATUTORY REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES – EAST  
LOTHIAN COUNCIL

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SENT ON BEHALF OF MARTIN WHITFIELD MSP

Elections Office,  
East Lothian Council,  
John Muir House,  
Haddington EH41 3HA

22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: STATUTORY REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES – EAST  
LOTHIAN COUNCIL**

I am writing to comment on the above proposals for amending East Lothian's polling districts and places.

While noting the general rationale for the proposed changes, I have a few specific points to make on them:

Firstly, on the change for voters in Blindwells, I understand the reason for this proposal and believe it will probably be a better option for most voters there, at least in the early phases of its development. However, as Blindwells grows into a new town as planned, will further consideration be given to finding a suitable location for its own local polling place?

Secondly, regarding the proposal to move East Saltoun to Pencaitland, I am concerned that this is the biggest community that faces losing its polling place, and while Pencaitland is relatively near it is not easy to access without a car. I would like to be assured that all alternative options, for example Saltoun Parish Church, have been explored before a final decision is taken on this proposal.

Finally, I would like to make a general point concerning all the areas where it is proposed to remove a polling place from a community. The areas affected by the proposed changes are generally small, rural communities often with few, if any, public transport options and in some instances the changes will mean residents face having to travel a significantly further distance to reach their new polling place.

Therefore, it will be particularly important for all the electors affected to be fully aware of the option of voting by post, especially those without access to a car. With this in mind, I would like to suggest that consideration is given to undertaking additional work to encourage electors in those communities to sign up for a postal vote in advance of the changes being implemented.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these proposals.

[REDACTED]

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**From:** McLeod, Kenny  
**Sent:** 04 December 2023 10:23  
**To:** Elections Office  
**Subject:** Review Tranent Polling Stations

Dear Sir/Madam

As East Lothian are reviewing polling stations I would confirm I am comfortable with the polling stations within my ward of Tranent, Macmerry and Wallyford at this time and the near future. I would ask for this to be revisited in Tranent for further future Elections. Due to the rise in the population and house building in Tranent I would ask you to look at centralising to a single polling station at the Loch Centre after the repairs have been carried out. I have listed a few points below that I hope will be looked at and considered.

1. Availability: As we as a Council work with Enjoy Leisure we have a good working relationship and running costs to hold will be paid to them.
2. Accessibility: Good access and plenty of parking for voters. Wheelchair friendly.
3. Safety: CCTV coverage for members of the Public and Staff is available.
4. Costs: Due to an increase in Postal Votes, by centralising will reduce the costs on Venue, Staff and Energy.

We should be looking to convert new voters as well as existing voters to postal in an aim to reduce costs to having venues and also reduce our carbon footprint.

Regards  
Stay safe  
Kenny

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 29 January 2024 20:43  
**To:** Elections Office  
**Subject:** Review of Polling Places

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Good evening

The North Berwick Coastal Labour Party Branch has reviewed the proposal to discontinue using the Fenton Barns Polling Place in its current form, with electors being reallocated to Dirleton.

The Branch has no objection to this proposal.

Best wishes

[REDACTED]  
Branch Secretary

Bolton Community Association

Elections office  
East Lothian Council  
John Muir House  
Haddington  
EH41 3HA

28 January 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

**Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places**

We write to note that the Council intends to merge Bolton polling district EL5C with Gifford EL5G.

We note that East Lothian Council has assessed that there are 134 registered voters of which 20% are postal votes. Further it notes that the village hall has no landline or wifi.

Firstly, we would like to register our dismay at the proposals. The village hall has always been a polling station. This ensured easy access to voters including those with mobility issues either because they have disabilities or do not possess a car. The village is poorly served by public transport particularly to Gifford – some 3 miles away.

Secondly, we do not agree that a lack of landline or wifi should be a criteria. Telecommunication services are appalling in the village. There is no fibre in the village; landline facilities are abysmal – too poor to sustain broadband; and the Village hall has no mobile signal. Whilst more expensive communications could be installed, the village hall simply does not have the revenue to pay such costs.

Finally, the income generated from the use of the hall as a polling place was an extremely important source of revenue. As you will note from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, the village hall sustains its operations on less than £1000 with expenditure relating to electricity and insurance. Without this important revenue from elections, the hall will become at increasing risk of closure.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted name]

Chair  
Bolton Community Association  
Charity No: 49001

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 29 December 2023 12:45  
**To:** Elections Office  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Proposal to close voting provision at th Bolton Village Hall

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I have only recently found out that ELC propose closing the polling provision at the Bolton village hall .

In my view if carried out, this would be a serious blow to local democracy .

There are only 168 registered voters in this community of which 134 regularly use the hall and I would suggest that any the proposal to use the Bowling Green at Gifford is completely unacceptable ( too far and too inaccessible) would not be acceptable to local voters.

Can I offer the following comments : -

1. The alternative use of the postal vote is almost untenable since the postal service has become very unreliable and there will undoubtedly be issues of identification as the need for photo id has now been introduced by the UK government .
2. In my view there is no effective community voice in this village and outlying area, since we have in reality no practical Community Council representation due to the ELC arrangement to ink this community to East Saltoun . Furthermore neither of our ELC councilors have shown much interest in the problems which have arisen over the past few years ( not even responses to e mails)
3. There will shortly be a community meeting to discuss the future of the Parish church and the village hall and hopefully the issue of the loss of an accessible polling venue will be discussed.
4. 2024 will undoubtedly be an important year for elections and I would suggest that any impediment to voters to turn out should be avoided by our of our ELC politicians .

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 14 December 2023 15:33  
**To:** Elections Office  
**Subject:** MORHAM VILLAGE HALL

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Good afternoon,

I write to request that Morham Village Hall remains registered and used as a polling station.

I live at [REDACTED]. When I moved to this area 17yrs ago I worked in Edinburgh. I voted by stopping at the Hall on my way to work or my way back. I met locals and it helped me belong in my community. Work then called me away on business frequently and for practical reasons I changed to postal voting so that I did not miss my vote. I have not reverted and do appreciate the postal voting system.

However, I would be very distressed if we lost our polling station as Morham Village Hall. My main reasons being;

1. I have two children, one and approaching voting age. I would like them to be able to walk or cycle to a polling station. Morham is a place my children can safely get to. It is accessible. Garvald is not at all accessible to them, it is not convenient to get to, nor is it a place we pass by. Closing Morham removes access of a polling station they can get to themselves. We have no public transportation and rely on cars. I cannot be sure I can get them to Garvald and they should be allowed to be independent on voting.
2. I appreciate they can register as a postal vote. I ask is this really the way you are moving voting to for rural people? This will isolate my family from the polling experience. The very essence of the polling booth, the confidence it takes to do this also meeting candidates at the entrance. Furthermore meeting other locals coming in and out and generally being part of the community. This is a big thing, people need to see people and engage with other people. This is not how young voters should start their voting journey.
3. Rural communities can't keep being pushed along to the next nearest town. The Village Hall is our hub and it needs the support as a place people feel connected with, know and use.
4. The hall is always available for polling and the income for the hall is a benefit to the hall and contributes to the long term benefit of rural communities having a safe place.

The proposed decision of ceasing Morham Village Hall as a polling station and moving us to Garvald polling station fails us. Garvald is NOT accessible, nor does it suit the current electorate or projected electorate. It forces my children to become postal voters from day 1. This feels very wrong.

This suggestion is also just another nail in the coffin for the hall and a lack of awareness of the wider benefits that using MVH has as a polling station. A polling station draws attention to a hall and helps it be a place in the community. It's how I first entered it and how I then knew about it to use it for my children's parties etc. Please DO NOT be part of mothballing it up. It needs you to help it exist in more ways than just polling day.

With my kindest regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 14 December 2023 20:00  
**To:** Elections Office  
**Subject:** Review of Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places

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Hi,

I wish it give my opinion to the above mentioned proposed change for my polling station (Morham) to change to Garvald.

I feel that it is just another step of erosion of any type of possible service that my/our community will receive (probably due to council trying to find ways of reducing budgeting costs which seems to be an ever increasing black hole of revenue costs).

Our particular area has little enough services left .

- 1- No public mode transport .
- 2- One of the worst areas for broadband connectivity in the whole of Scotland ( with no meaningful support from East Lothian Council ) to help move suppliers to meaningful action).
- 3- Very poor treatment of road surfaces during bad weather ( when ice and or snow is actually on the roads) . We see treatment though when there is actually no risk of freezing or snowing conditions ( but overtime must be paid during these times as often salting vehicles are seen on roads out-with the normal hours of work.
- 4- Reduction in the collection of household waste/refuse.

We have a village hall at the heart of Morham parish , so let's use it !!! Not lose it!!!

As Well.

Regards

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 05 December 2023 10:48  
**To:** Elections Office  
**Subject:** Poling station - Morham

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I would object to the merging of Morham and Garvald. Both villages have village halls which are central and easy for residents to attend to vote.

Since there is adequate facilities in both villages, use of these for such occasions should be a priority.

Village halls in small communities are the hub of the village and encouragement to use the facility should be promoted – not discouraged.

By moving the polling station to a neighbouring village 3-4 miles away would discourage residents to take up their vote – especially the elderly or disabled. Having access to the facility without travel is essential.

I would strongly object to this motion.

[REDACTED]

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows



[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 13 December 2023 22:47  
**To:** Elections Office  
**Subject:** Moving voting venues

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My name is [REDACTED] I live at [REDACTED] I have just heard of your proposal to have us vote at Garvald, this would not only be inconvenient but also eventually spell the end of our village hall. Having already lost our church thanks to The Church of Scotland, I would hope you will reconsider this, maybe the people of Garvald could vote here at Morham. Thank you for allowing me to express my sadness and views on this matter.

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 14 December 2023 09:00  
**To:** Elections Office; Morham Village Hall  
**Subject:** Moreham Village Hall voting destination status

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I write on behalf of [REDACTED] us living at [REDACTED] to share our concerns about your potential decision to merge Morham with Garvald for voting purposes.

In the event of snow & inclement weather, the implications are really tough, especially given Garvald is itself often blocked in. In fact, both Morham & Garvald are very vulnerable to being snowed in and impossible to access.

Also, we just think it's bad for Morham as the village hall is integral to the community and losing EL funding will potentially result in its going under.

With Thanks in the hope that you will reconsider the critical role that your polling station performs in Morham both for elections & the overall community.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 27 January 2024 18:08  
**To:** Elections Office  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

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To whom it may concern

East Lammermuir Community Council wishes to **OBJECT** to the proposed closure of two Polling stations, namely Spott Village Hall and Oldhamstocks Village Hall. Both of these fall within East Lammermuir.

Any closure of a polling place and expectation that voters will travel further afield to another existing polling station is likely to reduce the number of votes cast. This is a threat to an already fragile democracy, where turnout, particularly at local elections, is already often low.

Spott Community Association speak for the Spott voters and have lodged a separate comment. They manage Spott Village Hall. They (Spott Community Association) wish the council to continue to use Spott Village Hall as a Polling Station.

Oldhamstocks Community Association exists to promote the wellbeing and quality of life of people living in the Oldhamstocks polling district. It also manages the Oldhamstocks Village Hall. The committee have discussed the proposal and indicate the following facts which should be taken into account;

1. The reference to the demolition of the Oldhamstocks Village Hall is misleading as a new hall will be built immediately after demolition
2. In the unlikely event that an election is held in the interim (building) period whilst there is no hall available in Oldhamstocks, the Church may offer a suitable alternative venue
3. There is no public transport available from Oldhamstocks to Innerwick, nor for anywhere in the polling district
4. The majority of voters attend in person to vote (only 45 postal votes out of 220 registered voters) - any change to the venue is likely to reduce the number of votes cast.
5. Innerwick Hall is further away from the vast majority of addresses where people are currently registered to vote at Oldhamstocks - another barrier to voting
6. This is just one more example of the loss of a community resource in Oldhamstocks, following on from the Post Bus, Gaberlunzie, Travelling Library, Post Office. Is the village deliberately being denuded of all community services?

The Community Council endorse these views. In addition we suggest that in line with practice at Stenton Polling Station, local people could be recruited to staff the Polling Station, with appropriate training. It may even be possible to identify people willing to volunteer for this important role. We wonder if this would be a way to keep costs down as that is evidently a key driver behind the recommendations of this review.

We would be pleased if you take our concerns and suggestions into account in any final decisions about polling stations.

**From:** Oldhamstocks OCA [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 January 2024 14:28  
**To:** Elections Office; OCA Committee  
**Subject:** Re: Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

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Dear Sirs,

On behalf of Oldhamstocks Community Association SCIO and the residents of Oldhamstocks and district, we strongly object to the proposed closure of Oldhamstocks Village Hall as a polling place.

We object to this proposed erosion of democracy on the following grounds:

1. The reference to the demolition of the Oldhamstocks Village Hall is misleading, as a new hall will be built immediately after demolition.
2. In the unlikely event that an election is held whilst there is no hall available in Oldhamstocks, the Church may offer a suitable alternative venue.
3. There is no public transport available from Oldhamstocks to Innerwick, nor for anywhere in the polling district.
4. The majority of voters attend in person to vote (only 45 postal votes out of 220 registered voters). Any change to the venue outwith Oldhamstocks village is likely to reduce the number of votes cast.
5. Innerwick Hall is further away from the vast majority of addresses where people are currently registered to vote in Oldhamstocks - another barrier to voting.
6. This is just one more example of the loss of a community resource to Oldhamstocks, following on from the Post Bus, Gaberlunzie, Travelling Library and Post Office. Is the village deliberately being denuded of all community services?

OCA and Oldhamstocks community residents would like to reiterate our strong objection to this proposed erosion of democracy and of services for our village and wider community, and hope that ELC will take these concerns into account when making your final decisions re Polling Places.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
Secretary, OCA/OCA SCIO

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 27 January 2024 12:10  
**To:** Elections Office  
**Subject:** Review of Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places

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Dear sirs,

I refer to the above open consultation. I didn't see any mention of parking considerations at the polling stations that will be busier as a result of merging. In my case, I'm specifically thinking of East Linton where, per the current numbers, there will be 131 extra voters as a result of Tynninghame Village Hall not being used as a polling station. Whilst in the past most of the 131 people likely walked to Tynninghame Village Hall, I think it is fair to assume they will all have to drive to East Linton in order to vote.

Could you advise?

Many thanks,  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** Elections Office  
**Subject:** FW: Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

**From:** Dunpender CC [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 3, 2024 7:31 PM  
**To:** Elections Office [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

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The two changes to polling stations in Dunpender affect Tynninghame and Whittingehame. We have no objection to these stations being merged with larger ones nearby.

[REDACTED]  
Chairman Dunpender CC

**Schedule to the Lothian East Parliamentary Constituency Polling Districts and Designation of Polling Places Scheme**

Local Government Ward 1: **Musselburgh**

Polling District:	ELMN1D
<b>Polling Place:</b>	<b>Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre</b>
No. of Stations:	4
Address:	Haddington Road, Musselburgh, EH21 8JJ

## Local Government Ward 2: Preston, Seton and Gosford

Polling District: EL2A  
**Polling Place:** Pennypit Centre  
No.of Stations: 3  
Address: Double Dykes, Rope Walk, Prestonpans, EH32 9BN

Polling District: EL2B  
**Polling Place:** Prestonpans Community Centre  
No.of Stations: 4  
Address: Preston Road, Prestonpans, EH32 9QS

Polling District: EL2C  
**Polling Place:** Port Seton Community Centre  
No.of Stations: 5  
Address: South Seton Park, Port Seton, EH32 0BQ

Polling District: EL2D  
**Polling Place:** Longniddry Community Centre  
No.of Stations: 2  
Address: Seton Road, Longniddry, EH32 0LD



## Local Government Ward 3: **Tranent, Wallyford and Macmerry**

Polling District: EL3A  
**Polling Place:** **The Fraser Centre**  
No.of Stations: 3  
Address: 3a Winton Place, Tranent, EH33 1AF

Polling District: EL3B  
**Polling Place:** **Loch Centre**  
No.of Stations: 5  
Address: off Blawearie Road, Tranent, EH33 2JX

Polling District: EL3C  
**Polling Place:** **Elphinstone Community Centre**  
No.of Stations: 1  
Address: Main Street, Elphinstone, EH33 2LX

Polling District: EL3D  
**Polling Place:** **Macmerry Miners' Welfare Club**  
No.of Stations: 1  
Address: Main Road, Macmerry, EH33 1QF

Polling District: ELMN3E  
**Polling Place:** **The Village Hub, Whitecraig**  
No.of Stations: 1  
Address: 72 Whitecraig Avenue, Whitecraig, EH21 8PB

Polling District: ELMN3F  
**Polling Place:** **Wallyford Learning Campus**  
No.of Stations: 2  
Address: Mason's Way, Wallyford, EH21 8BF

## Local Government Ward 4: North Berwick Coastal

Polling District:	EL4A
<b>Polling Place:</b>	<b>The Stables</b>
No.of Stations:	1
Address:	Main Street, Aberlady, EH32 0RB
Polling District:	EL4B
<b>Polling Place:</b>	<b>Gullane Community Association Hall</b>
No.of Stations:	2
Address:	Hall Crescent, Gullane, EH31 2HA
Polling District:	EL4C
<b>Polling Place:</b>	<b>Dirleton Church Hall</b>
No.of Stations:	1
Address:	5d Manse Road, Dirleton, EH39 5EL
Polling District:	EL4D
<b>Polling Place:</b>	<b>North Berwick Sports Centre</b>
No.of Stations:	6
Address:	Grange Road, North Berwick, EH39 4QS
Polling District:	EL4E
<b>Polling Place:</b>	<b>Whitekirk Village Hall</b>
No.of Stations:	1
Address:	Whitekirk, EH42 1XS

Local Government Ward 5: **Haddington and Lammermuir**

Polling District: EL5A  
**Polling Place:** **Humbie Village Hall**  
No.of Stations: 1  
Address: Humbie, EH36 5PJ

Polling District: EL5B  
**Polling Place:** **Aubigny Sports Centre**  
No.of Stations: 7  
Address: Mill Wynd, Haddington, EH41 4DB

Polling District: EL5C  
**Polling Place:** **Athelstaneford Village Hall**  
No.of Stations: 1  
Address: Main Street, Athelstaneford, EH39 5BE

Polling District: EL5D  
**Polling Place:** **Gifford Bowling Club**  
No.of Stations: 1  
Address: Station Road, Gifford, EH41 4QL

Polling District: EL5E  
**Polling Place:** **Garvald Village Hall**  
No.of Stations: 1  
Address: Garvald, EH41 4LN

Polling District: EL5F  
**Polling Place:** **Ormiston Community Centre**  
No.of Stations: 2  
Address: George Street, Ormiston, EH35 5JB

Polling District: EL5G  
**Polling Place:** **Trevelyan Hall**  
No.of Stations: 2  
Address: 9 Wester Pencaitland, Pencaitland, EH34 5HA

## Local Government Ward 6: Dunbar and East Linton

Polling District: EL6A  
**Polling Place:** East Linton Community Association Hall  
No.of Stations: 2  
Address: 73 High Street, East Linton, EH40 3BQ

Polling District: EL6B  
**Polling Place:** Stenton Village Hall  
No.of Stations: 1  
Address: Stenton, EH42 1TE

Polling District: EL6C  
**Polling Place:** West Barns Bowling Club  
No.of Stations: 1  
Address: Edinburgh Road, West Barns, EH42 1UH

Polling District: EL6D  
**Polling Place:** Bleachingfield Centre  
No.of Stations: 6  
Address: Countess Crescent, Dunbar, EH42 1DX

Polling District: EL6E  
**Polling Place:** Innerwick Village Hall  
No.of Stations: 1  
Address: Innerwick, EH42 1SE

**EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL**  
**STATUTORY REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES**

<b>WARD</b>	<b>POLLING DISTRICT</b>	<b>POLLING PLACE</b>	<b>TOTAL ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)</b>	<b>STATION (<i>in person</i>) ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)</b>	<b>POSTAL VOTERS (as at 1/9/23)</b>	<b>RETURNING OFFICER'S COMMENT</b>	<b>PROPOSAL</b>
<b>Ward 1 Musselburgh</b>	EMN1A	Musselburgh Rugby Club 3A Stoneyhill Farm Road, Musselburgh, EH21 6RN	4805	3428	1377  (28%)	UK Boundary changes determine ELMN1A move to the Edinburgh East Burgh constituency for UK Parliamentary Elections	Suitable polling place
	EMN1B	North Esk Parish Church Hall 16 Bridge Street, Musselburgh, EH21 6AG	3409	2531	878  (25%)	UK Boundary changes determine ELMN1B move to the Edinburgh East Burgh constituency for UK Parliamentary Elections	Suitable polling place
	EMN1C	Our Lady of Loretto Church Hall 17 Newbigging, Musselburgh, EH21 7AJ	2849	2015	834  (29%)	UK Boundary changes determine the bulk of ELMN1C move to the Edinburgh East Burgh constituency, for UK Parliamentary Elections, leaving approx 300 electors with Lothian East Constituency	Voters in the part of ELMN1C that will remain within the Lothian East constituency, amounting to just under 300, to move into ELMN1D
	ELMN1D	Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre Haddington Road, Musselburgh, EH21 8JJ	4338	3288	1050  (24%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate the move of approx 300 electors from ELMN1C	As above – change in polling district to include the remainder of ELMN1C

WARD	POLLING DISTRICT	POLLING PLACE	TOTAL ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	STATION ( <i>in person</i> ) ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	POSTAL VOTERS (as at 1/9/23)	RETURNING OFFICER'S COMMENT	PROPOSAL
<b>Ward 2 Preston, Seton and Gosford</b>	EL2A	Pennypit Centre Double Dykes Road, Rope Walk, Prestonpans, EH32 9BN	3947	3071	876 (22%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL2B	Prestonpans Community Centre Preston Road, Prestonpans, EH32 9QS	3729	2929	800 (21%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL2C	Port Seton Community Centre South Seton Park, Port Seton, EH32 0BQ	4263	3258	1005 (23%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate the move of electors from the Blindwells area of EL2D	Amend polling district EL2C to include Blindwells area of EL2D
	EL2D	Longniddry Community Centre Seton Road, Longniddry, EH32 0LD	2606	1811	795 (30%)	The current polling place will not accommodate the projected additional electorate within Blindwells. Consider altering this polling district to move Blindwells from EL2D to EL2C	Amend polling district EL2D to move Blindwells area into polling district EL2C (Port Seton Community Centre)

WARD	POLLING DISTRICT	POLLING PLACE	TOTAL ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	STATION (in person) ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	POSTAL VOTERS (as at 1/9/23)	RETURNING OFFICER'S COMMENT	PROPOSAL
<b>Ward 3 Tranent, Wallyford and Macmerry</b>	EL3A	The Fraser Centre 3a Winton Place, Tranent, EH33 1AF	2821	2211	610 (21%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL3B	Loch Centre Off Blawearie Road, Tranent, EH33 2JX	6203	4901	1302 (20%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL3C	Elphinstone Community Centre Main Street, Elphinstone, EH33 2LX	477	390	87 (18%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL3D	Macmerry Miners' Welfare Club Main Road, Macmerry, EH33 1QF	1326	1077	249 (18%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	ELMN3E	The Village Hub 72 Whitecraig Avenue, Whitecraig, EH21 8PB	998	764	234 (23%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	ELMN3F	Wallyford Learning Campus Mason's Way, Wallyford, EH21 8BF	3260	2610	650 (20%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place

WARD	POLLING DISTRICT	POLLING PLACE	TOTAL ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	STATION (in person) ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	POSTAL VOTERS (as at 1/9/23)	RETURNING OFFICER'S COMMENT	PROPOSAL
<b>Ward 4 North Berwick Coastal</b>	EL4A	The Stables Main Street, Aberlady, EH32 0RB	1355	1009	346 (25%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL4B	Gullane Community Association Hall Hall Crescent, Gullane, EH31 2HA	2313	1588	725 (31%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL4C	Dirleton Church Hall 5d Manse Road, Dirleton, EH39 5EL	816	581	235 (28%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate EL4D, as below.	As EL4D below, merge polling districts EL4C and EL4D.
	EL4D	Fenton Barns Fenton Barns, EH39 5BW	353	261	92 (26%)	A Portakabin is currently used as a polling place. Accessibility is not appropriate and safety of poll staff in the rural setting is a concern	Merge polling district EL4D with EL4C. There is adequate space within Dirleton Church Hall to accommodate this increase in electorate
	EL4E	North Berwick Sports Centre Grange Road, North Berwick, EH39 4QS	6467	4281	2186 (33%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL4F	Whitekirk Village Hall Whitekirk, EH42 1XS	312	252	60 (19%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place



WARD	POLLING DISTRICT	POLLING PLACE	TOTAL ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	STATION (in person) ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	POSTAL VOTERS (as at 1/9/23)	RETURNING OFFICER'S COMMENT	PROPOSAL
<b>Ward 5 Haddington and Lammermuir</b>	EL5A	Humbie Village Hall Humbie, EH36 5PJ	310	236	74 (23%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL5B	Fletcher Hall East Saltoun, EH34 5DX	484	359	125 (25%)	Fletcher Hall is earmarked for upgrading works, therefore there is a risk the hall may become unavailable as a polling place. There are no alternative venues within East Saltoun	Merge polling district EL5B with EL5J (Trevelyan Hall, Pencaitland). There is adequate space within Trevelyan Hall to accommodate this increase in electorate
	EL5C	Bolton Village Hall Under Bolton, EH41 4HL	168	134	34 (20%)	This polling district currently has 134 station voters. It is a rural polling place with no landline or wifi	Merge polling district EL5C with EL5G (Gifford Bowling Club). There is adequate space within Gifford Bowling Club to accommodate this increase in electorate
	EL5D	Aubigny Sports Centre Mill Wynd, Haddington, EH41 4DB	9036	6418	2645 (29%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL5E	Athelstaneford Village Hall Main Street, Athelstaneford, EH39 5BE	497	360	137 (27%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL5F	Morham Village Hall Morham, EH41 4LQ	125	71	54 (43%)	This polling district currently has 71 station voters. Consider	Merge EL5F polling district with EL5H (Garvald Village

						merging with another district.	Hall). There is adequate space within Garvald Village Hall to accommodate this increase in electorate.
	EL5G	Gifford Bowling Club Station Road, Gifford, EH41 4QL	879	642	237 (26%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate electorate from EL5C	As EL5C above, merge polling districts EL5C and EL5G
	EL5H	Garvald Village Hall Garvald, EH41 4LN	259	208	51 (19%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate electorate from EL5F	As EL5F above, merge polling districts EL5F and EL5H
	EL5I	Ormiston Community Centre George Street, Ormiston, EH35 5JB	2100	1671	429 (20%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL5J	Trevelyan Hall 9 Wester Pencaitland, Pencaitland, EH34 5HA	1747	1318	429 (24%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate electorate from EL5B	As EL5B above, merge polling districts EL5B and EL5J

WARD	POLLING DISTRICT	POLLING PLACE	TOTAL ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	STATION (in person) ELECTORATE (as at 1/9/23)	POSTAL VOTERS (as at 1/9/23)	RETURNING OFFICER'S COMMENT	PROPOSAL
<b>Ward 6 Dunbar and East Linton</b>	EL6A	Allison Cargill House Whittinghame, EH41 4QA	162	119	43 (26%)	This polling district currently has 119 station voters. It is a very rural polling place with no landline or wifi, therefore poll staff safety is a concern	Merge EL6A with EL6D (Stenton Village Hall). There is adequate space within Stenton Village Hall to accommodate this increase in electorate
	EL6B	East Linton Community Association Hall 73 High Street, East Linton, EH41 2BQ	1932	1444	488 (25%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate electorate from EL6C	As EL6C below, merge polling districts EL6C and EL6B
	EL6C	Tynninghame Village Hall Tynninghame, EH42 1XL	179	131	48 (26%)	This polling district currently has 131 station voters. Consider merging with polling district EL6B	Merge EL6C with EL6B (East Linton). There is adequate space within East Linton Hall to accommodate this increase in electorate
	EL6D	Stenton Village Hall Stenton, EH42 1TE	265	213	52 (19%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate EL6A	As EL6A above, merge polling districts EL6A and EL6D
	EL6E	West Barns Bowling Club Edinburgh Road, West Barns, EH42 1UH	526	431	95 (18%)	Suitable polling district and polling place	No change to polling district or place
	EL6F	Bleachingfield Centre Countess Crescent, Dunbar, EH42 1DX	7993	5945	2048 (25%)	Suitable polling place with sufficient space to accommodate EL6G	As EL6G below, merge polling districts EL6G and EL6F
	EL6G	Spott Community Centre Spott, EH42 1RJ	251	200	51	This polling district currently has 200 station	Merge EL6G with EL6F

					(20%)	voters. Consider merging with polling district EL6F	(Bleachingfield). There is adequate space within Bleachingfield to accommodate this increase in electorate
	EL6H	Innerwick Village Hall Innerwick, EH42 1SE	372	293	79 (21%)	Suitable polling district with sufficient space to accommodate EL6I	As EL6I below, merge polling districts EL6H and EL6I
	EL6I	Oldhamstocks Village Hall Oldhamstocks, TD13 5XN	165	120	45 (27%)	There are plans for Oldhamstocks Village Hall to be demolished and a replacement built, therefore, there is a risk the hall may become unavailable as a polling place.	Merge EL6I with EL6H (Innerwick Village Hall). There is adequate space within Innerwick Hall to accommodate this increase in electorate

**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Council  
**MEETING DATE:** 23 April 2024  
**BY:** Executive Director for Council Resources  
**SUBJECT:** Schedule of Meetings 2024/25

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**12**

## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To set the Schedule of Meetings of the Council, committees and other forums for 2024/25.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Council is asked:
- i. to approve the proposed Schedule of Meetings for 2024/25; and
  - ii. to note that the schedule is subject to change, and that any changes will be communicated to Members and officers as soon as practicable.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The annual Schedule of Meetings for 2024/25 is presented to Members for approval. There are approximately 120 committee meetings scheduled for 2024/25, and the schedule largely follows the pattern set in recent years.
- 3.2 Members should note that the Integration Joint Board (IJB) sets its own dates (including those for the IJB Audit & Risk Committee). The dates for these meetings have already been approved by the IJB.
- 3.3 Members should also note that the date for the budget-setting meeting will be confirmed in due course (potential dates for this meeting are noted on the schedule).
- 3.4 A number of dates have been included for Members' briefings. Members will be advised of the topics during the course of the session. Unless otherwise advised, Members' briefings will continue to take place via MS Teams.

- 3.5 It is anticipated that meetings taking place in the Council Chamber will be held via Public-i's Hybrid Link system, which allows for physical or remote participation. As with meetings that have taken place via Connect Remote, these meetings will also be webcast live, and the recordings will be available for six months following the meeting date. Any changes to meeting venues/format will be communicated as soon as possible.
- 3.6 Members are asked to note that the schedule is subject to change and that any changes will be communicated as soon as practicable.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None

#### **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 East Lothian Council Standing Orders

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<b>DATE</b>	26 March 2024

**East Lothian Council  
Draft Schedule of Meetings 2024/25**

Day	Date	Time	Committee/Meeting	Venue
Tues	20 August 2024	10.00	Planning Committee	CC
Thurs	22 August 2024	14.00	Local Review Body (Planning)	CC
Tues	27 August 2024	10.00	East Lothian Council	CC
Thurs	29 August 2024	10.00 14.00	East Lothian Licensing Board Dunbar Common Good Committee	CC CC
Tues	3 September 2024	10.00 15.00	Planning Committee Haddington Common Good Committee	CC CC
Thurs	5 September 2024	10.00 14.00	Employee Appeals Sub-Committee North Berwick Common Good Committee	CC CC
Tues	10 September 2024	10.00 14.00	Cabinet Members' Briefing	CC MS Teams
Wed	11 September 2024	14.00	Joint Consultative Committee	
Thurs	12 September 2024	10.00 14.00	Homelessness Appeals Sub-Committee Licensing Sub-Committee	CC CC
Tues	17 September 2024	10.00 14.00	Audit & Governance Committee Musselburgh Common Good Committee	CC CC
Wed	18 September 2024	10.00	Petitions & Community Empowerment Review Committee	CC
Thurs	19 September 2024	10.00 14.00	Policy & Performance Review Committee Local Review Body (Planning)	CC CC
Tues	24 September 2024	15.00	IJB Audit & Risk Committee	MS Teams
Thurs	26 September 2024	10.00 14.00	East Lothian Licensing Board East Lothian Integration Joint Board	CC MS Teams
Tues	1 October 2024	10.00	Planning Committee	CC
Thurs	3 October 2024	10.00	Employee Appeals Sub-Committee	CC
Tues	8 October 2024	14.00	Members' Briefing	MS Teams
Thurs	10 October 2024	14.00	Licensing Sub-Committee	CC
Autumn Recess: Friday 11 October – Monday 21 October 2024				
Thurs	24 October 2024	10.00 14.00	East Lothian Licensing Board East Lothian Integration Joint Board	CC MS Teams
Tues	29 October 2024	10.00	East Lothian Council	CC
Thurs	31 October 2024	14.00	Local Review Body (Planning)	CC
Tues	5 November 2024	10.00	Planning Committee	CC
Thurs	7 November 2024	10.00	Employee Appeals Sub-Committee	CC
Tues	12 November 2024	10.00 14.00	Cabinet Members' Briefing	CC MS Teams

Thurs	14 November 2024	10.00	Homelessness Appeals Sub-Committee	CC
		14.00	Licensing Sub-Committee	CC
Tues	19 November 2024	10.00	Education & Children's Services Committee	CC
Thurs	21 November 2024	10.00	Dunbar Common Good Committee	CC
		14.00	Local Review Body (Planning)	CC
Tues	26 November 2024	10.00	Musselburgh Common Good Committee	CC
		14.00	Haddington Common Good Committee	CC
Thurs	28 November 2024	10.00	East Lothian Licensing Board	CC
Tues	3 December 2024	10.00	Planning Committee	CC
		14.00	IJB Audit & Risk Committee	MS Teams
Wed	4 December 2024	14.00	Joint Consultative Committee	CC
Thurs	5 December 2024	10.00	Employee Appeals Sub-Committee	CC
		14.00	North Berwick Common Good Committee	CC
Tues	10 December 2024	10.00	East Lothian Council	CC
Wed	11 December 2024	10.00	Police, Fire & Community Safety Scrutiny Committee	CC
Thurs	12 December 2024	10.00	Policy & Performance Review Committee	CC
		14.00	Licensing Sub-Committee	CC
Tues	17 December 2024	10.00	Audit & Governance Committee	CC
Wed	18 December 2024	10.00	Petitions & Community Empowerment Review Committee	CC
Thurs	19 December 2024	13.00	East Lothian Integration Joint Board	MS Teams
Winter Recess: Friday 20 December 2024 – Friday 3 January 2025				
Tues	14 January 2025	10.00	Planning Committee	CC
Thurs	16 January 2025	10.00	Homelessness Appeals Sub-Committee	CC
		14.00	Licensing Sub-Committee	CC
Tues	21 January 2025	10.00	Cabinet	CC
		14.00	Members' Briefing	MS Teams
Thurs	23 January 2025	14.00	Local Review Body (Planning)	CC
Thurs	30 January 2025	10.00	East Lothian Licensing Board	CC
Tues	4 February 2025	10.00	Planning Committee	CC
Thurs	6 February 2025	10.00	Employee Appeals Sub-Committee	CC
Tues	11 February 2025	10.00	East Lothian Council (budget-setting - tbc)	CC
		14.00	Members' Briefing (if no budget mtg)	MS Teams
Thurs	13 February 2025	14.00	Licensing Sub-Committee	CC
Tues	18 February 2025	10.00	East Lothian Council (budget-setting tbc)	CC
		14.00	Members' Briefing (if no budget mtg)	MS Teams
Thurs	20 February 2025	10.00	Dunbar Common Good Committee	CC
		14.00	East Lothian Integration Joint Board	MS Teams
Tues	25 February 2025	10.00	East Lothian Council	CC



Thurs	27 February 2025	10.00 14.00	East Lothian Licensing Board Local Review Body (Planning)	CC CC
Tues	4 March 2025	10.00 14.00	Planning Committee Haddington Common Good Committee	CC CC
Wed	5 March 2025	14.00	Joint Consultative Committee	CC
Thurs	6 March 2025	10.00 14.00	Employee Appeals Sub-Committee North Berwick Common Good Committee	CC CC
Tues	11 March 2025	10.00 14.00	Cabinet Musselburgh Common Good Committee	CC CC
Thurs	13 March 2025	10.00 14.00	Homelessness Appeals Sub- Committee Licensing Sub-Committee	CC CC
Tues	18 March 2025	10.00 14.00	Education & Children's Services Committee IJB Audit & Risk Committee	CC MS Teams
Wed	19 March 2025	10.00	Petitions & Community Empowerment Review Committee	CC
Thurs	20 March 2025	10.00 14.00	Policy & Performance Review Committee East Lothian Integration Joint Board	CC MS Teams
Tues	25 March 2025	10.00 14.00	Audit & Governance Committee Members' Briefing	CC MS Teams
Thurs	27 March 2025	10.00 14.00	East Lothian Licensing Board Local Review Body (Planning)	CC CC
Tues	1 April 2025	10.00	Planning Committee	CC
Thurs	3 April 2025	10.00	Employee Appeals Sub-Committee	CC
Spring Recess: Friday 4 to Monday 21 April 2025				
Tues	22 April 2025	14.00	Members' Briefing	MS Teams
Thurs	24 April 2025	10.00 14.00	East Lothian Licensing Board Local Review Body (Planning)	CC CC
Tues	29 April 2025	10.00	East Lothian Council	CC
Thurs	1 May 2025	10.00	Employee Appeals Sub-Committee	CC
Tues	6 May 2025	10.00	Planning Committee	CC
Thurs	8 May 2025	10.00 14.00	Homelessness Appeals Sub- Committee Licensing Sub-Committee	CC CC
Tues	13 May 2025	10.00 14.00	Cabinet Members' Briefing	CC MS Teams
Tues	20 May 2025	14.00	Haddington Common Good Committee	CC
Thurs	22 May 2025	10.00 14.00	East Lothian Licensing Board East Lothian Integration Joint Board	CC MS Teams
Mon	26 May 2025		(Education Appeals)	(CC)
Tue	27 May 2025		(Education Appeals)	(CC)
Wed	28 May 2025		(Education Appeals)	(CC)

Thurs	29 May 2025	14.00	(Education Appeals) Local Review Body (Planning)	(CC) CC
Fri	30 May 2025		(Education Appeals)	(CC)
Mon	2 June 2025		(Education Appeals)	(CC)
Tue	3 June 2025	10.00 14.00	Planning Committee IJB Audit & Risk Committee	CC MS Teams
Wed	4 June 2025	10.00 14.00	Petitions & Community Empowerment Review Committee Joint Consultative Committee	CC CC
Thurs	5 June 2025	10.00 14.00	Employee Appeals Sub-Committee Dunbar Common Good Committee	CC CC
Tue	10 June 2025	10.00 14.00	Education & Children's Services Committee Musselburgh Common Good Committee	CC CC
Wed	11 June 2025	10.00	Police, Fire & Community Safety Scrutiny Committee	CC
Thurs	12 June 2025	10.00 14.00	Policy & Performance Review Committee Licensing Sub-Committee	CC CC
Tue	17 June 2025	10.00	Audit & Governance Committee	CC
Thurs	19 June 2025	10.00 14.00	North Berwick Common Good Committee Local Review Body (Planning)	CC CC
Tue	24 June 2025	10.00	East Lothian Council	CC
Wed	25 June 2025	10.00	Planning Committee	CC
Thurs	26 June 2025	10.00 14.00	East Lothian Licensing Board East Lothian Integration Joint Board	CC MS Teams

CC = Council Chamber (it is anticipated that meetings taking place in the Council Chamber will be held via the Council's hybrid meeting system and webcast live)

## MOTION TO EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL 23 April 2024

### Progress of East Lothian Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES)

#### Context

- The recent UK Committee for Climate Change has assessed Scotland's 2030 emissions goals as 'beyond what is credible', and the Chair of the Committee Professor Piers Forster, argued that 'we need to see actions that will deliver our future targets.'
- On the issue of heat in buildings, the committee said: 'There are welcome bold proposals in the Heat in Buildings consultation, which if implemented could become a template for the rest of the UK. But these proposals must be delivered in practice and the planned rate of decarbonisation will not achieve those promised in 2020.'<sup>1</sup>
- East Lothian Council unanimously approved the Draft Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) in October 2023 and the accompanying report committed to bring the final Strategy to Council in February 2024.

#### Motion

Council is asked to:

1.a) **agree** that local authorities have a key role to play in the strategic planning for reducing emissions from heat in buildings and to note that the Scottish Government, through its funding for LHEES posts, plans, and feasibility/strategic support studies, is empowering local authorities to take action on this key target.

1.b) **note** that the significant role for the community envisaged in the Draft LHEES is strongly supported by East Lothian Council's ambitions around Community Wealth Building and by the desired outcomes of the East Lothian Council Plan, in particular by the key value 'Enabling: recognising that the Council cannot do everything itself, [during COVID-19] we supported the vast voluntary effort that rose up in all our communities to provide much needed support for vulnerable people. The Council will develop this approach by continuing to enable and empower our communities and individuals to be more resilient.'<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See [Progress in reducing emissions in Scotland - 2023 Report to Parliament - Climate Change Committee \(theccc.org.uk\)](https://www.theccc.org.uk)

<sup>2</sup> See also the East Lothian Council Plan commitments to 'Develop a place-based approach to deliver services designed around our local communities, focusing on community-led regeneration' and to 'empower and enable individuals and communities to have a real say in the decisions that matter most to them. This involves going beyond dialogue and consultation by supporting citizens ... to actively participate in the definition, design and delivery of their public services.'

1.c) **further note** the significant collaborative drive and ambition of communities across East Lothian as demonstrated in the recent formation of a SCIO (by the Association of East Lothian Community Councils) to enable maximisation of the impact of community benefit from future consented energy projects.

Therefore, noting that the ambitious draft LHEES gained unanimous political support when it was presented to the October meeting of Council, and also noting that the 'Strategic Heat Network Support' from the Scottish Government's Heat Network Support Unit (HNSU) is the appropriate route for working out the significant remaining questions around feasibility and deliverability, this Council is asked to:

2. a) **Instruct** officers to submit an application for Strategic Heat Network Support to HNSU / the Scottish Government at the earliest opportunity

and

2. b) **Require** that the final draft of the LHEES should be submitted back to Full Council within two committee cycles.

Proposed by (name): Shona McIntosh

Date: 11 April 2024

Seconded by (name): Lyn Jardine

Date: 11 April 2024

Received by (name of officer): Linda Gillie, Team Manager, Democratic and Licensing

Date: 11 April 2024

**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Council

**MEETING DATE:** 23 April 2024

**BY:** Executive Director for Council Resources

**SUBJECT:** Submissions to the Members' Library Service,  
12 February – 7 April 2024

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**14**

**1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To note the reports submitted to the Members' Library Service since the last meeting of Council, as listed in Appendix 1.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Council is requested to note the reports submitted to the Members' Library Service between 12 February and 27 April 2024, as listed in Appendix 1.

**3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 In accordance with Standing Order 3.4, the Chief Executive will maintain a Members' Library Service that will contain:
- (a) reports advising of significant items of business which have been delegated to Councillors/officers in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation or officers in conjunction with Councillors, or
  - (b) background papers linked to specific committee reports.
- 3.2 All public reports submitted to the Members' Library are available on the Council website.

**4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None

## **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 East Lothian Council's Standing Orders – 3.4

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<b>DESIGNATION</b>	Team Manager – Democratic Services & Licensing
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<b>DATE</b>	8 April 2024

**MEMBERS' LIBRARY SERVICE RECORD FOR THE PERIOD  
12 February – 7 April 2024**

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Originator</b>	<b>Document Title</b>	<b>Access</b>
20/24	Head of Infrastructure	Repairs to Wall on Bridge Street, Musselburgh	Public
21/24	Head of Finance	Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy	Public
22/24	Head of Children's Services	Creation of Policy & Service Improvement Officer	Private
23/24	Executive Director for Education (in place of Exec Director for Place)	Local Lettings Plan – Middleshot Square	Public
24/24	Executive Director for Place	Musselburgh Coastal Change Assessment (Dynamic Coast)	Public
25/24	Head of Corporate Support	Establishment Changes for February 2024	Private
26/24	Executive Director for Place	Proposed New Primary Schools at Blindwells and Craighall	Public
27/24	Executive Director for Council Resources	Creation of Team Leader – Council Resources Systems (Post within the Revenues Service)	Private
28/24	Executive Director for Place	Service Review Report – Amenity Services, Sport, Countryside & Leisure	Private
29/24	Head of Infrastructure	Proposed New Gym Extension at the Aubigny Centre Haddington	Private
30/24	Head of Education	Creation of Equity and Inclusion Education Outreach Team	Public
31/24	Executive Director for Place	Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, Sections 16(2) and 18(1) – Additions to the List of Public Roads 2018	Public
32/24	Head of Education	Learning Estate Improvement Plan	Public
33/24	Head of Communities	Funding for Communities 2024-2025	Public
34/24	Head of Finance	Budget Impact 2024/25	Public
35/24	Executive Director for Council Resources	Finance Service Review	Private
36/24	Head of Corporate Support	Establishment Changes for March 2024	Private
37/24	Head of Housing	Response to the Scottish Government's 'Social Housing Net Zero Standard' Consultation	Public
38/24	Head of Housing	Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Reform Consultation	Public
39/24	Head of Housing	Scottish Government Consultation on <i>Enhancing the accessibility, adaptability and usability of Scotland's homes</i>	Public

8 April 2024

