

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

**TUESDAY 23 APRIL 2024
VIA DIGITAL MEETING FACILITY**

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Committee Members Present:

Provost J McMillan (Convener)

Councillor S Akhtar

Councillor E Allan

Councillor R Bennett

Councillor L Bruce

Councillor C Cassini

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 L-A Menzies

Councillor B Ritchie

Councillor C Yorkston

Council Officials Present:

Ms M Patterson, Chief Executive

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

Mr D Hood, Head of Operations – Health and Social Care Partnership

Ms W McGuire, Head of Housing

Mr R Montgomery, Head of Development

Mr T Reid, Head of Infrastructure

Ms S Saunders, Head of Communities

Mr J Baker, Service Manager – Economic Development

Mr S Cooper, Team Manager – Communications

Ms F Currie, Committees Officer

Mr R Edgar, Team Manager – Policy and Strategy (Planning)

Mr C Grilli, Service Manager – Governance

Mr C Hamm, Sustainability and Climate Change Officer

Mr E John, Service Manager – Sport, Countryside and Leisure

Mr S Kennedy, Team Manager – Emergency Planning

Ms L Kerr, General Manager – Planning and Performance (Adult Wellbeing)

Ms J Lothian, Team Manager – Strategy, Policy & Development

Mr M Mackowiak, Planner

Ms M Scott, Committees Officer

Visitors Present:

Mr John Boyd, Audit Scotland

Clerk:

Mrs L Gillingwater

Apologies:

Councillor K McLeod
Councillor T Trotter

Declarations of Interest:

Councillor Menzies advised that as a Board Member of EnjoyLeisure, she would be declaring an interest in respect of Item 16 on the agenda, and that she would leave the meeting for the duration of that item (despite being advised by the Monitoring Officer that there was no requirement for her to withdraw from the meeting).

Councillor Forrest advised that he also had a conflict of interest in respect of Item 16, in relation to the application for Common Good funding submitted by the Honest Toun Association, and that he would leave the meeting for the duration of that item.

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.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Provost announced changes to the order of business. He advised that Councillors McIntosh and Jardine had indicated that they wished to withdraw their motion on the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (Item 13 on the agenda). Both Members confirmed the withdrawal of this motion. The Provost noted that an amendment to that item had been submitted by Councillors Hampshire and Akhtar; however, as the motion had now been withdrawn that amendment would not be heard.

The Provost also advised that an emergency motion had been submitted by Councillors Dugdale and Forrest in respect of the proposals by the Boundary Commission (Boundaries Scotland) in relation to the Scottish Parliamentary Constituency boundaries. He noted that the emergency motion had now been issued to Members and that he was prepared to accept it given that the proposals had only recently been received and that the Council only had until 15 May to respond. He proposed that this item be heard following Item 12 on the agenda.

Prior to the commencement of business, the Provost paid tribute to members of the community on their recent achievements: Blair Glynn on his recent success with the Scottish Cerebral Palsy Football Team, and Ellie Moffat on her selection for the Scotland U18 Rugby squad. He also congratulated Councillor Shona McIntosh on participating in the London Marathon.

The Provost also announced that this meeting would be the last Council meeting for Morag Ferguson (Head of Council Support) and Sharon Saunders (Head of Communities). He thanked both officers for the advice and support over many years and wished them well for their retirement.

Councillor Bruce indicated that he wished to submit an amendment to the emergency motion. Morag Ferguson, Head of Council Support, confirmed that she had assessed the amendment and that it was competent. She advised that she would issue it to Members. The Provost noted that he would allow Members time to consider the amendment to the motion.

1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

The minutes of the following meeting were approved:

- a. Special East Lothian Council, 20 February 2024
- b. East Lothian Council, 27 February 2024

2. EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL 2022/23 ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT

The Provost welcomed Mr John Boyd of Audit Scotland to the meeting and invited him to present the Council's 2022/23 Annual Audit Report.

Mr Boyd presented the report, confirming that the Council had been given an unqualified opinion on the accounts. He advised that the Council had a clear vision and priorities, and that appropriate governance arrangements and performance management arrangements were in place. He recognised the financial challenges and service demands facing the Council, and highlighted the need for the Council to align resources with its priorities. He thanked officers for their assistance during the audit process and hoped that the next annual report would come forward in accordance with normal timescales.

Councillor Hampshire asked if future Annual Audit Reports would recognise the impact of growth on the Council, as well as the need for additional government funding. Mr Boyd advised that he would highlight the specific challenges facing the Council and also mention this in Audit Scotland's overarching report to the Accounts Commission.

Councillor Bruce asked for an explanation as to why all the actions in the 2018 Best Value Assurance Audit had not yet been completed. Mr Boyd indicated that it was not unusual for delays, for example, where a council was unable to prioritise an action or where the issue was a 'slow burner' and would take time to embed. This aspect would be included as part of the report to the Accounts Commission. Councillor Bruce also asked about the capital budget situation and the impact of digital services. Mr Boyd confirmed that the situation with capital funding was reflected across the public sector, exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19, Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC), supply issues and inflationary pressures. However, he stressed that it was necessary to deliver capital programmes in alignment with Council priorities. On digital services, he informed Members of a detailed review of major IT programmes. In order to prevent costs increasing due to delays, he suggested that the Council should seek to 'lock down' costs where possible.

Councillor Jardine questioned the efficacy of the transformation agenda and the prioritisation of digital services. Mr Boyd advised of the Accounts Commission's thematic approach as regards their focus, with workforce and workforce innovation being the focus in 2023/24. He was unable to comment on the specifics of the investment in digital services but did point out that this was a fast-moving area, with more people working remotely and a greater need to focus on cyber security.

In response to a question from Councillor McIntosh regarding the Council's assessment of risk as regards financial sustainability and climate change, Mr Boyd advised that there was a great deal of work underway in this area, including in relation to pension funds. He accepted that there was a challenge for councils in achieving Scottish Government targets. He noted that

the Auditor General and Accounts Commission were developing a programme of work on climate change that councils would need to incorporate into their planning processes, but that the needs of service users would have to be taken into account alongside financial capability.

Councillor Menzies asked about the challenges concerning the housing capital programme. Mr Boyd pointed out that East Lothian's challenges in this area were unique, due to growth. He accepted that there were capital funding pressures and that the Council would need to take difficult decisions as to what could be achieved.

On the progress of the Dr Bruce Fund, as raised by Councillor Cassini, Ellie Dunnet, Head of Finance, advised that some progress had been made regarding the review of Trust Funds, with a view to making better use of these funds, and that a report would be presented to Members in due course.

Opening the debate, Councillor Hampshire welcomed the report and thanked Mr Boyd and his team. He stated that the Council would always consider plans to deliver financial stability, but that growth was putting pressure on all service areas. He reaffirmed the Council's commitment to reaching net zero but cautioned that this had to be considered alongside the financial position.

Councillor Forrest thanked Ms Dunnet and her team for their work on trust funds.

As Convener of the Audit & Governance Committee, Councillor Menzies thanked Mr Boyd and his team for their assistance and advice. She welcomed the unqualified opinion on the accounts but recognised that councils were facing difficult times financially. She called on the Council to be innovative in its quest to be financially sustainable, adding that collaboration and strong leadership were key to achieving this.

Councillor Akhtar spoke of the significant demand on Council services, and the challenges facing all councils. She welcomed Audit Scotland's confirmation that the Council had appropriate governance arrangements, a clear vision and clear priorities. She paid tribute to staff who were working to deliver services whilst making savings.

The Provost thanked Mr Boyd for his report.

Decision

The Council agreed to note the 2022/23 Annual Audit Report.

Sederunt: Councillor McGinn left the meeting.

3. FINANCE UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources providing an update on the 2024/25 budget, specifically the additional funding allocation announced following the Chancellor's Spring Budget on 6 March; providing an update on budget mitigation measures agreed by the Council in August 2023; providing an update on the work of the external auditor for the financial year 2022/23; and outlining the process for setting the financial strategy and budgets for 2025/26 onwards.

The Head of Finance, Ellie Dunnet, presented the report. She made reference to a recent announcement by the Deputy First Minister in relation to additional unringfenced funding for councils to deal with the impact of the council tax freeze; she anticipated that the Council may receive additional funding of approximately £1.2m. She proposed that this funding should be

used to reduce the planned use of reserves. She also noted that the previously approved mitigation measures, with the exception of the decision to pause capital spending, should remain in place.

Responding to a question from Councillor Jardine on the additional funding, Ms Dunnet reiterated that as the Council was facing significant financial risks, she was proposing to use the additional funding to mitigate these risks, by way of reducing the planned use of reserves in 2024/25.

Councillor Bruce asked for further information as to the rationale of that decision. Ms Dunnet advised that the current level of reserves was very low, and was expected to be further reduced due to decisions made as part of the budget-setting process. By reducing the use of reserves, services would be protected. She accepted that the funding could be used to reduce debt charges, but the current level of risk was such that the Council may not be able to meet all its commitments. On the removal of mitigation measures, Ms Dunnet emphasised that these measures were not designed to be permanent, and it was likely that some would be reduced or amended in June. She accepted that these measures were damaging but reiterated that they were not part of the longer-term strategy.

On the potential closure of buildings, Councillor Gilbert asked if Members would have an opportunity to take such decisions. Ms Dunnet advised of some facilities that were operating on reduced hours and anticipated that a protocol would be put in place to keep Members informed of any significant changes. Tom Reid, Head of Infrastructure, added that decisions to mothball buildings/facilities were taken in line with budget pressures. He assured Members that the asset review was continuing, looking at utilisation and condition of properties; a report on this would be presented to Council in June.

Councillor Menzies asked Ms Dunnet if she was confident of a cross-party budget for 2025/26. Ms Dunnet indicated that this would be the ideal outcome, noting that some changes had come out of the cross-party working group for 2024/25. She proposed that work on the next budget should commence at an early stage and hoped that the measures in place would facilitate a cross-party budget.

With reference to the Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) and other grant funding, Councillor Akhtar asked what else could be done to support people, and if the Council would be in a position to make a contribution to the Integration Joint Board (IJB) overspend. Ms Dunnet stated that the high threshold for applications to the SWF would continue throughout the year, as it was a limited pot of money. She noted the importance of ensuring that the funding reaches those most in need, and that other ways to support people would need to be explored. On the position of the IJB, she was working on the assumption that any overspend would be met through the use of IJB reserves; further detail on this would be presented to Council in June. However, she anticipated that it was unlikely she would be in a position to recommend an additional contribution to the IJB from the Council if the IJB had sufficient reserves to meet the in-year overspend. She would continue to work with IJB colleagues on this issue.

Councillor Hampshire warned that the savings outlined in the budget would be difficult to deliver. He was in favour of Ms Dunnet's proposals to use the additional funding to reduce the use of reserves in order protect services in future years.

Councillor Jardine welcomed Mr Reid's commitment to bringing forward a report on the asset review to Council in June. She asserted that the Council had to be braver in its decision-making now in view of the challenging financial situation, and that tackling poverty and inequality needed to be prioritised.

Councillor Akhtar remarked that the Council was not looking for special treatment, but that there was recognition of the impact of growth on the Council. She noted that, over the past

ten years, the Council's capital funding had decreased by 22% whilst other areas had seen theirs increase. She called on the Council to challenge this position.

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

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. 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 Section 3.3 of the report;
- ii. that any additional unringfenced funding would be used as set out in Section 3.9 of the report;
- iii. to 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 the Council on 20 February 2024;
- iv. that all other mitigation measures would remain in place until the provisional outturn for 2023/24 is considered by Council, in June 2024;
- v. to note that the statutory audit of the 2022/23 accounts for the Council and group accounts had now concluded, with an unqualified audit opinion being issued on 20 March 2024; and
- vi. to approve the indicative timetable for setting the budget for 2025/26 onwards, outlined in Section 3.19 of the report.

4. COMMON GOOD BUDGETS 2024/25

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources providing an update on Common Good Funds and seeking approval of the proposed budgets for 2024/25.

The Head of Finance, Ellie Dunnet, presented the report, drawing Members' attention to the budgets for each Common Good Fund, as set out in Appendices 2a-d of the report, and highlighting in particular the proposal to recharge maintenance costs for Common Good assets in Musselburgh. She noted that there may be a need to revise these budgets following the outcome of the Common Good Review.

In response to a question from Councillor Bruce regarding the situation with the Brunton Hall, Ms Dunnet confirmed that the building was a Common Good asset and that the fund would need to support any remedial work. Tom Reid, Head of Infrastructure, provided an update on the situation, advising that the Engineering Team were continuing their work with external contractors and that he hoped to submit a report to the Council Management Team on the issue in the coming weeks; this report would be shared more widely in due course.

Councillor Bruce expressed concern about approving a grants budget without knowing the outcome of the Common Good asset review and the potential costs associated with the Brunton Hall. Ms Dunnet referred to Section 3.7 of the report which outlined the risks to the Common Good funds. However, she explained that there was an ongoing flow of Common Good applications, and it was felt appropriate that some funding was made available for grant awards. She assured Councillor Bruce that she would report to Council if it was felt that making provision for grants was no longer appropriate.

Councillor Forrest asked for further information regarding using Common Good funding for the upkeep of amenities in Musselburgh. Ms Dunnet advised that Common Good assets in Musselburgh were currently being maintained through the Amenities Services budget, and it was felt reasonable that the Common Good fund should contribute to these costs going forward.

Councillor Findlay asked what happens to income generated from Common Good assets, in particular if it is retained within the relevant Common Good fund; he provided the Quality Street car park in North Berwick as an example. Ms Dunnet advised that this would need to be considered in conjunction with the parking review and she undertook to provide a detailed response on this matter.

Councillor Cassini asked if Common Good assets could be managed by a third party and whether the funds could be transferred for this purpose. Ms Dunnet explained that the financial investments were already managed by an external fund manager. Mr Reid also noted that as part of the asset review, Common Good assets could be leased, but the longer-term disposal of assets may require a court order. Morag Ferguson, the Head of Corporate Support, pointed out that there were different categories of Common Good asset, but that there was no reason why the management of assets could not be sub-contracted to a third party; however, this would likely incur a cost and it would be difficult to demonstrate Best Value for the funds in that situation.

Councillor Forrest thanked officers for their work on the Common Good funds and paid particular tribute to Wendy Gillie in Estates and Chris Gray at the Old Course in Musselburgh for their work.

Councillor Bruce reiterated his comment that Common Good funding should be used primarily for the maintenance of assets and, as the situation with the Brunton Hall and other assets remained uncertain and it was unclear if there would be a surplus in the funds, he was concerned about continuing with grant funding at this time. He moved that this item of business be continued pending the outcome of the Common Good asset review.

Councillor Findlay seconded this proposal.

Taking account of Councillor Bruce's comments, Councillor Jardine was of the view that it should be for the Members involved in the various Common Good Committees to determine what should be funded and she was concerned that by agreeing to continue the item would mean that none of the Committees would be able to consider grant applications.

Councillor Forrest indicated that continuing with grant awards would not make much difference to the situation at the Brunton Hall.

Councillor Bruce advised that he would be withdrawing his proposal to continue the report to a future meeting.

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

For (15): Councillors Akhtar, Allan, Bennett, Cassini, Dugdale, Forrest, Gilbert, Hampshire, Jardine, McFarlane, McIntosh, McMillan, Menzies, Ritchie, Yorkston

Against (0)

Abstentions (4): Councillors Bruce, Collins, Findlay, McGuire

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the ongoing financial challenges relating to the current economic climate and the risks that this presents to the Common Good Funds;
- ii. to approve the 2024/25 grants budgets for Dunbar, Haddington, Musselburgh and North Berwick, as set out in Appendices 2a-2d, noting the context for future budget development;
- iii. to approve the grounds maintenance budgets within Musselburgh Common Good as set out in Section 3.10 of the report, from the financial year 2024/25 onwards; and
- iv. to note that a review of property maintenance requirements was ongoing, and that updates to the proposed budgets would be brought back to Council in June 2024 if the review presents a requirement for a material change to these budgets.

5. NON-RESIDENTIAL CHARGING: SOCIAL CARE

A report was submitted by the Director of Health and Social Care informing the Council of the current position on the Non-Residential Charging Policy for Social Care, and seeking agreement of changes to this policy for 2024-25.

The General Manager for Planning and Performance, Laura Kerr, presented the report, drawing particular attention to the protection measures in place (as set out in Section 3.10 of the report). She assured Members that processes were in place to ensure that applicants for services were not at risk of financial hardship, and that service users and advocacy representatives were involved in the working group overseeing this policy. She also highlighted the CoSLA guidance associated with the charging for services, confirming that the proposed policy was aligned to this guidance and to the practices of other local authorities.

Councillor Akhtar asked if any community alarms had been returned due to the cost, and she also sought more information on the national policy for the removal of non-residential charges. Ms Kerr referred to the appeals process associated with charging, noting that two appeals had been upheld and three not upheld. She asserted that the process was accessible and robust, and that a social worker and advocacy worker supported appellants; the financial inclusion team would also work with people to ensure that they were in receipt of benefits to which they were entitled. She did not have a record of alarms being returned due to unaffordability. As regards the plans for the removal of non-residential charges, Ms Kerr indicated that this would not progress any further during the current parliament.

In response to questions from Councillor Dugdale, Ms Kerr explained that the costs associated with community alarms covered the full cost of providing the service and that she was unable to say if charges would decrease if the cost of the alarms decrease in future. She confirmed that all returned equipment was recycled, with the exception of bed sensors. She advised that an impact assessment had been carried out in relation to this report, noting that it had not been possible to engage with all service users; this was reflected in the impact assessment.

Councillor Bruce asked how the policy would be reviewed. Ms Kerr pointed out that the changes to the financial processes had been made to achieve maximum income for the Integration Joint Board, but that increasing the rates would not significantly increase income because most service users were already paying the maximum charge. Now that the national policy for the removal of non-residential charges would not be progressing in the foreseeable future, she added that charges would be updated on an annual basis going forward.

Councillor Akhtar pointed out that the Health and Social Care Partnership was in a difficult position, as the situation regarding the removal of charges was unclear. She highlighted the additional costs of moving from analogue to digital community alarms, which would result in an increase in cost for those using the alarms. However, she stressed that support could be provided for those who need it.

Councillor Menzies spoke in support of the removal of charges, noting that further funding from the UK Government would be required to achieve this.

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

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the contents of the report
- ii. to approve
 - a. the inclusion of ILF charges within the current financial assessment process
 - b. the recommendation to increase the first taper from 60% to 65% from April 2024, with a further 5% increase in the following three years to 75% from 1 April 2027
 - c. the phased the removal of the second taper within the current financial assessment process
 - d. 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
 - e. the recommendation to remove subsidy for frozen meals and complete removal of the hiring costs of freezers and microwaves
 - f. the recommendation to reduce the subsidy for community alarms from 33% to 0% over a 3-year period from 1 April 2024
 - g. yearly uplifts of financial assessments to ensure charges are increased in line with benefits uplifts and increasing income
 - h. a 10% increase in charge for care at home, and transport, and 6% increase for resource centre and transport to and from resource centres
- iii. to note that any increase to charges requires a one-month notice period to the payer and that charges to each individual will be limited by the income protection measures outlined in Section 3.10 of the report

6. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive presenting the up-to-date Corporate Risk Register to the Council.

The Team Manager for Emergency Planning, Scott Kennedy, presented the report, advising that the Council currently had 6 Very High risks, 7 High risks, 6 Medium risks, and 1 Low risk, and that a number of services remained in Business Continuity measures: Facilities; Estates; Housing; and Sport, Countryside and Leisure (Forestry). He advised Members of the monitoring arrangements for the Corporate Risk Register.

Councillor Hampshire welcomed the update, especially that there were no new risks on the Register. He thanked staff for their efforts to mitigate risks but warned that it would be difficult to find new mitigation measures to reduce risk. His comments were echoed by Councillor

Jardine, who added that the Risk Register allowed the Council to look forward and consider what could be achieved.

Councillor Akhtar made reference to CR10: Impact of the National Care Service, noting that the budget for the work on this was £30m every year for the next 10 years. She stressed the need to ensure that resources were directed appropriately.

The Provost concluded the debate by recalling the debate on change, particularly as regards digital transformation, noting that change would bring risk; however, he was reassured by the comments made by Mr Boyd earlier in the meeting on the Council's control measures.

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

Decision

The Council agreed to approve the Corporate Risk Register and, in doing so, to approve that:

- i. The Corporate Risk Register would be maintained as a live document which would 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 required;
- ii. The relevant risks had been identified;
- iii. The significance of each risk was appropriate to the current nature of the risk;
- iv. The total profile of corporate risk could 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
- v. While corporate risks would 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.

7. EAST LOTHIAN PLAY SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Place seeking approval of the East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA).

The Team Manager for Strategy, Policy & Development (Amenity Services), Jennifer Lothian, presented the report. She advised that the PSA was a requirement of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, and that it would inform the new Local Development Plan (LDP). She informed Members that the PSA had been carried out by Play Scotland, and involved assessing all 121 Council-owned or managed formal public outdoor play spaces, with a particular focus on inclusion and accessibility. The assessment had included engagement with children and young people, including those with disabilities, and families. She noted that East Lothian was the first council to carry out such an assessment. She drew attention to the process and the key findings of the assessment (as set out in Sections 3.12-3.19 of the report), and also to the recommendations (as set out in Sections 3.20-3.21 of the report). She noted that although the Council provided an excellent quantity and good range of risky play opportunities, and that outdoor play facilities were generally attractive, there were some areas for improvement, such as facilities for older children, and the need for more accessible, sensory and natural play opportunities.

Councillor McFarlane asked if the installation of pump tracks would be supported by the Council. Dr Lothian confirmed that the Council had allocated capital funding to establish pump tracks in the main towns, and that these were subject to planning permission.

Highlighting the importance of outdoor play facilities, Councillor McIntosh asked how facilities would be made inclusive/accessible for disabled people, older children and girls. Dr Lothian referred to the work done in conjunction with Play Scotland and East Lothian Play Association (ELPA), which had informed the report, covering aspects such as surfaces, types of equipment, the range of equipment, etc.; however, she recognised there was a need for more sensory and interactive play facilities. She referred Members to the 'Make Space for Girls' website, which had proved to be a valuable resource during the development of the PSA. Dr Lothian also noted that officers would be looking to improve the range of nature-based play facilities on offer.

Councillor Ritchie asked for further information on accessibility. Dr Lothian advised that as a result of the work undertaken with ELPA and additional support needs (ASN) groups, the specifications for new play areas had been amended to increase accessibility, including facilities such as basket swings, wheelchair accessible roundabouts and sensory play panels. She further advised that some communities were currently being consulted on the future of their play areas, and that it was important to listen to the views of children and young people.

On the consultation process, Dr Lothian indicated that a wide range of people and groups had been consulted, assisted by Play Scotland, ELPA and Can Do – primary and secondary school children, disabled children and their families, young women and girls, and families with children aged 0-4 had all been consulted; in addition, there had been a wider consultation online and through the Library Service, as well as with community councils, to which 291 responses had been received.

Councillor Menzies asked about safety in play areas and also about intergenerational play facilities. Dr Lothian pointed out that a large proportion of East Lothian's play spaces were in open areas, and that family members were often present to supervise children. She noted that seating areas were provided in many play spaces, and that some had outdoor gym play equipment suitable for older children and adults. She added that consideration had to be given to parents and care-givers who had disabilities to make these areas more accessible to them – this would need to be considered alongside the financial resources available.

Councillor Cassini suggested that better use of open spaces could be considered, e.g. by removing 'no ball-game' signs, and also that it would be useful to have public toilets situated close to play areas. Dr Lothian accepted that some spaces could be made more welcoming and that this aspect could be taken forward with community groups. Regarding toilet facilities, this had been raised by Play Scotland during the development of the PSA. She advised that toilets were generally available at some of the large 'destination' parks, but that it would not be possible or necessary to provide such facilities in every play space.

Councillor Dugdale asked if pop-up play facilities had been considered during the PSA process, noting that ELPA had trialled this over previous holiday periods. Dr Lothian indicated her support for such events, noting that the Council would support them wherever possible. She added that there were no specific locations planned for pop-up events at this time, and that proposals would be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Councillor Menzies stressed that it is a right for children to be able to play, and welcomed the news that East Lothian was the first local authority to undertake a full assessment of accessible and inclusive play provision. She appreciated that providing such play facilities would come at a cost, but noted that some may be covered by way of Section 75 Agreements. Without such play areas, she believed that there would be an increase in poor mental health and anti-social behaviour, as well as missed education opportunities.

Speaking in support of Councillor Menzies's comments, Councillor Hampshire highlighted the importance of providing suitable facilities for young people aged 12 to 17 in particular. He believed that creating new communities also required the creation of facilities within those

communities for children and young people. He looked forward to seeing the plans develop further.

Councillor Ritchie praised the Council for its existing play facilities. She welcomed the work to take this matter forward and for the engagement with the third sector and other organisations.

Concluding the debate, Councillor Dugdale emphasised the importance of play for children and young people's development and wellbeing. She commended Dr Lothian on the work that had gone into the report, and the consultation that had taken place with young people and with ELPA and Can Do. She accepted that providing such facilities would come at a cost and hoped that additional funding would be provided by the Scottish Government to meet the needs of children and young people.

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

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to approve the East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment; and
- ii. to note that the Play Sufficiency Assessment would inform the Evidence Report for the next East Lothian Local Development Plan.

8. PROPOSED EAST LoTHIAN LOCAL ECONOMY STRATEGY

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Place seeking approval of the Local Economy Strategy 2024-34.

Sederunt: Councillor Collins left the meeting.

The Service Manager for Economic Development, Jamie Baker, presented the report on the Strategy, which had been developed with the support of Stantec UK. It took account of the local context, organisational capacity, local priorities, community wealth, economic and business sustainability and climate change. He noted that a key theme of the Strategy was community wealth building (CWB), reminding Members that the Council had approved the Community Wealth Building Charter in February 2024.

Responding to a series of questions from Councillor Findlay, Mr Baker advised that the operational delivery plan could be progressed soon after approval of the Strategy and that he would be happy to provide an annual report on its progress. On employment, Mr Baker explained that there were only a few large employers in East Lothian, and that there would be a focus on businesses with growth potential, e.g. the Innovation Hub at Queen Margaret University, Cockenzie and Blindwells, as well as creating high quality employment opportunities, remarking that there was a disparity in the average earnings of those employed in East Lothian versus those employed in Edinburgh. As regards tourism, Mr Baker indicated that it was too early to assess the impact of the short-term licensing legislation, adding that it was important to ensure that the right types of properties were available as short-term let accommodation, especially as hotel accommodation in East Lothian was limited. He also advised that golf featured in the tourism section of the strategy as well as the business section.

Councillor Jardine asked if there would be opportunities to develop different types of tourist accommodation. Mr Baker accepted that, in order to attract visitors to stay for longer periods

in East Lothian, suitable accommodation was required; visitors tended to prefer short-term let accommodation as it was more flexible than hotel accommodation. He welcomed ideas for holiday accommodation, e.g. on farms and campsites, purpose built, etc. As regards workforce accommodation, he indicated that this was a complex area and that providing accommodation for short-term events had to be considered alongside the need for tourist accommodation.

Councillor Gilbert asked about the Council's obligations in relation to providing businesses with space around East Lothian's towns, and if the compulsory purchase of land was an option. Mr Baker confirmed that the Council did have the power to do that, and that there were potential sites for development, but that it would come at a cost and the process was not straightforward. He added that there were other potential routes, such as compulsory sale, whereby landowners could be compelled to put the land on the market, or community right to buy.

Councillor Menzies requested further information on direct recruitment. Mr Baker advised that there would be a focus on areas with recruitment challenges, suggesting that additional training or better pay could be offered, in addition to guaranteed interviews for certain groups and offering modern apprenticeships. The Council would work in partnership with Anchor Institutions to target those who need more support.

Councillor McIntosh raised the issue of transport, asserting that the Council should be encouraging modes of transport other than the car. Mr Baker commented that the volume of journeys was an indicator of activity, not economic value. He recognised that there were issues with public transport connectivity, and that there was a need to address this, alongside increasing local employment opportunities. These issues would feature in the next Local Development Plan. On demand-responsive transport, he noted that this was being trialled at present. As regards renewable energy, Mr Baker indicated that partners were keen to be involved in developing the idea of heat networks, and that gas engineers were transitioning to installing heat pumps. He added that a variety of opportunities were being explored to reach net zero, but that this was a complex and fast-moving area of work and that a pragmatic approach was needed.

Councillor Findlay welcomed the report and looked forward to seeing the delivery plan in due course.

Councillor Jardine congratulated Mr Baker and his team on developing the Strategy. She highlighted the importance of the inclusion of community wealth building, and referenced the socio-economic review to demonstrate how critical this Strategy is. She looked forward to scrutinising the progress of the Strategy [at the Policy & Performance Review Committee].

The Provost, as Economic Development spokesperson, commented on the value of grants given to local businesses.

Councillor McIntosh remarked that growth was not always a good thing. She welcomed the focus on prosperity and providing access to jobs to meet skills. However, she felt that existing businesses should be focusing more on sustainability rather than growth. She declared that she would abstain on the basis that more could be done to fully embed prosperity rather than profit. The Provost indicated that this may be a question of language used in the report as opposed to outcomes and results.

Councillor Hampshire emphasised the need to create opportunities within East Lothian to allow people to work close to where they live. He believed that the Strategy would make East Lothian an attractive place for investment. On the future of Torness Power Station (due to close in 2028), he believed that the power station could continue to operate through the installation of modular reactors. He also mentioned the need to find appropriate ways to store

energy, suggesting that electricity could be converted to hydrogen, and that the quarry at Dunbar would be an ideal location for hydrogen storage tanks. He added that Scottish Gas was currently trialling hydrogen heating in Fife, which, if effective, could contribute to achieving net zero. He noted that the Strategy would evolve to meet the requirements of national government but was a solid foundation to building the economy in East Lothian.

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

For (17): Councillors Akhtar, Allan, Bennett, Bruce, Cassini, Dugdale, Findlay, Forrest, Gilbert, Hampshire, Jardine, McFarlane, McGuire, McMillan, Menzies, Ritchie, Yorkston

Against (0):

Abstentions (1): Councillor McIntosh

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to approve: the Proposed Local Economy Strategy 2024-34; the vision, goals and objectives; and the action areas outlined
- ii. to note that progress would be reported annually, and that the Strategy would be subject to a mid-term review in 2028/29;
- iii. to note that a 'public facing' version of the Strategy would be published with a focus on of readability/accessibility, including additional diagrams and infographics in place of text, relevant case examples highlighting progress made under the 2012-22 Strategy, as well as photography.

9. CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Place providing the fourth annual update on the progress of delivering the actions and commitments in East Lothian's Climate Change Strategy 2020-25.

Sederunt: Councillor McGinn returned to the meeting.

The Sustainability and Climate Change Officer, Cheyne Hamm, presented the report, drawing attention to a number of key projects and achievements (as set out at Sections 3.9-3.18 of the report). He made reference to the recent Scottish Government announcement on climate change targets, noting that he was still assessing the implications of this, but adding that the net zero target of 2045 remained in place. He advised that the Council's approach would be aligned to that of the Scottish Government, and that a new Climate Change Strategy for the period 2025-30 would be developed over the coming year.

Councillor Forrest asked for an update on progress as regards Council properties. Mr Hamm pointed out that the Council was looking to supply homes with a net zero heat source alongside other energy efficiency measures.

In response to a series of questions from Councillor McIntosh, Mr Hamm indicated that, as a public body, the Council has a duty to help communities adapt to climate change and reduce their emissions. This would be included within the next Climate Change Strategy. He added that he was working with a number of community groups with an interest in this subject, and that he anticipated that there would be a discussion on climate change at the next East Lothian Partnership meeting, with the aim of larger organisations working together to reduce

emissions. He also informed Members that many Council services were adopting an 'efficiency first' approach due to the Council's financial situation and this approach would be encouraged to all teams across the organisation. On the recent Scottish Government announcement and its impact on the Council's new Climate Change Strategy, Mr Hamm noted that clear outcomes from the Scottish Government were required so that the Council's Strategy could be aligned accordingly, as well as a direction on the Council's responsibilities, and those of region-wide public bodies.

Tom Reid, Head of Infrastructure, explained that officers were involved in campaigning for investment in order that the Council could progress in a variety of areas, including the conversion to sustainable fuels for the Council's vehicle fleet. He stressed that ringfenced funding was required to achieve such aims, adding that even new school buildings were not operating at net zero due to insufficient funding.

Councillor Hampshire highlighted the increase in household recycling since 2019/20, an area in which the Council had invested heavily. He asked what measures were being taken to encourage households to recycle more. Mr Reid stated that the most recent figures suggested that c. 53% of waste was now being recycled, but that these figures were a year behind and it would be some months before the figures for the new system were available. He believed that the new 3-weekly general waste collection would encourage people to recycle more, adding that the Council was one of only a few providing a food waste collection service. He also noted that the Council's recycling service was sustainable, with less than 3% contamination.

On the heating of buildings, Councillor Hampshire noted that the Council's current Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) was not compatible with the current Scottish Government guidance, and he requested that a review of this strategy was required in order to make it as flexible as possible. Mr Hamm indicated that heat networks was the preferred option currently, as this made best use of existing heat; other options included biomass or waste heat from hydrogen fuel production. He noted that a balance would have to be struck between energy efficient upgrades and decarbonising the heat sources themselves, and that the options had to be affordable, available and secure. Ray Montgomery, Head of Development, pointed out that discussions with the Scottish Government were ongoing as to whether the Council's current strategy was compliant with their guidance; he anticipated that the finalised strategy would be presented to Council later in the year. He added that the Council may not be eligible for additional funding for feasibility studies should it pursue its previous strategy.

Councillor Hampshire sought to put forward an amendment to the effect that there would be an additional recommendation seeking agreement to bring forward a finalised Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy in compliance with the Scottish Government's guidance, and that the strategy would provide the Council with a flexible approach going forward as regards technology and methodology. He noted that the wording of the amendment was identical to the wording of the amendment he had submitted in relation to Councillor McIntosh and Jardine's motion, which had now been withdrawn from the agenda.

Sederunt: Councillor Collins returned to the meeting.

A number of Members voiced their objection to this late amendment being proposed. The Monitoring Officer, Morag Ferguson, advised that it was for the Provost to determine whether or not to accept it. Following a short debate on the matter, the Provost declared that he would not accept the proposed amendment on the grounds that officers had confirmed that the finalised Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy would be presented to Council for consideration after the summer recess, and that it would cover the points raised by Councillor Hampshire in relation to flexibility, risk, compliance and funding.

Councillor Dugdale questioned how the Council's annual emissions were measured, especially with so many staff working from home. She also asked about emissions from the Council's fleet and the funding required to achieve net zero for those vehicles. Mr Hamm advised that this issue was currently under consideration, with a pilot project underway covering commuting emissions and home-working emissions. On the Council's fleet, he noted that there were some logistical challenges to overcome; for example, the Council's insurance would only cover 25% of the fleet being electric vehicles. Mr Reid provided some examples of the costs of electric vehicles, which were significantly more expensive than those requiring traditional fuel. Mr Hamm added that he was working in partnership with other councils to provide an estimation of the costs associated with adapting to climate change, and also of the costs associated with not adapting to climate change.

Councillor Findlay asked if any action was being taken in relation to storm outflows into coastal waterways. Mr Hamm was unaware of work being to address this, but offered to discuss this further with the Council's Biodiversity Officer.

Councillor Gilbert asked about the Council's policy for dealing with buildings that could not be decarbonised. Mr Reid assured him that this was being considered as part of the ongoing asset review and place-based approach. Any buildings unsuitable or unaffordable to maintain may be declared as surplus and eligible for community asset transfer or disposal for development purposes.

Sederunt: Councillor Gilbert left the meeting.

Councillor Collins asked if consideration had been given to planting herbal leys on verges and open ground in order to capture more carbon and promote biodiversity. Mr Hamm indicated that the Council's Amenity Services officers were looking at using an appropriate mix of seeds where there was an opportunity in order to expand nature networks. Mr Reid cautioned that sight lines at verges and management of those spaces had to be taken into account. He offered to discuss this further with Councillor Collins.

Councillor McIntosh welcomed the report, particularly that the Council was progressing with its emissions reduction. She confirmed that the Scottish Greens were still focused on achieving net zero by 2045, despite falling short on the target to reduce emissions by 75% by the end of the current decade. She stressed that councils had a key role to play, and that the Council would have to be ambitious and engage more with residents, businesses, community groups and investors. On the decarbonisation of buildings, she accepted that the cost of this could not be met by the public sector alone, and that private sector investment, community involvement and innovation were all key to achieving this. She also spoke of the need to find ways of transporting heat.

Councillor Hampshire expressed his disappointment that his proposed amendment had not been accepted. He argued that any new heating strategy would have to be affordable, both in its delivery and by householders. He recognised that achieving net zero by 2045 would be challenging and would only be achieved through additional investment.

Councillor Dugdale noted the key achievements outlined in the report and welcomed the partnership working with other councils. She also mentioned the commitment of young people to tackling climate change.

The Provost concluded the debate by reiterating the Council's ambitions but noted that it also had to be realistic as to what could be achieved.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the progress made in decarbonising the Council's services and operations and contributing to a low carbon East Lothian; and
- ii. to note the key projects and achievements, and the key risks, as set out in the report, delivered by members of the Climate Change Planning and Monitoring Group.

10. APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources advising of the requirement for the Council to appoint a Chief Planning Officer, seeking approval of the appointment of Keith Dingwall as the Council's Chief Planning Officer, and seeking approval of the consequential changes to the Scheme of Delegation.

The Head of Corporate Support, Morag Ferguson, presented the report, advising that from April 2024 each local authority was required to appoint a Chief Planning Officer. She proposed that Keith Dingwall, Service Manager for Planning, was considered to have the relevant skills and experience to be appointed to this role.

Councillor Hampshire welcomed the appointment of Mr Dingwall to this statutory role, commenting that he would provide an excellent planning service for the Council.

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

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. 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);
- ii. to approve the appointment of Keith Dingwall to the statutory post of Chief Planning Officer; and
- iii. to approve the changes to the Scheme of Delegation to take account of the establishment of the role of Chief Planning Officer.

11. STATUTORY REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND PLACES/AMENDMENT TO THE POLLING PLACE SCHEME

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources informing Members of the outcome of the statutory review of polling districts and places and seeking approval for the consequential changes to take effect after the next UK General Election. The report also sought approval to relocate a polling place from Trevelyan Hall, Pencaitland to Pencaitland Bowling Club with immediate effect, and to relocate a polling place from Fenton Barns (portacabin) to Dirleton Church Hall with immediate effect.

The Head of Corporate Support, Morag Ferguson, presented the report, drawing Members' attention to the proposed changes resulting from the statutory review, and the representations received in response to the proposals. She set out efforts that would be made to assist those affected by the changes.

Councillor Akhtar requested that the new arrangements for Pencaitland should be monitored. Mrs Ferguson assured her that there would be opportunities to undertake further reviews of polling places and suggested that the new arrangements be reviewed following the next UK General Election.

Councillor Findlay asked if Gullane Area Community Council had been consulted on the proposals for Fenton Barns. Mrs Ferguson confirmed that all community councils had been consulted on the proposals and that there had been no representation made by Gullane Area Community Council.

Councillor Menzies highlighted the importance of defending people's right to vote, but she accepted that some of the county's polling places were not suitable. In response to a suggestion to combine polling places, using Tranent as an example, she demonstrated that the size of the electorate would make this unfeasible and may put people off voting.

Councillor McGuire spoke against the proposed closure of some rural polling places, due mainly to poor public transport links. He felt that forcing people to drive further afield to vote would cause safety issues and lead to an increase in car journeys. He also suspected that there would be a lower turnout. On that basis, he advised that he would not be supporting the proposed changes.

The Provost commented that the safety of polling place staff also had to be considered. Whilst recognising the potential transport issues, he welcomed the proposed solutions, suggesting that people would combine their journey to the polling place with other errands or would share transport.

Councillor Jardine observed that many people in her area had opted for postal votes and suggested that postal voting should be promoted to enable those affected to participate.

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

For (15): Councillors Akhtar, Allan, Bennett, Cassini, Dugdale, Forrest, Hampshire, Jardine, McFarlane, McGinn, McIntosh, McMillan, Menzies, Ritchie, Yorkston
Against (0)
Abstentions (4): Councillors Bruce, Collins, Findlay, McGuire

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the representations received during the recent consultation on the statutory review of polling districts and places, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, together with the Returning Officer's comments;
- ii. to approve the amended polling scheme for Lothian East constituency, as detailed in Appendix 2, noting that changes as a consequence of this review would not take effect until after the next UK Parliamentary Election;
- iii. to note that polling districts and polling place will continue to be reviewed on an ongoing basis and that the next statutory review of polling districts and polling places will be required to be carried out by the end of January 2030 and on a 5-yearly basis thereafter;
- iv. that, with immediate effect, to move electors from Fenton Barns (polling district EL4D) to Dirleton Church Hall (polling district EL4C), as set out in Section 3.4 of the report; and

- v. that, with immediate effect, to move the polling place in polling district EL5J from Trevelyan Hall, Pencaitland to Pencaitland Bowling Club, as set out in Section 3.5 of the report.

12. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2024/25

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources, seeking approval of the Schedule of Meetings for the Council, committees and other forums for 2024/25.

The Clerk presented the report, advising that the 2024/25 Schedule of Meetings would largely follow the pattern of the current year's schedule, with c. 120 meetings to take place. She noted that the schedule was subject to change, and that any changes would be communicated to Members and officers as soon as practicable.

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

Decision

The Council agreed:

- 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.

13. EMERGENCY NOTICE OF MOTION: OPPOSITION TO THE PROPOSED SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARY CHANGES

An emergency motion was submitted by Councillors Dugdale and Forrest:

Context

- The Council notes the publication of the revised proposals for changes to the Scottish Parliamentary Constituency boundaries, which include moving Tranent and Elphinstone into a new Edinburgh Eastern, Musselburgh & Tranent constituency, and renaming the East Lothian constituency Lothian Eastern.
- The Council believes that these proposals would break historic community links in East Lothian, create further uncertainty in relation to issues such as MSP responsibility for school catchment areas and health provision, and undermine East Lothian's status and cohesion as a distinct area at a Scottish Parliament level.

Motion

Council therefore calls for:

- The Council to reject the Boundary Commissions proposals and mandates the Council Leader to write to the Boundary Commission urging it to reconsider the removal of Tranent and Elphinstone from the existing East Lothian constituency.
- The Council to reject the proposals to split the current Midlothian North and Musselburgh constituency and add Musselburgh to a new Edinburgh Eastern

Constituency where there are no historical links and very few existing community links. The Council requests that Edinburgh Eastern should remain within the city boundary and the constituency links between Musselburgh and Midlothian North should be retained.

- The Council to request that the Boundary Commission reconsider the abolition of the East Lothian constituency name.
- The Council to agree to support the community efforts to oppose the proposals in Musselburgh, Tranent and Elphinstone and back the retention of the East Lothian constituency along with a Midlothian North and Musselburgh based on the current boundaries that are within East and Midlothian boundaries.

Councillor Dugdale presented the motion, commenting that local people were shocked and disappointed with the proposals to move Tranent, Elphinstone and Musselburgh out of East Lothian. She argued that the proposals did not take community ties into account and that the title of East Lothian should not be changed. She called on Members to oppose the proposed changes to the boundaries.

Councillor Forrest seconded the motion.

The Provost advised that an amendment to the motion had been submitted by the Conservative Group, which sought to replace the wording of the motion with the following wording:

The Council notes the publication of the revised proposals for changes to the Scottish Parliamentary Constituency boundaries, which include moving Tranent and Elphinstone into a new Edinburgh Eastern, Musselburgh and Tranent constituency, and renaming the East Lothian constituency Lothian Eastern.

Council therefore calls for:

- A short-term working group to be formed with its first meeting within the next two weeks, of Group Leaders or nominated substitutes to consider alternative boundary formations; and
- Following that, mandates the Council's Chief Executive to write to the Boundary Commission on behalf of the Council with the unanimous verdict of that group.

Moving the amendment, Councillor Bruce remarked that the proposed constituency title of 'Lothian Eastern' did not make sense. He was concerned that the motion simply opposed the changes and that Boundaries Scotland would not respond to it, and he felt that reaching a consensus on an alternative proposal would be the best approach.

Councillor Findlay seconded the amendment.

Whilst having some sympathy with Councillor Bruce's amendment seeking a collaborative approach, Councillor Jardine was of the view that the timescales for this were not realistic and that Boundaries Scotland should devise a solution that takes account of the views of the affected communities.

Councillor Hampshire urged the Council to challenge the proposals. He believed that moving areas of East Lothian into Edinburgh did not take account of community cohesion and ties, and he argued that by retaining Tranent and Elphinstone in East Lothian and having Musselburgh in Midlothian North would still work as regards the electorate numbers. The proposals would also mean that MSPs would be working across a number of local authority areas, and that this was not appropriate. He offered to draft a response to Boundaries Scotland and share it with Group Leaders in order to seek to achieve cross-party agreement on this issue.

Councillor McGinn was concerned that the proposals would split communities and their historical links, and that no thought had been given to the impact on those communities. He believed that Tranent and Elphinstone were integral parts of East Lothian and should remain so, noting that this view had been shared at the recent Community Council meeting. He called on the Council to oppose the plans.

Councillor Menzies shared Councillor McGinn's concerns, adding that changes in the boundaries would also affect schools. She saw no reason to remove historical community ties, which would impact on the identity of East Lothian, and which would be further diluted by changing the constituency name to Lothian Eastern. She was concerned that without that identity fewer people would vote.

Having been invited to sum up, Councillor Dugdale indicated that she had nothing further to add to her previous comments.

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

For (4): Councillors Bruce, Collins, Findlay, McGuire
Against (14): Councillors Akhtar, Allan, Bennett, Cassini, Dugdale, Forrest, Hampshire, Jardine, McFarlane, McGinn, McMillan, Menzies, Ritchie, Yorkston

Abstentions (0):

The amendment fell.

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

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to reject the Boundaries Scotland's proposals and mandate the Council Leader to write to Boundaries Scotland urging it to reconsider the removal of Tranent and Elphinstone from the existing East Lothian constituency.
- ii. to reject the proposals to split the current Midlothian North and Musselburgh constituency and add Musselburgh to a new Edinburgh Eastern Constituency where there are no historical links and very few existing community links.
- iii. to request that Edinburgh Eastern should remain within the city boundary and the constituency links between Musselburgh and Midlothian North should be retained.
- iv. to request that Boundaries Scotland reconsider the abolition of the East Lothian constituency name; and
- v. to support the community efforts to oppose the proposals in Musselburgh, Tranent and Elphinstone and back the retention of the East Lothian constituency along with a Midlothian North and Musselburgh based on the current boundaries that are within East and Midlothian boundaries.

14. SUBMISSIONS TO THE MEMBERS' LIBRARY SERVICE, 12 FEBRUARY TO 7 APRIL 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 February 2023.

Decision

The Council agreed to note the reports submitted to the Members' Library Service between 12 February and 7 April 2024, as listed in Appendix 1 to the report.

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS – EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Council unanimously agreed to exclude the public from the following business containing exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 6 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

Ross High School RAAC Remediation

A private report submitted by the Executive Director for Place concerned with the remediation of RAAC at Ross High School was approved.

Applications for Funding to Musselburgh Common Good Committee

Two applications for funding from the Musselburgh Common Good Committee were approved, with EnjoyLeisure being granted £25,478.78 for a new accessible pool pod, and the Honest Toun Association being granted £14,956.49 for the Musselburgh Festival's Family Fun Day.

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REPORT TO: East Lothian Council
MEETING DATE: 25 June 2024
BY: Executive Director for Council Resources
SUBJECT: Financial Review 2023/24

2

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide an update on the **DRAFT** financial position for the year ending 31 March 2024.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Council is recommended to:

- Note the **DRAFT** revenue and capital out-turn positions, that these are provisional and remain subject to audit.
- Agree to the creation of earmarked reserves for service concessions and Scottish Future Trust funds for the Wallyford Learning Campus.
- Agree to provide a letter of guarantee to support the going concern assumption for East Lothian Leisure and Brunton Theatre Trust.
- Agree to transfer £230,000 from the Wallyford Learning Campus capital budget underspend to support the delivery of pitches at North Berwick High School.
- Agree to an additional contribution of £750,000 to the IJB to fund the Analogue to Digital capital project (£100,000 for costs incurred during 2023/24 and a commitment to fund the remaining implementation costs up to £750,000).
- Agree to the updated budget mitigation measures set out in paragraph 3.30, noting that these will remain under review through the quarterly monitoring process.
- Note that fiscal flexibilities for service concessions have now been applied in line with the decision by Council in February 2023.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 During 2023/24 Council has considered financial reviews setting out the enhanced challenges of managing an increasingly complex and growing range of financial pressures and associated risks.
- 3.2 The significance of these pressures is reflected in the Corporate Risk Register where “Managing the Financial Environment” risk remains the highest ever scoring risk being managed by the Council and continues to represent the key corporate priority risk.
- 3.3 This report sets out the financial results for the 2023/24 financial year across all service areas. These results remain in draft and subject to change pending the finalisation of the 2023/24 audit.

Unaudited Accounts – 2023/24

- 3.4 The draft accounts covering the financial year 2023/24 are in the process of being finalised for publication. The timetable for considering the annual accounts is set out below:
- In accordance with requirements, the Chief Financial Officer will be responsible for ensuring the draft accounts are submitted for audit by the statutory deadline of 30 June 2024. The **DRAFT** accounts will be submitted formally to Members’ Library Service following submission to audit.
 - The audit will be undertaken between June and November 2024.
 - Aligned to statutory requirements, the draft accounts will be available for public inspection during the first three weeks of July 2024.
 - A briefing will be offered to Elected Members in August 2024 to support a wider understanding of the final accounts and key issues contained in them.
 - In August 2024, the **DRAFT** accounts will be presented to Council for consideration in order to support formal requirements to enable members to scrutinise the unaudited accounts by 31 August 2024.
 - Following an indication by external audit of their planned work schedule, the audited accounts are expected to be formally considered by Audit and Governance Committee at the end of November 2024.
- 3.5 The accounts and financial results will remain in **DRAFT** pending the completion of the audit. Members will be kept fully apprised of any material changes that may arise during the course of the audit.

General Services Revenue Summary – 31 March 2024

- 3.6 An analysis of the financial position across service groups is set out in **Appendix 1** with further details regarding the main variances in the paragraphs below.

- 3.7 Several budgets have changed to reflect necessary accounting adjustments to ensure that the surplus or deficit on service areas reflects only costs that are chargeable direct to the taxpayer. The most significant of these adjustments relates to IAS19 Pension requirements. No budget variances have arisen from these adjustments.
- 3.8 In summary, before applying use of reserves and other mitigations, there was an overspend of £12.273 million (4.1%). The total includes one-off costs to be funded from earmarked reserves of £2.233 million. The main reasons for the overspend are:
- Children's Services - £2 million. This is due to overspends in commissioned external placements.
 - IJB - £ 3.122 million
 - Asset Review Savings - £400,000 (which will be delivered in 2024/25)
 - Trading Accounts - £1 million
 - One-off Use of Reserves to fund recurring budget pressures - £9.7 million.
- 3.9 A number of one-off savings have resulted in non-recurring underspends which partly offset the financial pressure in-year. These include:
- Education - £3.964 million
 - Additional Funding for Pay & RSG - £1.4 million
 - Infrastructure - £264,000
 - Communities - £873,000
- 3.10 It is anticipated that the IJB overspend will be met from IJB reserves, subject to an additional capital contribution from the Council. This is detailed further in paragraphs 3.23 to 3.26 below.
- 3.11 The application of the IJB reserves reduces the overspend from £12.273 million to £9.151 million (3.0%). The overspend will be funded by reserves as set out in **Appendix 3**.

2023/24 Efficiencies

- 3.12 During 2023/24, Council approved £4.402 million of planned efficiencies, of which, £875,000 were not delivered in full. These include:
- Increased Rental Charges for Day Centres - £175,000. This saving was not delivered, resulting in a budget pressure in 2023/24.
 - Review of Council Assets - £400,000. This will be delivered in 2024/25 when the full saving from ending the rental agreement for Randall House is recognised. The target for asset review savings increased by £1 million within the agreed budget for 2024/25 and work to develop plans for achieving this is ongoing.

- Reducing Public Holidays by 2 days - £300,000. The budget agreed for 2024/25 assumes that this saving will be delivered in the current financial year. If this is not achievable, then it will be necessary to identify alternative measures to offset this.

3.13 Further detail is set out in **Appendix 2**.

Reserves

3.14 The impact of the 2023/24 revenue out-turn will be a net reduction in general reserves of £8.7 million (The £9.151 million overspend on the ledger adjusted by the increase in the affordable housing earmarked reserve). This comprises drawdowns for planned use of reserves and the in-year budget overspend, offset by contributions to earmarked reserves where funds will be required to fulfil a specific purpose in the future.

3.15 Two new earmarked reserves are proposed:

- **Scottish Futures Trust Earmarked Reserve - £1.292 million**, this funding is to support maintaining the new Wallyford Learning Campus at specific standards required to access ongoing SFT grant funding conditions. The funding profile does not match the likely maintenance and renewal programme on the building and this reserve would offset years when the costs of the work exceed the available funding in-year. This reserve, if topped up annually, would give the Council some security around its ability to meet future building costs.
- **Service Concessions Earmarked Reserve - £1.043 million**, this reserve will partially offset the future costs associated with the extended repayment period on PPP assets, which arises because of applying fiscal flexibilities in line with the decision made by Council in February 2023. The reserve, if topped up on an annual basis will mitigate future financial risks to the Council which may arise from extending the repayment period for these assets.

3.16 As noted above, Council agreed in February 2023 to apply permitted fiscal flexibilities for service concessions (PPP) assets. This has now been applied and the impact of the backdated accounting adjustment has increased opening reserves by £14.193 million, which will be used to support and enable change to deliver financial sustainability, as previously agreed by Council. This represents a non-cash adjustment to reserves, which means that it will be necessary to borrow to spend these. Taking this into account, the movement in the general reserves balance reported at 31 March 2023 is an overall increase of £14.193 million.

3.17 The Council's approved reserves strategy sets out the requirement to maintain a minimum unallocated balance on the general fund, which is currently set at £7.6 million, and this level has been maintained. The remaining increase to the reserves balance arising from the application of fiscal flexibilities has been allocated to the Transformation earmarked reserve, in line with the previous council decision.

- 3.18 An indicative summary of general reserves at 31 March 2024 is provided in **Appendix 3**.
- 3.19 The closing reserves balance at 31 March 2024 enables unallocated balances to be maintained above the minimum acceptable level set out within the financial strategy. However, as noted in the 2022/23 Annual Audit Report:
- The Council's level of uncommitted general reserves as a percentage of overall budget is below the Scottish average as at 31 March 2022 of 3.48% (based on the 2024/25 budget, the minimum unallocated balance would need to increase to £11.5 million in order to align with the 2022/23 Scottish average.
 - 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.
 - One of the key measures of the financial health of a body is the level of reserves held.
- 3.20 In addition, the risks around the low level of unallocated reserves relative to the level of risk facing the Council has continued to be raised within the Financial Strategy and wider Council finance reports. Given the extent of risk factors which the council continues to face, it is essential that action is taken to preserve the unallocated general fund balance over the coming year, in order to ensure that the council holds adequate contingency and would have the capacity to respond to any future unforeseen events.

Additional Scottish Government Funding

- 3.21 In 2023/24 there has been net additional funding totalling £1.4 million from the Scottish Government. **Appendix 4** sets out the full details of additional funding provided during 2023/24. The largest element of this was additional funding of just under £1 million as a part contribution to support the complex funding arrangements for the 2023/24 pay award.

Council Tax

- 3.22 Overall, Council Tax income was £290,000 higher than budget. In percentage terms this represents a small variance to the budget set and is mainly due to additional properties and lower than anticipated discounts.

Integrated Joint Board (IJB)

- 3.23 The IJB has delegated authority over the majority of the Health and Social Care budget along with a small number of other budgets within Community Housing, the Housing Revenue Account and Housing Capital. The management of these resources remains in line with the scheme of integration and wider overall IJB resources.

- 3.24 The IJB delivered an overspend of £3.122 million mainly due to the increasing demand for commissioned care services for clients including Care Home placements and Care at Home services.
- 3.25 This overspend has been funded as follows:
- IJB Ear-marked Reserves - £763,000
 - IJB Reserves - £2.359 million (see comments on analogue to digital costs below)
- 3.26 There is a proposed additional capital contribution from the Council to fund analogue to digital costs for IJB services. £128,000 was incurred in 2023/24 with a balance of £622,000 to come in future years. By doing this, it enables the reserve that was being held to cover these costs to be used as one of the levers to offset the overspend. It is recommended that this proposal is agreed.
- 3.27 The impact of the in-year overspend is a significant reduction to IJB reserves which will leave limited capacity to respond to future budget overspends in this way. This presents a risk to funding partners if any future budget overspends cannot be contained within IJB reserves. The IJB has therefore developed a recovery plan which seeks to ensure that budgets are delivered within available budgets in 2024/25 and this will continue to be closely monitored.

Council's Group Components

- 3.28 In previous years, a "letter of guarantee" was provided to both Enjoy and Brunton Theatre Trust in closing off their final accounts. The "guarantee", whilst not prescriptive in respect of quantum, gave both organisations positive assurance that the Council would work proactively with them to manage cash flow and fulfil their obligations should the need arise.
- 3.29 It is recommended that a similar "letter of guarantee" is supported for both Enjoy and Brunton Theatre Trust as part the 2023/24 accounts closedown.

Update on Mitigation Measures

- 3.30 In response to the projected in-year overspend, Council agreed to continue with a number of temporary budget mitigation measures. These measures have necessarily resulted in some disruption to service delivery alongside some improvements to the outturn position. The agreed measures were designed to be temporary, and it is appropriate that they are revisited at this time. Given the ongoing challenging financial position that the Council faces, along with the wide range of significant ongoing risk factors, it remains necessary to continue to operate enhanced controls to mitigate the risk and impact of further budget overspends. It is therefore proposed that the following ongoing control measures will apply from the date of this meeting:
- Recruitment – posts will only be filled if there would be an obvious detrimental impact on the three agreed short term Council Plan priorities from not doing so and sign-off has been given by CMT and

EMT. This may result in ongoing disruptions to service delivery and closure of Council facilities and bi-weekly recruitment will continue.

- All Council managers must operate within approved budget levels, preserving underspends where possible.
- 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.
- Use of agency staff should be kept to a minimum and should be kept under close review.
- Council officers will continue to work with partner bodies including the IJB to minimise the risk of overspends.
- In-year financial review papers will continue to be reported to Council rather than Cabinet.

3.31 These control measures will remain under review through the quarterly budget monitoring process. It is recommended that these measures are approved.

General Services Capital Summary – 31 March 2024

3.32 General Service's gross capital expenditure at the end of 2023/24 was £51.098 million against an updated budget of £108.101 million (Quarter 3 forecast of £52.9 million). The mitigation measures approved at Council in August 2023 to pause or delay any uncommitted expenditure is reflected in the outturn figure. A significant proportion of this underspend has already been re-profiled as part of the work on the 2024/25 capital plan and will be utilised in future years. Where appropriate, this is matched against anticipated income in line with individual project requirements.

3.33 Capital Income applied during 2023/24 was £28.496 million with the most significant element being other funding contributions, which relate to external funding sources, totalling £11.796 million. More details setting out the specific project spend relative to approved budgets is set out in **Appendix 5**.

3.34 Inflation and the challenging economic/market conditions continue to impact the delivery of the capital programme and remain a key element for monitoring, spend projections and overall capital plan affordability. A summary of the key movements since Period 9 are shown below:

- An acceleration of budgets for Blindwells, Craighall and Whitecraig new build primary schools show a spend profile greater than the projected outturn figure at quarter 3 by £3.9 million.
- Urgent harbour wall works at North Berwick were undertaken during March 2024 and were fully externally funded.
- The Markle Level Crossing Replacement (Roads Externally Funded) started onsite in March 2024 which increased the spend significantly

compared to projection at Q3 by £1.1 million. This is a fully externally funded project.

- There has been a saving in the region of £3 million for the project at Wallyford Learning Campus.

3.35 The borrowing requirement reduced from a projected figure of £23.9 million to £22.6 million. Other significant movements to income include:

- An increase in the use of developer contributions to £8.5 million, primarily for Blindwells and Craighall new schools.
- Post completion developer contributions have been removed as these have been transferred to a Capital Fund to support the Loans Fund repayments in future years.
- Other funding sources which include external grants have increased by £4.7 million compared to the projected figure at Quarter 3 to £11.8 million.

3.36 The current capital programme continues to be aligned to the Local Development Plan requirements and remains ambitious. A number of projects have moved from the design and planning stage to construction over the last 12 months.

3.37 Whilst recognising the extent of the plan, there remains significant external challenges as a result of wider inflationary pressures. These are collectively placing significant and increased financial risk to the deliverability and affordability of the current capital plan. The impact of this remains under close review, with further updates to be provided during this year.

Housing Revenue Account Summary – 31 March 2024

3.38 The HRA delivered a budget surplus of £1.342 million against a planned surplus of £1.250 million. The additional £92,000 surplus allowed for a slightly higher than budgeted CFCR. Voids remain high and work is continuing to remedy. **Appendix 6** sets out the revenue spend for the year.

3.39 The HRA General Reserve as at 31 March 2023 increased from £1.486 million to £1.535 million and this is in line with the planned opening budget for 2024/25 that was in the HRA budget that was approved in February 2024.

3.40 Looking ahead, in order to meet the two key tests in the financial strategy, a £1 million minimum HRA balance and a debt-to-income ratio below 40%, adhering to a minimum 5% rent strategy is essential in order to maintain the proposed capital investment in modernising properties and building new council houses.

3.41 Capital spend at year-end was slightly under £43 million in line with forecasts at Quarter 3. This position reflects the acceleration of a number of new build council house sites, the timing of which the Council is not

always in control of as developers determine the pace of house building. Further details are provided in **Appendix 7**.

- 3.42 There remain challenges in delivering the programme due to shortage of labour resources, uncertainty in the housing market due to the current economic situation and challenges in awarding and mobilising of contracts.

Conclusion

- 3.43 The Council continues to operate in a challenging, complex and ever-changing financial environment. Within General Services revenue there is an overspend of more than £12 million before applying mitigations, within which, there is a recurring pressure in excess of £10 million. There also remain significant challenges in ensuring that the capital programme remains affordable.

- 3.44 Many of these pressures will be recurring and the collective scale of financial risks and challenges facing the Council remains at an unprecedented level.

- 3.45 The Council will continue to take steps to ensure that it can sustain the delivery of vital services to the community and more effectively manage wider assets. The scale of the challenge will require difficult decisions in the years ahead to ensure ongoing financial sustainability.

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 and in the supporting appendices.
- 6.2 Personnel - none
- 6.3 Other – none

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Council – 13 December 2022 – Item 4 – Financial & Capital Strategy

- 7.2 Council – 28 February 2023 – Item 3 – Budget Development & 2023/24 Council Tax and Rent Levels
- 7.3 Council – 28 February 2023 – Item 4 – Rent Proposals 2023/24 to 2027/28
- 7.4 Council – 28 February 2023 – Item 5a – Budget Proposals on General Services (General Services Capital)
- 7.5 Council – 28 February 2023 – Item 5b – Budget Proposals on General Services (General Services Revenue)
- 7.6 Council – 28 February 2023 – Item 5c – General Fund Budget Projections 2023/24 to 2027/28
- 7.7 Council – 28 February 2023 – Item 6 – Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24 to 2027/28
- 7.8 Council – 29 August 2023 – Item 3 – Finance Update
- 7.9 Council – 31 October 2023 – Item 2 – Finance Update
- 7.10 Council – 12 December 2023 – Item 2 – Finance Update
- 7.11 Council – 20 February 2024 – Item 1 – Period 9 Financial Update

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Appendix 1
 East Lothian Council
 Budget Monitoring 2023/24 - Year-end

Service	Head of Service	Business Unit	Out-turn			2023/24 Budget Variance (Surplus) / Deficit £'000	2023/24 Budget Variance %
			2023/24 Actual	2023/24 Budget	2023/24 Budget Variance (Surplus) / Deficit £'000		
			£'000	£'000	£'000		
Education & Children's	Children's	Performance & Service Delivery	1,359	1,367	-8	-0.6%	
Education & Children's	Children's	Management	5,945	4,297	1,648	38.4%	
Education & Children's	Children's	Assessment HUB and Early Interventions	2,883	2,864	19	0.7%	
Education & Children's	Children's	Long Term Social Work Supervisory Groups	2,625	2,624	1	0.0%	
Education & Children's	Children's	TAC, Disability & Resources	7,865	7,691	174	2.3%	
Education & Children's	Children's	Disability Short Breaks	909	689	220	31.9%	
EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S	CHILDREN'S TOTAL		21,586	19,532	2,054	10.5%	
Education & Children's	Education	Additional Support for Learning	12,485	12,592	-107	-0.8%	
Education & Children's	Education	Pre-school Education & Childcare	15,456	16,678	-1,222	-7.3%	
Education & Children's	Education	Schools - Primary	52,827	53,520	-693	-1.3%	
Education & Children's	Education	Schools - Secondary	50,970	52,398	-1,428	-2.7%	
Education & Children's	Education	Schools - Support Services	4,362	4,633	-271	-5.8%	
Education & Children's	Education	East Lothian Works	1,469	1,712	-243	-14.2%	
EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S	EDUCATION TOTAL		137,569	141,533	-3,964	-2.8%	
EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S TOTAL			159,155	161,065	-1,910	-1.2%	
Council Resources	Finance	Financial Services	3,667	3,752	-85	-2.3%	
Council Resources	Finance	Revenues & Benefits	4,695	4,787	-92	-1.9%	
Council Resources	Finance	Procurement	994	791	203	25.7%	
COUNCIL RESOURCES	FINANCE TOTAL		9,356	9,330	26	0.3%	
Council Resources	Corporate	IT Services	3,644	3,377	267	7.9%	
Council Resources	Corporate	People & Council Support	4,071	3,680	391	10.6%	
Council Resources	Corporate	Governance	2,249	2,378	-129	-5.4%	
Council Resources	Corporate	Communications	438	455	-17	-3.7%	
COUNCIL RESOURCES	CORPORATE TOTAL		10,402	9,890	512	5.2%	
COUNCIL RESOURCES TOTAL			19,758	19,220	538	2.8%	
Health & Social Care Partnership	Head of Operations	Adult Social Work	29,247	28,044	1,203	4.3%	
Health & Social Care Partnership	Head of Operations	Acute & Ongoing Care	11,417	11,487	-70	-0.6%	
Health & Social Care Partnership	Head of Operations	Rehabilitation	2,242	2,211	31	1.4%	
Health & Social Care Partnership	Head of Operations	Learning Disability & MH Community Services	18,058	17,810	248	1.4%	
Health & Social Care Partnership	Head of Operations	Head of Operations	2,775	3,879	-1,104	-28.5%	
Health & Social Care Partnership	Head of Operations	Business & Performance IJB	4,791	5,099	-308	-6.0%	
HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP	IJB TOTAL		68,530	68,530	0	0.0%	
Health & Social Care Partnership	Head of Operations	Business & Performance Non-IJB	872	540	332	61.5%	
HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP	Non-IJB TOTAL		872	540	332	61.5%	
HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP TOTAL			69,402	69,070	332	0.5%	
Place	Development	Planning	1,156	1,370	-214	-15.6%	
Place	Development	Economic Development	1,049	878	171	19.5%	
PLACE	DEVELOPMENT TOTAL		2,205	2,248	-43	-1.9%	
Place	Housing	Housing, Strategy & Development	420	252	168	66.7%	
Place	Housing	Property Maintenance Trading Account	-951	-951	0	0.0%	
Place	Housing	Community Housing	3,084	3,247	-163	-5.0%	
PLACE	HOUSING TOTAL		2,553	2,548	5	0.2%	
Place	Infrastructure	Facility Support Services	4,116	4,149	-33	-0.8%	
Place	Infrastructure	Facility Trading Activity	-53	-331	278	-84.0%	
Place	Infrastructure	Asset Maint & Engineering Services	3,349	3,494	-145	-4.1%	
Place	Infrastructure	Asset Management & Capital Planning	-1,367	-1,147	-220	19.2%	
Place	Infrastructure	Landscape & Countryside Management	6,228	6,178	50	0.8%	
Place	Infrastructure	Roads Network	4,964	5,209	-245	-4.7%	
Place	Infrastructure	Roads Trading Activity	54	-666	720	-108.1%	
Place	Infrastructure	Transportation	1,822	2,112	-290	-13.7%	
Place	Infrastructure	Waste Services	10,115	10,374	-259	-2.5%	
Place	Infrastructure	Active Business Unit	3,933	4,053	-120	-3.0%	
PLACE	INFRASTRUCTURE TOTAL		33,161	33,425	-264	-0.8%	
Place	Communities & Partnerships	Corporate Policy & Improvement	791	758	33	4.4%	
Place	Communities & Partnerships	Connected Communities	6,530	6,835	-305	-4.5%	
Place	Communities & Partnerships	Protective Services	1,902	2,139	-237	-11.1%	
Place	Communities & Partnerships	Customer Services Group	4,435	4,799	-364	-7.6%	
PLACE	COMMUNITIES & PARTNERSHIPS TOTAL		13,658	14,531	-873	-6.0%	
PLACE TOTAL			51,577	52,752	-1,175	0.0%	
SERVICE TOTAL			299,892	302,107	-2,215	-0.7%	
CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TOTAL			-290,741	-302,107	11,366	-3.8%	
TOTAL			9,151	0	9,151	3.0%	
Movement in Reserves							
General Services Overspend (incl. IJB)			12,273				
Less IJB Reserves applied			-3,122				
General Services Overspend			9,151				
General Services Overspend			9,151				
<i>Funded by:</i>							
Committed for Future Budgets			9,727				
Transformation Fund			1,042				
Ring Fenced Funds and Other balances			428				
Service Concession reserve			-1,043				
SFT Earmarked Reserve			-1,292				
Empty Homes Premium for Affordable Housing (excluding increase in 2023/24)			289				
Total Reserves Funding			9,151				
Reconciliation			0				
General Services Overspend			9,151				
Increase in transformation reserve from PPP Flexibility			-13,741				
Increase in Empty Homes Premium for Affordable Housing Reserve			-450				
Capital Funding to Support National Pay Funding			-2,315				
Increase in Contingency Reserve			-400				
Increase in Capital Grants Unapplied			-3,106				
Reduction in Capital Receipts			594				
HRA			-48				
Total Movement in Reserves			-10,315				
Usable Reserves							
Opening Usable Reserves			-45,192				
Movement in Reserves			-10,315				
Closing Usable Reserves			-55,507				

Appendix 2
East Lothian Council
2023/24 Budget Efficiencies - Year-end

Service	2023/24			
	Achieved	Amber	Unachievable	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Education	999	0	0	
Finance	107	0	0	
Corporate Services	95	0	0	
H&SCP	250	0	0	
Development	280	0	0	
Housing	78	0	0	
Communities	245	0	0	
Infrastructure	848	0	175	
Corporate Management	625	0	700	
Total	3,527	0	875	4,402
	80.12%	0.00%	19.88%	

Appendix 3
 East Lothian Council
 2023/24 Reserves

Description	Opening Balance	Adjustments	Revised Opening Balance	Transfer of Capital Grant to Fund Pay Award	Change	Total Change	Closing Balance 2023/24
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Fund Reserve							
Earmarked							
Committed for Future Budgets	8,524	0	8,524	2,315	-9,727	-7,412	1,112
Transformation Fund	5,826	13,741	19,567	0	-1,042	12,699	18,525
DSM	1,148	0	1,148	0	0	0	1,148
Ring Fenced Funds and Other balances	2,253	0	2,253	0	-428	-428	1,825
Service Concession reserve	0	0	0	0	1,043	1,043	1,043
SFT Earmarked Reserve	0	0	0	0	1,292	1,292	1,292
Empty Homes Premium for Affordable Housing	1,463	0	1,463	0	161	161	1,624
Total Earmarked Reserves	19,214	13,741	32,955	2,315	-8,701	7,355	26,569
Contingency	7,200	452	7,652	0	-52	400	7,600
Total General Fund Reserves	26,414	14,193	40,607	2,315	-8,753	7,755	34,169
Other Reserves							
Insurance Fund	2,684	0	2,684	0	0	0	2,684
Capital Receipts Reserve	14,607	0	14,607	-2,315	1,721	-594	14,013
Capital Grants Unapplied Account	0	0	0	0	3,106	3,106	3,106
HRA	1,487	0	1,487	0	48	48	1,535
Total Other Reserves	18,778	0	18,778	-2,315	4,875	2,560	21,338
Total Reserves	45,192	14,193	59,385	0	-3,878	10,315	55,507

Appendix 4**East Lothian Council****Budget Monitoring 2023/24 - Additional Funding from the Scottish Government**

	£million
2022/23 GRG (per Budget Amendment)	215.992
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Additional Funding - GRG	
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Teachers Pay Funding (Additional Funding confirmed through redetermination)	0.637
Teacher Induction Scheme (Additional Funding confirmed through redetermination)	0.128
Ukraine Refugee Resettlement Teams	0.050
Climate Intelligence Service	-0.007
Educational Psychologists	0.009
Change to SDS Funding in Redeterminations	-0.050
Local Government Pay - Confirmed share £2.976m	0.025
Local Government Pay Deal - Confirmed Share of £29m	0.998
Support for School Staff Training	0.019
DHP Adjustment	-0.339
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Total Additional Funding	1.470
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Revised GRG	217.462
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Appendix 5
 East Lothian Council
 General Services Capital Budget Monitoring Summary 2023-24
 Year-end

Expenditure	Annual (In-Year)					
	Updated Budget 2023/24	Actual 2023/24	Updated Budget-Actual Variance 2023/24 (Surplus)/ Deficit	Previously reported Outturn to Council (P9/Q3)	P9/Q3 Projection - Actual Variance	Reprofiled during 2024/25 budget process
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Community Projects						
Community Intervention	375	91	(284)	93	(2)	-
Community Intervention Fund - Pump Tracks	500	35	(465)	25	10	-
Community Public Art	0	25	25	10	15	-
Bleachingfield Centre Remodelling Works	90	5	(85)	1	4	90
Dunbar Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS)	405	0	(405)	405	(405)	-
East Saltoun Community Hall	400	0	(400)	-	-	-
North Berwick Skatepark	0	152	152	165	(13)	-
Support for Business	229	353	124	323	30	-
CCTV	247	28	(219)	100	(72)	-
Town Centre Regeneration	1,345	737	(608)	1,205	(468)	-
Total Community Projects	3,591	1,424	(2,166)	2,327	(902)	90
Town Centre Regeneration (PBIP) Grant	(1,520)	(775)	745	(1,095)	319	-
Other Funding Sources	(694)	(272)	422	(664)	392	(90)
Total Income: Community Projects	(2,214)	(1,047)	1,167	(1,759)	712	(90)
Community Projects - General Capital Grant/Borrowing Requirement	1,377	377	(1,000)	568	(191)	0
ICT						
IT Programme & Digital Opportunities	2,200	1,889	(311)	2,200	(311)	-
Telecare System upgrade to Digital	0	185	185	-	185	-
Total ICT	2,200	2,074	(126)	2,200	(126)	-
Other Funding Sources	-	(55)	(55)	-	(55)	-
Total Income: ICT	-	(55)	(55)	-	(55)	-
ICT - General Capital Grant/Borrowing Requirement	2,200	2,019	(181)	2,200	(181)	0
Fleet						
Amenties - Machinery & Equipment - replacement	246	277	31	277	(1)	-
Vehicles	4,299	3,157	(1,142)	3,143	14	-
Total Fleet	4,545	3,434	(1,111)	3,420	14	-
Other Funding Sources	0	0	-	-	-	-
Total Income: Fleet	0	0	-	-	-	-
Fleet - General Capital Grant/Borrowing Requirement	4,545	3,434	(1,111)	3,420	14	0
Open Space						
Synthetic Pitch Replacement Programme	571	282	(289)	355	(73)	-
Cemeteries (Burial Grounds)	1,077	440	(637)	714	(274)	-
River Tyne / Haddington Flood Protection scheme	425	16	(409)	10	6	-
Coastal / Flood Protection schemes - Musselburgh	2,978	1,783	(1,195)	1,637	146	1,093
Coastal Car Park Toilets	64	29	(35)	35	(6)	-
Core Path Plan	50	0	(50)	-	-	-
Harbour Walls	0	500	500	-	500	-
Mains Farm Town Park & Pavilion	4	8	4	4	4	-
Nature Restoration	125	272	147	331	(59)	-
Replacement Play Equipment	317	184	(132)	192	(8)	-
Polson Park	20	0	(20)	-	-	-
Sports and Recreation LDP	3,068	744	(2,325)	900	(156)	-
Waste - New Bins	160	191	31	185	6	-
Waste - Machinery & Equipment - replacement	40	17	(23)	15	2	-
Total Open Space	8,899	4,466	(4,433)	4,378	88	1,093
Developer Contribution	(1,746)	(516)	1,230	(715)	199	-
Capital Receipts	-	(231)	231	(274)	42	(303)
Other Funding Sources	(1,450)	(1,090)	360	(538)	(552)	54
Total Income: Open Space	(3,196)	(1,837)	1,351	(1,526)	(310)	(249)
Open Space - General Capital Grant/Borrowing Requirement	5,703	2,629	(3,074)	2,851	(222)	844
Roads, Lighting and related assets						
Cycling Walking Safer Streets	582	1,127	545	1,046	81	-
East Linton Rail Stop / Infrastructure	27	0	(26)	0	0	-
Parking Improvements	274	129	(145)	280	(151)	-
Roads	6,865	5,867	(998)	6,205	(338)	-
Roads - externally funded projects	4,251	4,649	398	3,500	1,149	-
Total Roads, Lighting and related assets	11,999	11,772	(226)	11,031	741	-
Developer Contribution	(47)	-	47	(47)	47	-
Other Funding Sources	(4,786)	(6,103)	(1,318)	(4,499)	(1,605)	-
Total Income: Roads, Lighting and related assets	(4,833)	(6,103)	(1,271)	(4,546)	(1,557)	-
Roads etc. - General Capital Grant/Borrowing Requirement	7,166	5,669	(1,497)	6,485	(816)	0
Property - Education						
Aberlady Primary - extension	2,868	11	(2,857)	50	(39)	300

Blindwells Primary - new school	13,650	2,253	(11,397)	774	1,478	257
Craighall Primary - New School	13,451	2,888	(10,562)	778	2,110	222
East Linton Primary - new school	674	0	(674)	-	-	-
Free School Meals Expansion to P6-7	1,544	0	(1,544)	-	-	-
Gullane Primary - extension including Early Learning and 1140	0	1	1	-	1	-
Law Primary - extension including Early Learning and 1140	581	661	81	1,216	(555)	-
Letham Primary - New School	112	29	(83)	30	(1)	-
North Berwick High School - Extension	1,331	1,650	319	1,309	341	-
Ormiston Primary - extension	34	18	(16)	100	(82)	-
Pinkie St Peter's Primary - sports hall extension	846	500	(346)	551	(51)	296
Pinkie St Peter's Primary - extension including Early Learning and 1140	1,115	1,225	110	1,395	(171)	(280)
Preston Lodge High School - extension (phase 1)	1,200	0	(1,200)	-	-	1,200
Prestonpans Primary - upgrades	245	0	(245)	-	-	245
Ross High School - extension	219	884	665	644	240	-
School Estate - Curriculum Upgrades	1,083	0	(1,083)	38	(38)	12
St Gabriel's Primary - extension including Early Learning and 1140	122	34	(88)	42	(8)	-
Wallyford Primary - New School	108	0	(108)	-	-	108
Wallyford Learning Campus	9,371	5,405	(3,966)	8,898	(3,492)	-
West Barns Primary - extension including Early Learning and 1140	633	1,003	370	999	4	-
Whitecraig Primary - new school including Early Learning and 1140	8,436	1,062	(7,373)	759	303	741
Windygoul Primary - Early learning and 1140 extension	1,991	17	(1,975)	17	0	20
Total Property - Education	59,613	17,642	(41,972)	17,600	42	3,121
Developer Contribution	(11,484)	(8,004)	3,480	(5,185)	(2,819)	(1,173)
Developer Contribution (Post completion)	(427)	-	427	(251)	251	-
1140 Grant Income	(2,907)	(1,364)	1,544	(1,341)	(23)	(20)
Other Funding Sources	-	-37	(37)	-	(37)	-
Total Income: Property - Education	(14,818)	(9,404)	5,414	(6,776)	(2,628)	(1,193)
Property Education - General Capital Grant/Borrowing Requirement	44,795	8,237	(36,558)	10,824	(2,586)	1,928
Property - Other						
Accelerating Growth	6,614	3,676	(2,937)	4,509	(832)	-
- Cockenzie	612	85	(526)	593	(507)	-
- Levelling Up Project Cockenzie	0	440	440	300	140	-
- Blindwells	153	30	(124)	65	(35)	-
- Innovation Hub	2,748	0	(2,748)	450	(450)	-
- A1/QMU Junction	3,101	3,122	21	3,101	21	-
Brunton Hall - Improved Community Access	23	0	(23)	27	(27)	-
Court Accommodation	1,506	18	(1,488)	150	(132)	369
New ways of working Programme	1,637	1,077	(560)	1,637	(560)	-
Prestongrange Museum	1,840	193	(1,648)	340	(147)	-
Property Renewals	2,000	2,095	95	2,000	95	-
Replacement Childrens House	867	0	(867)	-	-	867
Sports Centres	240	270	30	240	30	-
Whitecraig Community Centre	49	0	(49)	49	(49)	-
Total Property - Other	14,775	7,329	(7,446)	8,951	(1,622)	1,236
Developer Contribution	(1,909)	-	(1,909)	(5,605)	5,605	-
Developer Contribution (Post completion)	(31)	(132)	102	(862)	729	-
Capital receipts	(2,283)	(3,703)	1,420	(887)	(2,816)	-
Other Funding Sources	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Income: Property - Other	(4,223)	(3,836)	(387)	(7,354)	3,518	-
Property Other - General Capital Grant/Borrowing Requirement	10,553	3,494	(7,833)	1,597	1,897	1,236
Total Property Spend - Education and Other	74,389	24,971	(49,418)	26,551	(1,580)	4,356
Total Income: Property - Education and Other	(19,041)	(13,240)	5,026	(14,130)	891	(1,193)
Property-Education and Other - General Capital Grant/Borrowing Requirement	55,348	11,731	(44,391)	12,421	(690)	3,164
Capital Plan Fees	2,479	2,421	(58)	2,479	(58)	-
PPP Projects	-	536	536	497	39	-
Total Gross Expenditure	108,101	51,098	(57,003)	52,883	(1,784)	5,540
Other Funding Sources	-	(536)	(536)	(497)	(39)	-
Total Income:PPP Projects	-	(536)	(536)	(497)	(39)	-
Income						
Developer Contribution	(13,277)	(8,519)	4,758	(5,947)	(2,573)	(1,173)
Developer Contribution (Post completion)	(2,336)	-	2,336	(5,856)	5,856	-
1140 Grant Income	(2,907)	(1,364)	1,544	(1,341)	(23)	(20)
Town Centre Regeneration (PBIP) Grant	(1,520)	(775)	745	(1,095)	319	-
Capital receipts	(2,031)	(2,364)	(333)	(3,135)	772	(303)
Other Funding Sources	(9,212)	(11,796)	(2,584)	(7,085)	(4,711)	(36)
Scottish Government General Capital Grant	(5,626)	(3,678)	1,948	(4,524)	846	-
Total Income	(36,909)	(28,496)	8,413	(28,983)	486	(1,532)
Borrowing Requirement	71,192	22,602	(48,590)	23,900	(1,298)	4,008
Actual as % of Approved Budget						
Actual as % of Updated Budget		47%				
Actual as % of Projected Outturn			97%			

Appendix 6
East Lothian Council
Budget Monitoring HRA 2023/24 - Year-end

	2023/24 Budget	2023/24 Actual	2023/24 Budget Variance (Surplus) / Deficit
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Total Income	-37,483	-37,727	-244
Total Expenditure	36,233	36,385	152
(Surplus) / Deficit for Year	-1,250	-1,342	-92

	2022/23 Budget	2022/23 Actual
	£'000	£'000
Management of Balances		
Opening (Surplus) / Deficit	-1,486	-1,486
CFCR	1,200	1,293
(Surplus) / Deficit for Year	-1,249	-1,342
Closing (Surplus) / Deficit	-1,535	-1,535

Appendix 7
East Lothian Council
Budget Monitoring HRA Capital 2023/24 - Year-end

	2023/24 Budget	2023/24 Actual	2023/24 Budget Variance (Surplus) / Deficit
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Modernisation	13,209	13,197	-12
New Council Housing	19,037	27,862	8,825
Fees	1,438	1,561	123
Mortgage to Rent	280	230	-50
TOTAL	33,964	42,850	8,886

Funded By:

	2022/23 Budget	2022/23 Actual	2022/23 Budget Variance (Surplus) / Deficit
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Grants	-6,500	-10,214	-3,714
Grants MTR	-196	-126	70
CFCR	-1,200	-1,293	-93
S75 Funding	0	-154	-154
Borrowing	-26,068	-31,063	-4,995
TOTAL	-33,964	-42,850	-8,886

REPORT TO: East Lothian Council

MEETING DATE: 25 June 2024

BY: Executive Director for Place

SUBJECT: Property Asset Strategy and Management Plan 2024-2028

3

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek approval for the proposed Property Asset Strategy & Management Plan 2024-2028.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Council is recommended to approve the Property Asset Strategy & Management Plan 2024-2028.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The East Lothian Council Asset Strategy & Management Plan 2018-23 was approved by Cabinet in January 2019. The strategy acknowledged the significant role assets have in the delivery of the Council's long-term goals and aspirations. This new strategy, focusing specifically on property assets, covers the period 2024 to 2028 and has been developed recognising that the current position is radically different from that in 2018.

Property Asset Principles

- 3.2 A set of proposed property asset principles have been developed and these have been used to guide this strategy and management plan. They are:
- Effectively manage property assets
 - Meet demographic need for services
 - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
 - Meet immediate savings target and bridge future affordability gap
 - Generate income and encourage economic development

- Work with communities and partners to maximise shared opportunities.
- 3.3 East Lothian Council owns and manages a diverse property estate consisting of 677 land and building assets.

Operational Property Performance

- 3.4 Operational property is used to directly support services delivered by the Council and includes the learning estate, community centres, offices, sports facilities, and care homes. The gross internal area (GIA) of operational property is set to increase by an estimated 9.2% over 2022/23 figures to meet the demands of an increasing population, particularly in relation to the learning estate.
- 3.5 The percentage of operational properties in good or satisfactory condition in 2022/23 was 87.98%. Condition surveys are underway to update condition information, but the maintenance need over the next five years is estimated to be in the region of £75m, which is more than current resources.

The revenue running costs of the operational property estate was £26.391m in 2022/23. Revenue savings targets totalling £4.618m were agreed as part of the budget setting process in February 2024.

Property Asset Management Strategy

- 3.6 The Property Asset Management Strategy sets out our aims in relation to the management and investment in property. It recognises the challenges faced from a property estate that is increasing in size at a time when we need to reduce running costs, future maintenance need and greenhouse gas emissions.
- 3.7 Significant work has been done to embed property as a corporate resource. Implementation of the corporate landlord approach has started, and this has seen recent benefits such as consolidation of staff in John Muir House and the closure of Randall House. The asset governance model has supported this and has allowed consistent and transparent decisions on all property matters. However, there are some aspects of the corporate landlord model that have not yet been fully implemented that can bring further benefit such as the allocation and management of space, furniture, and other resources.
- 3.8 Reviewing property assets is a key part of the transformation programme and the need to deliver efficiency and meet climate change targets. The Place Making Project is underway and aims to develop a new holistic service delivery model putting service delivery ahead of buildings. Property data will be analysed to develop options and recommendations that will contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and meeting efficiency targets through the potential rationalisation of the Council's operational property.

Property Asset Management Plan

- 3.9 The Property Asset Management Plan sets out the actions required, and proposed monitoring arrangements, to deliver the key aspects of the strategy.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The strategy objectives and action plan align with the East Lothian Council Plan 2022-27.
- 4.2 There are several policies that may be updated or developed as part of the delivery of the action plan such as corporate landlord property utilisation, community asset transfer and community lets.

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 strategy aligns with the agreed capital programme 2024/25 to 2028/29.
- 6.2 Personnel - None
- 6.3 Other - None

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Appendix A: Property Asset Strategy & Management Plan 2024-2028
- 7.2 Cabinet – 22 January 2019 – Item 4 – Council Asset Strategy & Management Plan 2018 – 2023
- 7.3 Council – 20 February 2024 – Item 2 – Budget Development including the Setting of Council Tax and Council Housing Rent 2024-25

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DATE	12 June 2024

PROPERTY ASSET STRATEGY & MANAGEMENT PLAN

2024 - 2028

V1.9

1.0	29/6/2023	Initial draft version to MN
1.1	20/7/2023	Updated draft for discussion to MN/ER
1.2	10/10/2023	Updated version for Asset Board
1.3	24/10/2023	Draft for Asset Project Board
1.4	23/2/2024	Updated draft for discussion
1.5	25/3/2024	Circulated for comment
1.6	24/4/2024	Version updated for Asset Project Board 24/4/2024
1.7	2/5/2024	Includes comments from Asset Project Board 24/4/2024 and Revised Place Making Project appendix.
1.8	23/5/2024	Includes comments from EMT May 2024 & SFT
1.9	10/6/2024	Final Draft with all EMT feedback

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INTRODUCTION

This new Property Asset Strategy and Management Plan 2024 – 2028 builds upon the previously approved Council Asset Strategy & Management Plan 2018 – 2023. This new strategy is specific to property assets. Separate asset strategies have been, or are being developed, for Open Space, Roads & Street Lighting, Fleet, Housing, and ICT.

The Property Asset Strategy and Management Plan 2024 – 2028 sets out how the council manages its property estate to meet long-term goals and objectives. It outlines the key drivers that will shape the management approach and investment in properties. It is split into the following sections:

1. Vision, wider context and key drivers for change.
2. Asset principles and the challenges faced in delivering the vision.
3. Extent of properties held and how they are currently performing.
4. The Property Asset Management Strategy setting out our aspirations for the management of property assets.
5. The Property Asset Management Plan setting out the key activities required to deliver the strategy.

East Lothian Council is committed to ensuring that the assets that the council holds contribute to the creation of sustainable communities and the delivery of efficient and effective public services. The council manage property assets as a corporate resource to support the overall objectives and for the benefit of local communities.

We aim to hold property assets, which are fit for purpose, support the delivery of the Council Plan, provide value for money and are efficient, sustainable, and resilient.

The Asset Strategy and Management Plan will continue to drive change through good performance management and sustainable development. Collaboration with community planning partners has increased the activity around joint asset management to look for opportunities to maximize the use of combined assets.

1.0 VISION, CONTEXT AND KEY DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

The following section details the council vision for the future, and some of the key drivers that have been used to inform and guide the development of the Asset Strategy & Management Plan.

1.1 Our Vision

The 2022-27 Council Plan outlines the vision of:

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

1.2 East Lothian Council Plan Priorities

The 2022-2027 Council Plan was adopted in August 2022. The country was still in the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic at that time and since then, the context and key factors that influenced its objectives have changed. Consequently, one of the three over-arching objectives set out in the Plan was Recovery and Renewal from COVID however, this has become 'business as usual' with 'building back better' now embedded with the Council Plan and other key strategies. The long-term economic

impacts of inflation and the cost-of-living crisis has placed significant pressures on budgets. As a result, the council has adopted three new priorities in response to the challenges we face.

- Ensure the financial sustainability of the council through the delivery of approved savings and transforming the way we deliver services.
- Target resources on statutory services and focus on the highest risks and those most in need.
- Deliver key infrastructure, economic development and environmentally sustainable projects within available council resources and maximising external funding.

In addition to these three priorities, we continue to face systemic, long-term challenges. In response the 2022-2027 Council Plan also sets out four thematic objectives.

- 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.

The following sections set out some of the other factors that influenced the need to review the Council Plan.

1.3 Current Financial Climate & Future Resources

The council is now facing the most extreme financial challenge it has ever faced, with an estimated recurring funding gap which will require the council to deliver financial savings equivalent to just under a quarter of its annual running cost over the next 5 years.

The scale of the financial challenge is significant with external pressures resulting in a future estimated recurring gap more than £55m from the period 2024/25 to 2028/29.

This is now placing the council in a very serious situation, where this is now a very significant risk that the council will not have sufficient resources to be able to sustain critical service delivery over the short to medium term. This is a key driver for reviewing our assets to ensure that the assets we hold, retain, and develop are fit for purpose to serve our communities in a sustainable and affordable way.

1.4 Climate Change

East Lothian Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. As a result, the council will take urgent action to make all services Net Zero as soon as reasonably practicable or in any case by 2045 and will lobby, support and work with government, all relevant agencies, partners, and communities to fulfil this commitment. The council will also work with communities and partners towards making East Lothian a carbon neutral county, enabling the county to deliver its part of wider national and international commitments, and to prepare for the impacts of climate change.

Climate change is also going to have a dramatic effect on the way that East Lothian looks and works. Coastal erosion is predicted to reshape our coastline, and we are going to experience longer and more intense extreme weather events which will increase the chances of flooding and drought. Our buildings must be adapted to these extreme weather events while restoring nature.

1.5 Population Growth

East Lothian continues to be one of the fastest growing areas in Scotland. The census in 2022 shows the county's population was 112,300. East Lothians population has increased from 99,717 in 2011 to 112,300 in 2022, a rise of 12.6%. The population is estimated to increase to over 120,000 by 2028 based on the additional housing approved in the Local Development Plan. This is a rise of 14% from the 2022 population census.

	Mid 2016 Population Estimate	Mid 2022 Population Estimate	Potential Future Population 2028
East Lothian	104,037	112,300	120,000

Significant growth is projected across all age groups but particularly among children and older people – the age groups that have traditionally relied most heavily on council services.

The table below shows the current population in each age range recorded in the 2022 Census.

Age Range	East Lothian Population	% East Lothian Population	% Scottish Average
0-19 years	25,000	22.2%	20.8%
20-64 years	63,500	56.6%	59.1%
Over 65	23,800	21.2%	20.1%

The existing capital programme contains investment in a range of additional facilities including new schools and extensions to existing schools to cope with additional demand for school places. Revenue running costs associated with this increased asset base will exacerbate the financial pressures faced and the ability to deliver balance budgets in the future.

1.6 Poverty, Inequality and SIMD Data

East Lothian is made up of 132 data zones, 8 of which fall within the most deprived 20% of areas in the whole of Scotland and 2 in the 10% of most deprived areas.

Higher levels of deprivation concentrated in the western part of East Lothian (around Musselburgh, Wallyford, Tranent and Prestonpans) although there are also pockets of deprivation in Haddington and Dunbar.

The COVID pandemic has exacerbated inequality and poverty. The pandemic has had/ is still having a disproportionate impact on disadvantaged families, children, and young people. This has led to increases in mental health issues, drug and alcohol issues, domestic abuse, and referrals to children's services.

1.7 National Infrastructure Investment Plan

The Scottish Government Infrastructure Investment Plan (IIP), A National Mission with Local Impact: Infrastructure Investment Plan for Scotland 2021-22 to 2025-26, is a strategic plan taking a whole of government approach to how resources are invested based on three themes shown below. This Property Asset Strategy & Management Plan contributes to the IIP's three themes and aligns with Scottish Government's policy on prioritising investments that deliver positive outcomes across more than one theme.



The IIP has an investment hierarchy which sets out how public authorities should demonstrate future need, maximise the life of existing assets as far as possible, seek opportunities to co-locate, and then decide on whether to use existing assets or replace and build new after considering the suitability and condition of current assets.

The figure below illustrates the IIP's investment hierarchy and how this maps across to property asset options.



This Property Asset Strategy & Management Plan has been developed in accordance with these themes and associated guidance developed by Scottish Futures Trust.

1.8 Digital Strategy

East Lothian Councils Digital Strategy sets out the approach to the provision of citizen centric services for a modern efficient local authority operating in the digital age.

Technology is a key enabler for change and improvement. The strategy sets out the innovative technical solutions to meet rapidly evolving and changing business needs, respond to the changing shape of the organisation, provide value for money, and enable the council to respond to opportunities.

2.0 PROPERTY ASSET PRINCIPLES & FUTURE CHALLENGES

A set of guiding principles has been developed by an officer working group and approved by the Asset Project Board that sets out the ambitions for our property estate. They will guide our asset strategy, management, and investment plans in what will be a difficult period as we strive to deliver council priorities.

The following section sets out each of the principles and some of the challenges we expect to face in the future. The Property Asset Management Plan in section 5.0 sets out some the key activities to be undertaken in meeting these challenges.

Effectively Manage Property Assets

Future Challenges:

- The council is responsible for 677 property assets over a large geographical area. The council has an ageing estate that requires to support changing service delivery needs as East Lothian grows.

- Lack of complete property data impedes decision making, particularly around property running costs and how well buildings are being used.

Meet Immediate Savings Targets and Bridge Future Affordability Gap

Future Challenges:

- We will work to ensure the property assets we hold, retain, and develop are fit for purpose to service our communities.
- Property running cost expenditure was £26.391m in 2022/23. Target savings in property running costs of £4.618m were agreed in February 2024.
- The overall floor area of operational properties is projected to increase by 9.2% over the next 5 years based on new schools and extensions required to meet demographic need.
- Maintenance investment required in operational property over the next 5 years based on condition surveys is estimated to be in the region of £75m which is in excess of available resources. We will continuously review our property assets with a view to reducing the estate to help bridge the affordability gap and reduce the risk of unplanned building closures and disruption to service delivery.
- 81.6% of operational properties have been assessed as suitable for current use. Agreed capital programme investment along with Asset Review using a place-based approach could contribute to reducing the number of unsuitable property assets.

Meet Demographic Need for Services

Future Challenges:

- East Lothian has had the largest population rise of any Scottish local authority since 2001. The population is projected to continue to rise at approximately 1% per annum based on development agreed in the current 2018 Local Development Plan and the housing requirements in NPF4.
- Significant growth is expected among children and older people. This will place pressure on already stretched council services.
- We must ensure that the property assets we retain, develop and build are done so through a place-based approach and that they provide for our growing communities in a sustainable and affordable way.

Generate Income & Encourage Economic Development

Future Challenges:

- The target for capital receipts through the sale of land and buildings is £18m over the next 5 years.
- The East Lothian Local Economy Strategy has set out ambitious goals to ensure East Lothian is an increasingly thriving, sustainable and inclusive economy.
- Existing non-operational property budgets have focused on reactive maintenance, statutory landlord obligations and void costs. The value of backlog maintenance for these properties is not known and condition surveys will be required to identify this.
- The non-operational portfolio is performing well with an occupancy rate of 96%. This portfolio comprises properties held on the Trading Account, General Services, Housing Revenue Account, Common Good and Trusts,

and generates rental income of around £2.5m per annum. Whilst this is positive, there is a risk that the backlog maintenance and need for investment will negatively impact on this and a considered approach to retention and disposal will be required.

- When properties are declared surplus to council requirements, they are generally advertised for lease or for sale on the open market. The complexity around Community Asset Transfer process can make this process protracted.
- Energy Performance in commercial buildings will eventually impact the sale and lease of all commercial property. The Scottish Government has not set a date for these changes, but it is thought that properties below a certain grade, will require improvement before they can be leased. The non-operational portfolio properties are generally Grade E-G and will require significant investment to improve energy performance, if to be leased out. Condition surveys will provide details and costs of the improvements required.

Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Future Challenges:

- East Lothian Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and has committed to take urgent action to make all services net zero as soon as reasonably practical or in any case by 2045.
- Property related greenhouse gas emissions in 2022 were 9,489 tonnes. This equates to 64.6% of the total council emissions of 14,679 tonnes.
- The overall floor area of operational properties is projected to increase by 9.2%. The council will require to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while the property footprint gets larger.
- An initial indication of cost to upgrade the operational property portfolio to meet Net Zero for East Lothian Council is in the region of £850m. Available grant funding for decarbonisation works in 2023 totalled £20m for the whole of Scotland's public sector.
- The estimated cost of making the property portfolio resilient to climate change is unknown but it is likely to rival the cost of reaching net zero emissions. Implementing these adaptation measures is necessary to protect our assets, as it is estimated that £1 spent on climate adaptation will save £3 of climate damage. Projects to estimate the cost of adapting the region to climate change are underway.

Work with Communities and Partners to Maximise Shared Opportunities

Future Challenges:

- Ongoing financial pressures for all public services and reduction in available grants for third sector organisations.
- Scotland is experiencing a cost-of-living crisis with a third of all Scots cutting back on spending on food and other essentials.
- Work with East Lothian Anchor Institutions as part of East Lothian Community Wealth Building Charter to identify opportunities for:
 - collaboration/co-location and the sharing of space
 - redirecting wealth back into the local economy
 - addressing inequalities
 - increasing control and benefits for local people
- East Lothian Council is committed to aiding communities to acquire, lease or acquire other rights in respect of assets for their advantage through community asset transfer. It is likely given the financial climate and savings

targets that more emphasis will be placed on Community Asset Transfer as a way of reducing council liabilities whilst still supporting local services.

3.0 COUNCIL PROPERTY AND HOW IT IS PERFORMING

3.1 Land & Buildings

East Lothian Council owns and manages a diverse property estate consisting of 677 land and building assets. The estate is divided into three main portfolios:

Operational Property

Used directly to support services delivered by the council such as the learning estate, community centres, offices, sports facilities, and care homes.

Non-Operational Property

Used to generate rental income and/or support development and growth of the local economy and includes Industrial / business units, stores, shops, offices, ground leases, golf courses and caravan parks, allotments and agricultural land.

Common Good Property

Common Good properties are owned by the council but are administered separately for accounting purposes. Some are used to support services delivered by the council (Operational Property), some are used to generate income (Non-Operational).

3.2 Operational Property

3.2.1 Extent

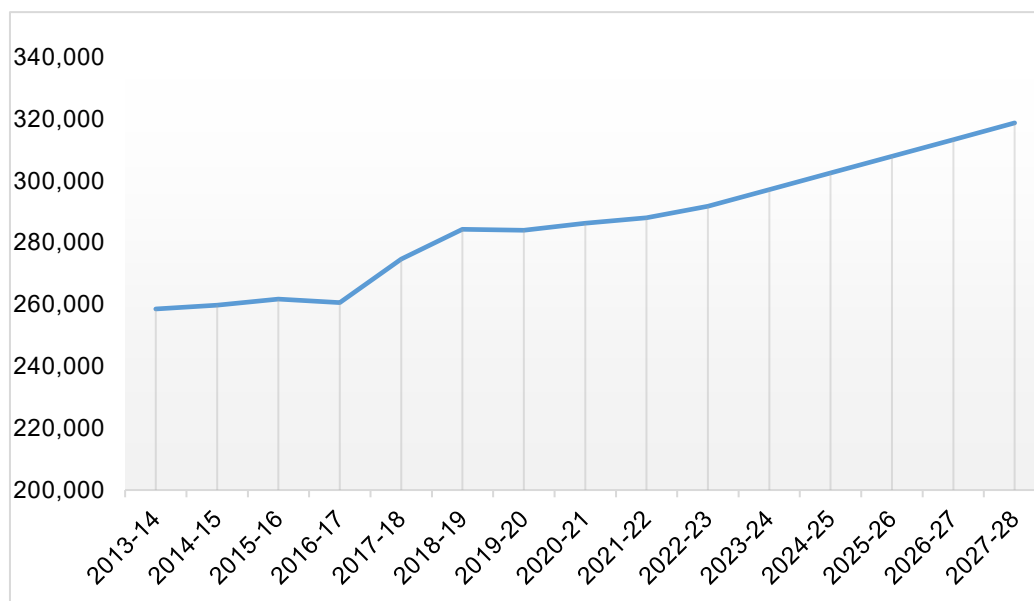
The following table shows the extent of the operational property portfolio at the end of 2022/23. It shows the gross internal floor area (GIA) for each of the property categories.

Category	GIA (m2)	Percentage GIA
Area Housing Offices	2,066	0.7%
Childrens Centres	1,750	0.6%
Community Centres	11,189	3.8%
Day Centres	2,652	0.9%
Depots	9,194	3.2%
Halls	5,445	1.9%
Libraries	4,358	1.5%
Outdoor Education Facilities	1,341	0.5%
Museums	2,411	0.8%
Offices	25,203	8.6%
Care Homes	7,584	2.6%
Pavilions	2,896	1.0%
Public Toilets	1,043	0.4%
Resource Centres	2,352	0.8%
Schools	190,156	65.2%
Sports Centres	20,964	7.2%
Town House	985	0.3%
Youth Centres	166	0.1%
Total	291,755	

The learning estate is by far the largest part of the council's operational property portfolio at over 65%. Significant house building in East Lothian will require additional schools and school extensions which will increase the size of the learning estate by a further 34,000m2 by the end of the current capital programme.

As a result, the operational property portfolio is estimated increase to increase by 9.2% over the next 5 years (23.3% estimated increase from the size of the estate from 2013/14 to 2027/28).

Total GIA (m2) Operational Property



3.2.2 Condition

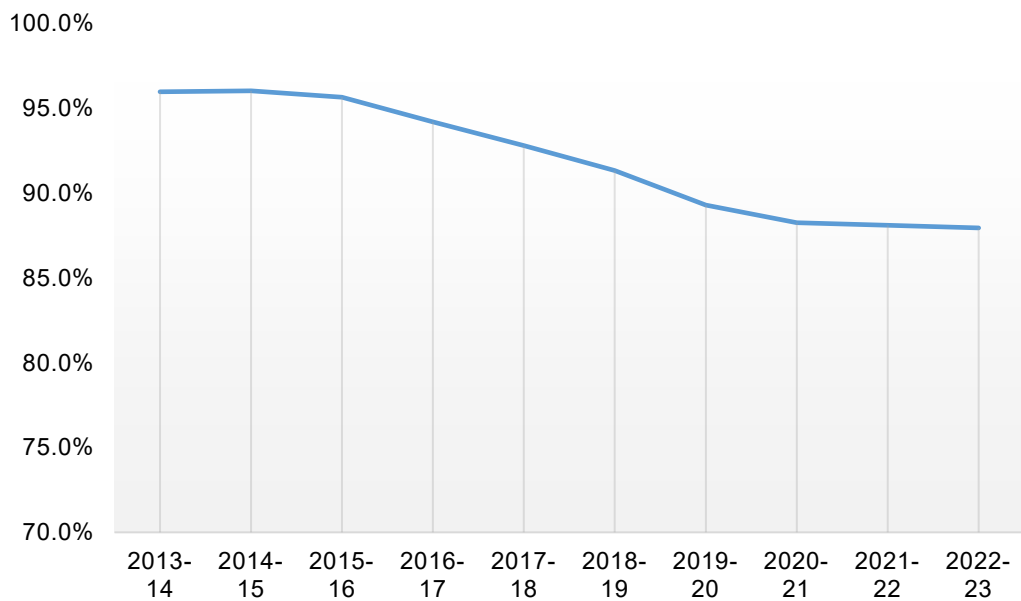
A programme of condition surveys is in place to assess the current condition of the property and the maintenance investment required to address condition issues. The table below shows the percentage of gross internal area (GIA) that is assessed as being either good or satisfactory condition in 2022/23.

Category	Percentage GIA in Good or Satisfactory Condition 2022/23
Area Housing Offices	66.9%
Childrens Centres	100.0%
Community Centres	93.7%
Day Centres	93.6%
Depots	100.0%
Halls	34.0%
Libraries	96.6%
Outdoor Education Facilities	100.0%
Museums	100.0%
Offices	83.2%
Old Peoples Homes	78.4%
Pavilions	98.3%

Public Toilets	98.1%
Resource Centres	100.0%
Schools	88.7%
Sports Centres	88.4%
Town House	100.0%
Youth Centres	100.0%
Total	87.9%

The percentage of properties in good or satisfactory condition has been reducing over the last ten years as can be seen in the graph below.

Percentage GIA in Good or Satisfactory Condition



Condition surveys completed on the learning estate have indicated a maintenance need of £40.0m over the next 5 years. Surveys are underway to update the maintenance need at non-school properties, but it is estimated to be in the region of £35.0m. The table below shows the overall estimated investment need over the next five years and the current approved capital budget. This is likely to have an impact on overall condition of the existing estate and may result in more properties slipping into the poor condition category unless action is taken.

Estimated Maintenance Investment required to 2028/29 (excluding PPP)	Actual Property Renewals Budget 2024/25 to 2028/29
£75m	£10m

The Property Renewals budget does not cover the required maintenance.

3.2.3 Suitability

The suitability of the operational portfolio is assessed regularly. Suitability questionnaires are completed by Service Managers that to provide an indication of

whether the property is considered suitable for current service delivery. The following criteria is used: -

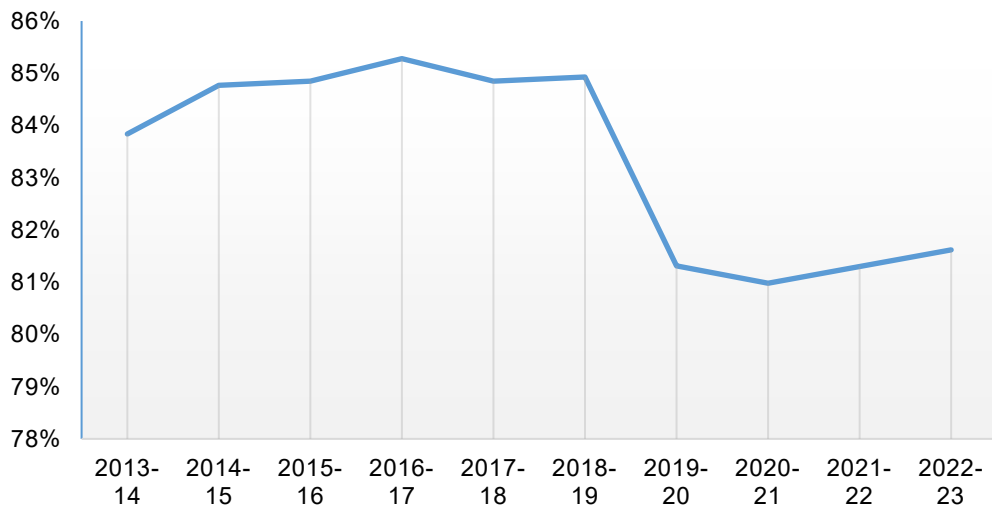
- Location/Place
- Access
- Environment and facilities
- Functionality and operability
- Image
- Safety and security
- Functionality

The table below shows the percentage of properties assessed as being suitable for current use in 2022/23.

Category	Percentage Suitable for Current Use 2022/23
Area Housing Offices	83.3%
Childrens Centres	100.0%
Community Centres	100.0%
Day Centres	100.0%
Depots	92.3%
Halls	60.0%
Libraries	100.0%
Outdoor Education Facilities	100.0%
Museums	100.0%
Offices	83.3%
Old Peoples Homes	100.0%
Pavilions	77.8%
Public Toilets	63.0%
Resource Centres	100.0%
Schools	70.5%
Sports Centres	87.5%
Town House	100.0%
Youth Centres	100.0%
Total	81.2%

The overall suitability of the estate has reduced over the last ten years as can be seen in the graph below.

Percentage of Properties Suitable for Current Service Delivery

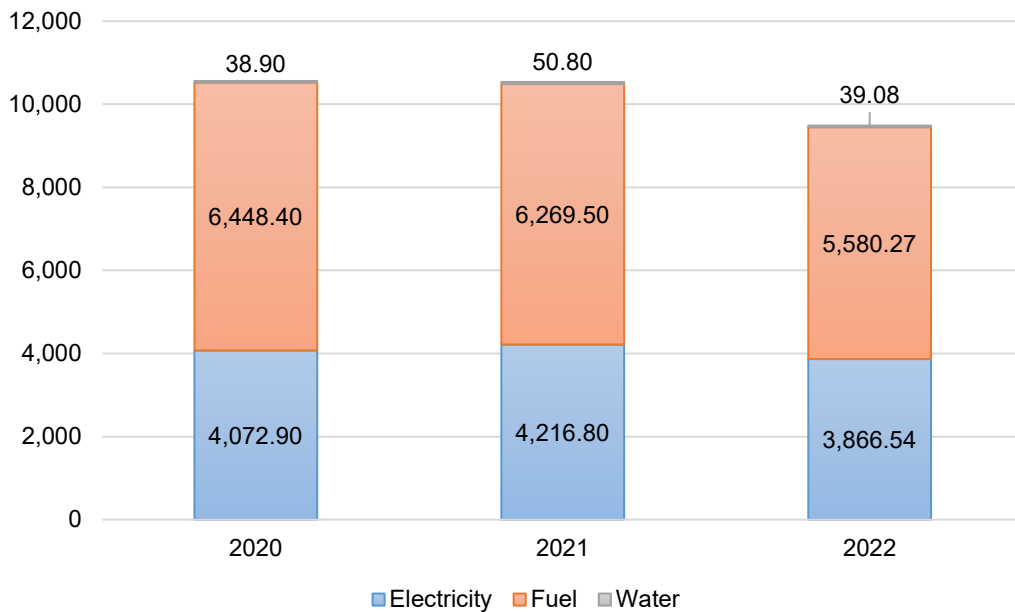


3.2.4 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

East Lothian Council has been measuring greenhouse gas emissions on an annual basis since 2014 as part of the public sector climate change duties under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

Overall, greenhouse gas emissions have fallen by 29.3% since 2014/15. The last three years emissions related to the property estate are shown in the graph below: -

Property Greenhouse Gas Emissions (tCO₂e)

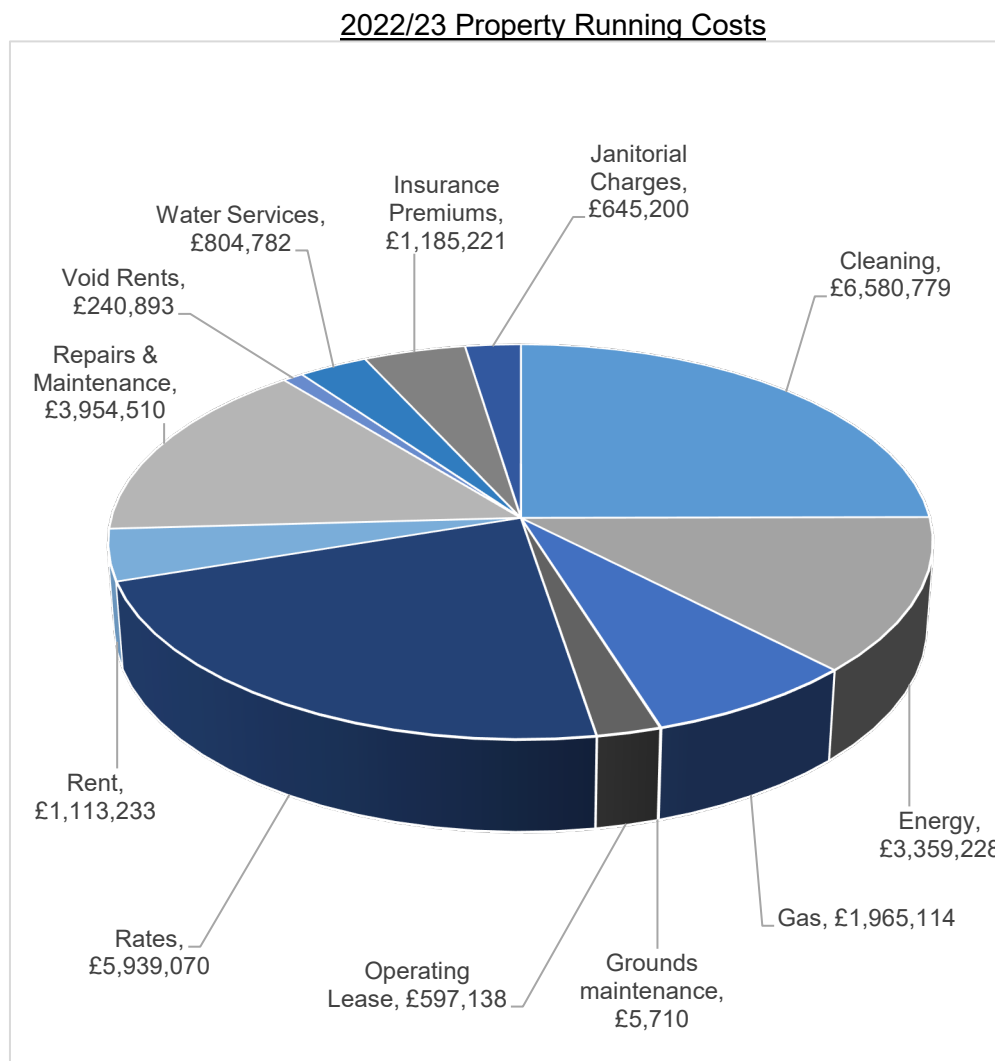


Property related emissions equate to over 70% of the councils' total emissions.

The council has approved a draft Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) and is aiming to have a finalised version of the strategy approved in 2024. The finalised strategy will set out the long-term plan for improving energy efficiency and decarbonising heat across East Lothian.

3.2.5 Finance

The running cost of the property estate in 2022/23 was £26.391m and is split into the main categories below: -



East Lothian Council is facing significant financial pressures and as a result agreed to savings totalling £4.618m from the running cost of the property estate. A range of transformation projects are underway, but the scale of savings required means that the council must try to reduce the extent of the operational property portfolio as much as possible.

3.2.6 Utilisation

Accurate measurement of how well buildings are being used has been challenging with limited performance information available at this stage. As a result, a project workstream is underway to implement a new room and desk booking system which will be capable of providing much greater detail on how well our buildings, meeting rooms and office space is used.

3.3 Non-Operational Property

Estates is responsible for all non-operational land and building the council owns or has an interest in - for example shops, offices, industrial units, agricultural land, caravan sites, surplus buildings etc.

In total, Estates manage and lease out over 500 properties and land creating revenue for the council.

The non-operational portfolio was valued at March 2020 at circa £25m.

The rental income breakdown of main categories for 2022/23 is shown below:

Category	Rental Income 2022/23 (£'000)
Industrial Units/Stores	730
Retail Units	333
Offices	290
Industrial Land	240
Other	858
Total	2,451

3.4 Common Good

Common Good properties are historic assets held and managed by the council. They can be either Operational or Non-Operational Assets

East Lothian Council have Common Good accounts for the former Burghs of Dunbar, Haddington, Musselburgh, North Berwick and Cockenzie, Port Seton and Tranent. The funds are used to further the common good of the residents of these areas.

Common Good property, plant and equipment was valued at £8.775m in 2022.

4.0 PROPERTY ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

East Lothian Council relies on a large and complex portfolio of property assets to deliver services. The following sections set out our strategy to develop and implement arrangements to help us manage and invest in our estate.

4.1 Corporate Landlord

East Lothian Council have embraced the Corporate Landlord approach to the management of the property estate. This ensures that all property assets are managed as corporate resources and decisions are made in the context of the councils' overall objectives. Good progress has been made setting out the Corporate Landlord responsibilities and putting in place a robust governance structure, However, there are still some aspects of the Corporate Landlord model that require to be fully implemented.

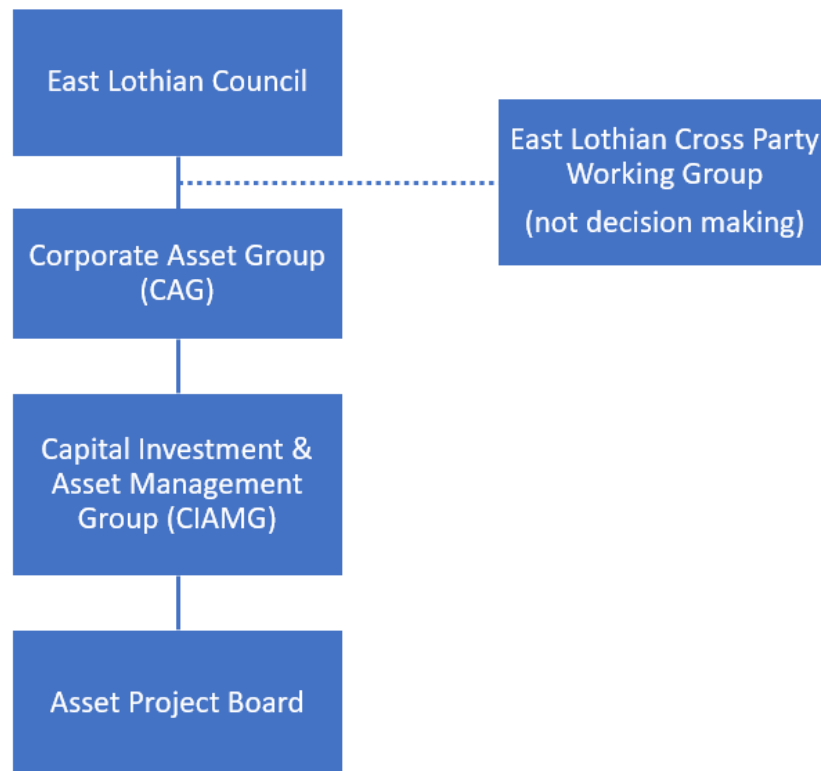
Infrastructure Services act as the Corporate Landlord and are responsible for the following activities: -

- Building design and project management

- Property repairs and maintenance
- Estates and valuation services
- Strategic property asset planning
- Facilities management
- Energy management
- Commercial property development

4.2 Governance Arrangements

In order to support the Corporate Landlord approach, a property governance regime has been developed that allows consistent and transparent decisions on all property matters.



Corporate Asset Group (CAG)

The Corporate Asset Group is the strategic body for asset management and capital investment decisions and projects. It is responsible for effective and efficient asset management at a corporate level. The Corporate Asset Group sets the direction and provides leadership in relation to how the council manages and develops its assets.

Capital Investment & Asset Management Group (CIAMG)

The Capital Investment and Asset Management Group (CIAMG) is the senior officer governance body with remit as the council's advisory body regarding asset management and related activities. The CIAMG oversees the management of each asset category to achieve an effective and efficient overall estate and makes recommendations to the Corporate Asset Group. It includes all Asset Lead Officers and representatives from a range of council services. The role of the CIAMG is to:

- ensure a culture and practice of corporate management of assets across the council.
- ensure all decisions that relate to land and buildings are considered corporately.
- consider and assess proposals and business cases for new capital investment and make recommendations to the Corporate Asset Group
- manage and monitor the capital plan programme delivery.
- ensure asset management planning is compliant with statutory requirements, including performance monitoring and demonstrating best value.
- establish opportunities for partnership asset planning and collaboration with other public sector organisations to deliver value for money.
- consider and evaluate requests from community bodies for asset transfer by sale or lease.
- consider and evaluate requests for community organisations for projects which impact on council land or buildings.
- review the monthly monitoring report of the general services capital investment plan.
- prepare an annual report to the Corporate Asset Group on asset management activity and performance.

Asset Project Board

East Lothian Council have adopted a consistent approach to project management based on the principles of PRINCE2. The Asset Project Board coordinates several property projects as part of the council's wider transformation programme such as Asset Review and the Place Making Project.

Cross-Party Working Group

The Cross-Party Working Group has been established by Council and includes cross party councillors who work together to provide advice and support in the development of council wide proposals. It is not a decision-making forum but provides scrutiny and challenge.

4.3 Property Information Systems

East Lothian Council use the CIPFA Property Manager software as the corporate property information system. It currently holds the Property Asset Register, the Asbestos Register and condition survey information. An upgrade programme is underway to transfer wider estates data into the system.

Earthlight GIS is used for property mapping, and this includes graphical information on land ownership, leases in place and historical sales.

4.4 Asset Review

East Lothian is changing, and we must adapt as a council. The population is growing and ageing and placing significant demand on services. In delivering transformational change within asset management, we will start to address some of the property challenges we face.

We aim to transform services to meet the changing needs of East Lothian's residents, communities, and businesses, while responding to financial challenges we face. The council needs to deliver an enhanced programme of change and transformation to

maximise the efficiency, effectiveness sustainability and resilience of services provided to the public.

Reviewing property assets is a key part of the transformation programme and the council has already realised savings and service improvements through New Ways of Working and the relocation of staff from Randall House to John Muir House.

4.5 Place Making Project

The purpose of this project is to develop a new holistic service delivery model for communities and the property assets required to support this. It is currently at an early stage with the Asset Review Team gathering data but has the potential to contribute to future efficiencies and savings targets. The project will have the following key work streams: -

- Establish the current position in relation to council services delivered to communities, the assets they are delivered from, how the assets are managed and how much they cost to operate.
- Identify other assets that can be used by the community for complementary services.
- Understand the needs of local communities.
- Consider the asset strategies and investment plans of partners to establish opportunities for collocated facilities and joined up service delivery.
- Develop a new service delivery model and proposals for the property assets required to support this, all in the context of the asset rationalisation revenue savings and capital receipts targets set.
- Engage with communities and staff on these proposals.

The Place Making project aligns with the aspiration for Local Living and 20-minute neighbourhoods. Local living means that people do not, ideally, have to go very far from their home or leave their settlement in order to meet their daily needs for service access. However, the geographical and rural nature of East Lothian means this could be challenging to achieve in some towns and villages.

Further information on the Place Making Project can be found in Appendix 2.

4.6 Learning Estate Strategy & Improvement Plan

East Lothian has approved a Learning Estate Strategy (LES) which sets out the councils' ambitions and continuous improvement priorities for the learning estate. The strategy is a high-level education specific strategic document which is underpinned by the Learning Estate Improvement Plan. Taken together, these documents support the oversight and management of the Learning Estate.

East Lothian's PPP Contract, for six of its secondary schools, will come to an end in 2035. The LEIP sets out the expectation that a 'PPP Hand Back Strategy' will be developed to ensure appropriate planning is in place in the ten years before hand back.

4.7 Non-Operational Property Management

Estates will continue to evaluate the non-operational portfolio, considering lease and sale opportunities as they arise, while following best value practice and maximising income. Energy Performance Legislation and Net Zero aspirations will continue to impact these decisions. Where significant improvements are required and the

leaseholder requires ownership to secure funding to carry out these improvements, Estates will consider sale and long lease opportunities. Estates will report these opportunities following negotiation, through CAG.

4.8 Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2028/29

The council has an ambitious capital programme and 5-year plan for 2024/25 to 2028/29 which was approved in February 2024. It represents the planned investment in all asset types, including property, to support the delivery of the councils' objectives and statutory obligations over the next 5 years.

Full details of the agreed capital programme 2024/25 to 2028/29 can be found in Appendix 1.

4.9 Disposal & Capital Receipts

The council's approach to asset disposal is that if an asset is no longer required for service delivery and does not meet the criteria for retention or for inclusion within the non-operational property portfolio, the asset will be declared surplus to the council's requirements and will be placed on the market for sale.

Where a market sale may not be achievable, for example if the market is depressed, retention and inclusion of the asset within the non-operational property portfolio may be considered, provided the following criteria are met:

- market demand – there is a good letting prospect.
- good revenue potential with minimal short to medium capital outlay.
- good potential for medium to long term capital growth.

Surplus assets are managed during the disposal process to minimize vacant property, maintenance, and security costs. All capital receipts are held corporately and used to fund future capital investments or off-set debt charges.

4.10 Climate Change Strategy 2020-2025

The council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and is committed to reaching net zero by 2045. Our Climate Change Strategy sets out the council's vision and overall aims for a Net Zero Council and a Carbon Neutral East Lothian. It sets out what we have done since 2020 to achieve these overall aims, and the specific targets and actions which have helped progress towards achieving net zero.

This Climate Change Strategy covers two major aspects of climate change:

- Climate Change Mitigation: this section of the strategy sets out how the council will reduce emissions to reach Net Zero as soon as reasonably practicable and by 2045, and help to mitigate against further global temperature rise; and
- Climate Change Adaptation: climate change is already impacting upon us, and we set out how we will adapt to and prepare for future changes in our climate. This will help to reduce inequalities and enable communities and businesses to be more resilient for the future.

The strategy contains 170 actions over 29 priority areas to help us reach net zero and become climate ready.

4.11 Community Wealth Building and Working with Partners.

East Lothian Council are working towards becoming a Community Wealth Building Council. Work with partners is underway to ensure wealth is locally owned and benefits local people. This focuses on the following.

- Goods that we buy.
- People that we employ.
- Assets we own.
- Powers we have that can bring about change to maximise local economic opportunities.

East Lothian Council are committed to the concept of socially just use of land and are working with partners to review land and asset ownership. It is hoped that this can unlock opportunity for the transfer of ownership to voluntary and community sector organisations for the benefit of the wider community. Partners include:

- NHS Lothian
- Police Scotland
- Scottish Fire & Rescue Service
- Scottish Enterprise
- Scottish Government & Government Agencies
- Volunteer Centre East Lothian
- Queen Margaret University
- Enjoy Leisure
- Scottish Water
- Historic Environment Scotland
- East Lothian Chamber of Commerce
- Visit Scotland

4.12 Area Partnerships

The council is committed to supporting communities to do things for themselves and to make their voices heard in the planning and delivery of services.

There are six Area Partnerships in East Lothian which are the local voice of community planning, and each has a delegated budget from East Lothian Council to deliver improvements in their area.



Each Area Partnership has an Area Plan which provides a profile of the main features of the local area and their priorities for improvement.

4.13 Community Asset Transfer

Community asset transfer involves the transfer of responsibility for an asset from the council to a voluntary or community organisation.

The council has prepared Policy and Guidance documents to provide a framework for considering requests for Community Asset Transfer under the terms of the Act. This will build on the council's on-going advice and support for community groups, many of whom already lease assets, and recognises the role which community ownership of assets can play in regenerating communities and enable well-run community organisations to deliver a range of benefits to their communities.

5.0 ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Property Asset Management Plan below sets out the actions required to deliver the key aspects of this strategy. Progress with the management plan will be regularly monitored and reported as per below.

Ref	Action	Reporting & Monitoring
Principle 1: Effectively Manage Property Assets		
	Fully implement the Corporate Landlord approach, in particular the allocation and management of space, furniture, and other resources in all council buildings.	Progress will be monitored and report to Corporate Asset Group (CAG) or Capital Investment and Asset Management Group (CIAMG)
	Report annually on property performance based on the current position set out in this strategy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent • Condition • Suitability • Energy Consumption/Greenhouse Gas Emissions • Property Running Costs • Utilisation 	
	Fully implement the Estates modules of the CIPFA Asset Manager software system to have a single corporate system for property information.	
	Review property budgets to improve transparency around running cost information.	
	Improve the measurement of property utilisation to make best use of available space.	
	Review current community lets, leases and ad-hoc use arrangements.	
	Develop a ten-year Strategic Asset Plan for the Learning Estate with the aspiration that all assets are maintained a condition B or above.	
	Develop a PPP Hand-back Strategy.	

Ref	Action	Reporting & Monitoring
Principle 2: Meet Immediate Savings Targets and Address Future Affordability Gap		
	Review property assets with the express intention to reduce the number of property assets held and make better use of what is retained.	Progress will be monitored and reported to the Asset Project Board
	Develop a Place Making strategy, options, and recommendations as a model for aligning service delivery with a reduced number of properties.	
	Deliver £4.618m property running cost savings.	Progress with agreed savings targets is reported to Council as part of the regular financial update and budget monitoring reports.
	Deliver agreed investment in the 2024/25 to 2028/29 capital programme to progress New Ways of Working and consider the best use of the former courts at John Muir House.	Progress with agreed investment is reported to Council as part of the regular financial update and budget monitoring reports.
	Continue to implement New Ways of Working and transformation programmes to support excellent service delivery and ensure best use of office accommodation and public buildings.	Progress will be monitored and report to Corporate Asset Group (CAG) or Capital Investment and Asset Management Group (CIAMG)
	Aim to improve marketing of the operational portfolio to increase potential income.	
	Develop a strategy for increasing the suitability of operational property.	

Ref	Action	Reporting & Monitoring
Principle 3: Meet Demographic Need for Services		
	Ensure ongoing monitoring of school capacities to help make strategic decisions pertaining to new residential development, to maximise existing capacity within existing learning estate and to ensure efficiency with regards to any additional education capacity that is required, because of planned growth.	Progress will be monitored by the Learning Estate Project Board and reported as part of the Learning Estate Improvement Plan
	Deliver agreed investment in the 2024/25 to 2028/29 capital programme to assist with addressing future demand in particular, new schools, school extensions, and sport and recreation facilities.	Progress with agreed investment is reported to Council as part of the regular financial update and budget monitoring reports.
	Prepare, consult, and then adopt Local Development Plan 2, considering Local Place Plans that communities bring forward.	Target date for adoption of LDP2 is 2025.
Principle 4: Generate Income & Encourage Economic Development		
	Regularly review vacant and underutilised buildings to bring forward potential capital receipts or other income opportunities.	Progress will be monitored and reported to the Asset Project Board
	Review historical lease arrangements and develop a consistent and transparent approach to community benefit leases.	Progress will be monitored and report to Corporate Asset Group (CAG) or Capital Investment and Asset Management Group (CIAMG)
	A review should also be undertaken to identify land in East Lothian that is not owned by Anchor Institutions that has the potential to be utilised in more socially and environmentally responsible ways.	Progress will be monitored and reported as part of East Lothian Local Economy Strategy.
	Anchors Institutions should undertake a review of their assets that includes current ownership/use, agreed investment plans and future aspirations/needs to identify opportunities to support Community Wealth Building including the potential sustainable transfer to other organisations.	

Ref	Action	Reporting & Monitoring
	Continue the redevelopment of the former Cockenzie Power Station to promote economic growth and employment opportunities.	Progress is regularly reported to Council.
	Continue to progress the Edinburgh Innovation Hub joint venture with Queen Margret University.	Progress is regularly reported to Council.
	Deliver capital receipts target of £18m over the next five years	Progress with agreed capital receipts targets is reported to Council as part of the regular financial update and budget monitoring reports.
	Undertake condition surveys on the non-operational estate.	Progress will be monitored and report to Corporate Asset Group (CAG) or Capital Investment and Asset Management Group (CIAMG)
	Meet annual income targets for the non-operational portfolio.	Progress with agreed income targets is reported to Council as part of the regular financial update and budget monitoring reports.
Principle 5: Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions		
	Implement the Climate Change Strategy, which includes 170 actions under 29 priority areas, within available budgets.	Progress will be monitored and reported as part of the annual update on the Climate Change Strategy.
	Develop the councils next Climate Change Strategy which will run from 2025.	
	Report greenhouse gas emissions and other required information to meet the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Reporting requirements.	

Ref	Action	Reporting & Monitoring
	Progress the approval of the finalised East Lothian Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy and delivery plan (LHEES).	Progress will be monitored and reported to the Energy Transformation Board as part of the Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy
	Work with other Scottish local authorities to share best practice around Passihvaus and Retrofit solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from new build and refurbishment projects.	Progress will be monitored and report to Corporate Asset Group (CAG) or Capital Investment and Asset Management Group (CIAMG)
	Aim to secure external funding from Scotland's Public Sector Heat Decarbonisation Fund to undertake energy efficiency works.	
	Develop building specific investment plans that sets out how greenhouse gas emissions can be reduced.	
Principle 6: Work with Communities and Partners to Maximise Shared Opportunities		
	Set up a Community Wealth Building Land & Property Group with other East Lothian Anchor Institutions to review our assets and identify potential opportunities for colocation and sharing assets.	Progress will be monitored and report to Corporate Asset Group (CAG) or Capital Investment and Asset Management Group (CIAMG)
	Encourage communities who wish to buy or lease East Lothian Council buildings using Community Asset Transfer legislation. Prepare updated Community Asset Transfer Policy and guidance documents to support this.	
	Work with East Lothian IJB to formalise arrangements for sharing accommodation.	
	Support Area Partnerships as the local voice of community planning. Each Area Partnership has an Area Plan which identified priorities for improvement.	

Ref	Action	Reporting & Monitoring
	Partners should develop an Asset Transfer Action Plan which focuses upon both voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations and small and medium enterprises (SME`s) and looks to provide support to Social Economy Organisations in the sustainable transfer of assets and supports the creation of business hubs for people who want to work remotely but not from home.	Progress will be monitored and reported as part of East Lothian Local Economy Strategy.

APPENDIX 1: AGREED INVESTMENT PLAN (FEBRUARY 2024)

Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2028/29

Expenditure	Year 1 2024/25 £000	Year 2 2025/26 £000	Year 3 2026/27 £000	Year 4 2027/28 £000	Year 5 2028/29 £000	5 Year Total £000
Community Projects						
Community Intervention	300	300	300	300	300	1,500
Community Intervention Fund - Pump Tracks	475	-	-	-	-	475
Community Public Art	160	-	-	-	-	160
Bleachingfield Centre Remodelling Works	100	3	-	-	-	103
Dunbar Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS)	355	112	20	-	-	487
East Saltoun Community Hall	-	-	-	-	-	-
North Berwick Skatepark	-	-	-	-	-	-
Support for Business	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fisherrow - spend to save project	225	-	-	-	-	225
CCTV	123	-	-	-	-	123
Town Centre Regeneration	514	325	425	-	-	1,264
Total Community Projects	2,253	739	745	300	300	4,338
ICT						
IT Programme & Digital Opportunities	2,200	2,200	2,200	2,300	2,325	11,225
Total ICT	2,200	2,200	2,200	2,300	2,325	11,225

Expenditure	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	5 Year
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Fleet						
Amenities - Machinery & Equipment - replacement	200	200	200	200	200	1,000
Vehicles	4,611	5,774	2,081	1,943	3,708	18,117
						-
Total Fleet	4,811	5,974	2,281	2,143	3,908	19,117

Open Space						
Synthetic Pitch Replacement Programme	157	269	525	260	1,075	2,286
Cemeteries (Burial Grounds)	637	400	500	400	500	2,437
Cemeteries (Burial Grounds) LDP	-	-	-	-	-	-
River Tyne / Haddington Flood Protection scheme	-	-	-	-	-	-
Coastal / Flood Protection schemes - Musselburgh	2,050	6,350	29,250	38,000	34,000	109,650
Coastal Change Management	85	-	-	-	-	85
Coastal Car Park Toilets	256	6	-	-	-	263
Core Path Plan	50	50	50	50	50	250
Harbour Walls	600	-	-	-	-	600
Mains Farm Town Park & Pavilion	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nature Restoration	-	-	-	-	-	-
Polson Park	160	-	-	-	-	160
Replacement Play Equipment	327	545	-	-	-	872
Sports and Recreation LDP	3,026	1,603	153	2,695	227	7,704
- 3G Pitch at Wallyford Learning Campus	-	-	-	-	-	-
- 2 full-size grass pitches at Wallyford PS	-	-	-	-	-	-

Expenditure	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	5 Year
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
- Aberlady Sports & Play Capacity	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Aubigny Sports Centre Expansion	1,055	16	-	-	-	1,072
- Blindwells Allotments	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Blindwells Community Sports	-	-	-	2,280	-	2,280
- Blindwells Equipped Play	-	-	-	415	-	415
- Craighall Sports Pitches	277	-	-	-	-	277
- Craighall Allotments	-	-	22	-	-	22
- Craighall Pavilion	500	611	-	-	-	1,111
- Dirleton Play Equipment	-	-	23	-	-	23
- East Linton Memorial Park	63	-	-	-	-	63
- Elphinstone Pavilion	31	-	-	-	-	31
- Elphinstone Equipped Play	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Fa'side Path	169	-	-	-	-	169
- Gullane Pitches	112	53	-	-	-	166
- Gullane Play Equipment	126	25	-	-	-	151
- Gullane Recreation Park	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Hallhill Sports Pitch & Changing	120	239	-	-	-	358
- Heritage Impletation Plan	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Lambertton Court, (Lempockwells) Play Area	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Letham 7 a-side Pitch	-	-	108	-	-	108
- Letham Path Network	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Longniddry-Haddington Path Improvements	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Macmerry Sports Facilities	-	105	-	-	-	105
- Wallyford 4 Team Pavilion	400	501	-	-	-	901
- Whitecraig Pavilion & Pitch	-	-	-	-	227	227
- Windygoul Sports Pitch	165	53	-	-	-	219

Expenditure	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	5 Year
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
- Windygoul Allotments	8	-	-	-	-	8
Street litter bin replacement	40	40	40	40	40	200
Waste - New Bins and replacement machinery and equipment	200	200	200	200	200	1,000
Total Open Space	7,588	9,464	30,718	41,645	36,092	125,507

Roads, Lighting, and related assets						
Cycling Walking Safer Streets	478	478	478	478	478	2,390
East Linton Rail Stop / Infrastructure	-	-	-	-	-	-
Parking Improvements	330	1,135	1,084	5,070	-	7,619
Roads	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500	27,500
Roads - externally funded projects	8,462	3,428	6,587	204	21	18,702
Total Roads, Lighting, and related assets	14,770	10,541	13,649	11,252	5,999	56,211

Property – Education						
Aberlady Primary - extension	2,289	1,780	52	-	-	4,121
Blindwells Primary - new school	19,453	3,355	329	-	-	23,137
Blindwells Primary - new school (phase 2)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Craighall Primary - New School	19,217	3,605	329	-	-	23,152
Craighall Primary - New School (phase 2)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dunbar Grammar - extension	-	-	-	-	-	-
East Linton Primary - new school	-	-	-	-	1,000	1,000
Elphinstone Primary - extension	-	-	-	-	-	-
Free School Meals Expansion to P6-7	-	-	-	-	-	-
Haddington School (Infants & St. Mary)	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	5 Year

Expenditure	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Knox Academy Extension	50	-	-	100	2,408	2,558
Law Primary - extension including Early Learning and 1140	67	-	-	-	-	67
Letham Primary - New School	-	-	-	-	-	-
Letham Primary - Extension	-	-	306	3,208	926	4,440
Longniddry Primary - extension	-	-	100	290	4,245	4,635
Macmerry Primary - extension	-	-	-	242	1,588	1,829
North Berwick High School - Extension	450	-	-	-	-	450
North Berwick High School - Extension (phase 2)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ormiston Primary - extension	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pencaitland PS	-	-	-	759	-	759
Pinkie St Peter's Primary - sports hall extension	505	7	-	-	-	512
Pinkie St Peter's Primary - extension including Early Learning and 1140	279	3	-	-	-	282
Preston Lodge High School - extension (phase 1)	-	-	-	1,315	2,694	4,009
Prestonpans Primary - upgrades	243	7	-	-	-	250
Ross High School - extension	-	-	-	-	-	-
School Estate - Curriculum Upgrades	1,045	-	-	-	-	1,045
St Gabriel's Primary - extension including Early Learning and 1140	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wallyford Primary - New School	108	-	-	-	-	108
Wallyford Primary - New School - Phase 2	-	-	-	-	500	500
Wallyford Learning Campus	1,001	6	-	-	114	1,120
West Barns Primary - extension including Early Learning and 1140	46	-	-	-	-	46
Whitecraig Primary - new school including Early Learning and 1140	16,058	2,297	278	-	-	18,633
Windygoul Primary - Early learning and 1140 extension	150	-	-	-	-	150
Windygoul Primary - extension	-	-	-	100	519	619
Total Property - Education	60,962	11,060	1,395	6,013	13,994	93,423
Expenditure	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	5 Year
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total

	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Property – Other						
Accelerating Growth	14,853	5,114	85	-	-	20,053
- A1/QMU Junction	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Blindwells	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Cockenzie	-	4,000	-	-	-	4,000
- Innovation Hub	3,876	259	85	-	-	4,219
- Levelling Up Project Cockenzie	10,978	856	-	-	-	11,833
Brunton Hall - Improved Community Access (paused)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Court Accommodation	820	-	-	-	-	820
Loch Centre Tranent - Major Refurbishment Works	721	2,786	1,501	-	-	5,008
New ways of working Programme	988	9	-	-	-	997
Prestongrange Museum	1,599	25	-	-	-	1,624
Property Renewals	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	10,000
Replacement Childrens House	867	867	26	-	-	1,760
Provision of Social & Healthcare facilities across East Lothian to support population growth, aligned to wider strategic planning	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sports Centres	240	240	240	240	240	1,200
Whitecraig Community Centre	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Property - Other	22,088	11,042	3,853	2,240	2,240	41,462
PPP Projects	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Plan Fees	2,524	2,590	2,640	2,692	2,746	13,192
Total Gross Expenditure	117,196	53,610	57,480	68,585	67,605	364,475

APPENDIX 2: PLACE MAKING PROJECT

1.0 Background

The purpose of the Place Making Project is to develop a new holistic service delivery model for communities and the property assets required to support this. The project will have the following key work streams: -

- Establish the current position in relation to council services delivered to communities, the assets they are delivered from, how the assets are managed and how much they cost to operate.
- Identify other assets that can be used by the community for complementary services.
- Understand the needs of local communities.
- Consider the asset strategies and investment plans of partners to establish opportunities for collocated facilities and joined up service delivery.
- Develop a new service delivery model and proposals for the property assets required to support this, all in the context of the asset rationalisation revenue savings and capital receipts targets set.
- Engage with communities and staff on these proposals.

2.0 Service Delivery Assessment

The properties used to deliver the following service categories will be identified for each locality:

- Customer Services
- Libraries
- Youth
- Elderly
- Community Hubs/Meeting Places
- Sports Centre & Swimming Pools
- Sports Pitches & Pavilions
- Primary Schools (Community Use Only)
- Secondary Schools (Community Use Only)
- Public Toilets
- Museums
- Others

The assessment will consider the opportunity to increase our digital offering for some services to reduce the need to physically visit a building. It will also consider alternative methods of service delivery to achieve the same outcomes, but at lower property cost to the council.

3.0 Property Data Gathering

Property data gathered to support the Place Making Project will be developed into a property scorecard that can be used to inform future proposals, options, and recommendations. The following information categories will be included:

3.1 Condition

Condition surveys reports will be used to assess the overall condition of the building and the cost of required maintenance, repair and replacement the next 5 years.

3.2 Suitability

Existing property suitability assessments will be reviewed and included in the property scorecard.

3.3 Energy Consumption

Actual energy consumption figures for property within the scope of the Place Making Project will be assessed against benchmark figures to identify potentially poorly performing buildings.

3.4 Running Costs

Property running cost information will be collated as part of the property scorecard. Ongoing property costs are significant, and this project will develop proposals, options and recommendations that could potentially reduce costs through property rationalisation.

3.5 Utilisation

Property utilisation will be used where available.

3.6 Population Analysis

Future populations will be prepared based on latest Mid-Year Population Estimate data from the National Record Scotland. This will be combined with additional housing agreed in the Local Development Plan 2018 to provide an estimate of the potential future population within the main settlements within East Lothian.

3.7 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) Data

SIMD ranking for each area will be included in the scorecard to enable comparison between areas and understand the potential impact of proposals.

3.8 Local Living & 20 Minute Neighbourhood Analysis

Local Community Hubs/Meeting Places are places where people can feel socially included and have opportunities for interaction with others. They are the places where people and groups can meet and are one of the twelve agreed criteria of Local Living and 20-minute Neighbourhoods.

Each Local Community Hub/Meeting Place within East Lothian will be identified. This will focus on community centres, village halls, church halls and community trust facilities. Commercial spaces such as Miners Welfare, Royal British Legion and Hotels/Public bars with function rooms will be excluded, but it is recognised that they would potentially contribute overall provision.

The routing functionality of the GIS software will be used to generate statistics including the percentage of the population that has access to a Community Hub/Meeting Place within a 10-minute walking round trip.

4.0 Needs of the Local Community

4.1 LDP2 Evidence Gathering

A key part of the production of the Local Development Plan (LDP2) has been public consultation to gather the views of local communities. This included, place-based questionnaires, facilities sessions using the Place Standard Tool and general

consultation events. Whilst primarily for LDP2, relevant information from this evidence base will also be used to inform outcomes from the Place Making Project.

4.2 Local Place Plans

Local Place Plans are community led proposals for the development and use of land. Several communities are in the process of developing plans, and these will be assessed and used to inform the place making strategy, options and recommendations place where possible.

4.3 Area Partnership Area Plans

Each Area Partnership has prepared an Area Plan which provides a profile of the main features of the local area and their priorities for improvement. Most plans are due to be updated in 2024.

5.0 Working with Partners

5.1 CWB Land & Property Assets Group

A working group will be set up with representatives of East Lothian Council and other Anchor Institutions to review assets and land. It is hoped that this can be used as a forum to share the work undertaken as part of the councils Asset Review and Place Making Project with key partners.

6.0 Strategy, Options & Recommendations

The outcome from the Service Delivery Assessment will be used along with the property data gathered to develop a strategy with options analysis, business cases and recommendations for the potential rationalisation of the council's operational property.

REPORT TO: East Lothian Council

MEETING DATE: 25 June 2024

BY: Executive Director for Place

SUBJECT: Proposed Article 4 Direction for East Lothian Conservation Areas

4

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek approval for a new Article 4 Direction for East Lothian's Conservation Areas.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Council approves a new Article 4 Direction for East Lothian's Conservation Areas, which would replace the existing Article 4 Directions; and
- 2.2 That the proposed Article 4 Direction is submitted to Scottish Ministers for approval in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 (GPDO) controls the types of development that are permitted or which require planning permission. This is done through a series of different classes of development. An Article 4 Direction is made under the GPDO and can withdraw certain classes of permitted development in a specified geographical area. Commonly, these are used to restrict permitted development in a designated conservation area to ensure that development is even more carefully controlled.
- 3.2 In East Lothian there are two existing Article 4 Directions dating from 1978 and 1981 that apply in defined areas within designated conservation areas.

- 3.3 Over the years a number of amendments have been made to permitted development rights. More recently the Scottish Government, as part of its Modernising Planning programme has been undertaking a Permitted Development review and has brought in many more changes to the GPDO. The last phase of permitted development changes came into effect on 24 May 2024.
- 3.4 One of the most significant changes that has come into effect relates to the replacement of an existing window. Prior to this change planning permission was required for the replacement of windows of buildings within a conservation area.
- 3.5 In October 2018 the Council adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance on Cultural Heritage and the Built Environment. It contains the following policy in respect of replacement windows:
- “The replacement of a window in a building in a conservation area must preserve or enhance the area’s special architectural or historic character. This will normally mean that the proportions of the window opening, the opening method, colour, construction material of frames and glazing pattern should be retained. The only exceptions to this will be:
- 1) Multiple glazing where there is no visible difference between that proposed and the original style of window.
 - 2) If the building itself does not contribute positively to the character of the Conservation Area and where a change in window design would have no impact on the character of the Conservation Area;
 - 3) If the window cannot be seen from a public place.”
- 3.6 Such control ensures that the character and appearance of our conservation areas is preserved.
- 3.7 The recent changes include the introduction of a new class of permitted development, Class 7A, which covers replacement windows.
- 3.8 The effect of Class 7A is that planning permission is no longer required for the installation of replacement windows on the back of the property or on the side, where the side of the property does not front a road.
- 3.9 Class 7A also means that planning permission is no longer required for the installation of replacement windows on the front of a property within a conservation, or on the side, where the side fronts onto a road. Depending on how similar the proposed window is to the existing one, property owners may need to notify the planning authority of their proposal (before carrying out the works) and submit some additional information so that the planning authority can take a view on whether the design is acceptable. This process is called “prior notification/prior approval.”
- 3.10 Property owners will not need to notify the planning authority and submit additional information if the proposed window matches (i.e. is the same or substantially the same as) the existing window as regards:

- Opening mechanism (e.g. sash and case);
 - The number, orientation and colour of panes within the window (e.g. six-over-six configuration); or
 - The dimensions and colour of the window's frame and any astragal bars.
- 3.11 The material of the proposed and existing windows do not need to match. So if, for example, the proposed window would be the same or substantially the same as the existing one in respect of the three criteria above but the proposed window is made of a different material to the existing window, no prior notification/prior approval is required.
- 3.12 The effect of Class 7A is that replacement windows with modern materials such as UPVC could potentially be installed in place of traditional timber framed windows on elevations visible from public places, without the need for planning permission. Such a development would generally not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of our conservation areas. Such a change would also generally be contrary to the Council's policy on replacement windows contained within the adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance on Cultural Heritage and the Built Environment.
- 3.13 It is the view of planning officers that the new system will lead to confusion, and the new prior notification/prior approval process will be cumbersome. The previous system for replacement windows worked effectively and in the interests of preserving the architectural and historic character of the designated conservation area as required by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) (Scotland) 1997. East Lothian has a history of careful management of change in its designated conservation areas ensuring that proposed changes to any individual property does not harm the overall character of that conservation area. Every small detrimental change cumulatively adds up to a significant deterioration in the overall quality of a conservation area in time.
- 3.14 Furthermore, for many years a series of Town Schemes, Townscape Heritage Initiatives and Conservation Area Regeneration Schemes have offered grant assistance in particular areas of conservation areas to reinstate traditional materials including traditional timber sash and case windows for eligible properties, the effects of which would be negated in time with loss of traditional fabric such as timber window frames, period glass and traditional dimensions of windows and doors in conservation areas. East Lothian conservation areas contain only a very few non-traditional windows, which could change in future.
- 3.15 The proposed replacement Article 4 Direction would maintain the current situation whereby it is clear to prospective applicants that planning permission is required for window replacement in conservation areas. It would bring under control those specific classes of development that are appropriate to the individual character of each conservation area.

- 3.16 These classes include the following types of development; chimney flues (Class 6C and 6F); means of enclosure in non-residential situations (Class 7); replacement windows (Class 7A); means of access to a road which is not adopted (Class 8); change of use of a shop or professional service to class 4 business use (Class 11B); private road maintenance or improvement of a private road (Class 27); works by a local authority not exceeding £250,000 (Class 33); harbour works (Class 35); and water undertakings of a specific nature (Class 38).
- 3.17 Before bringing this report to Council a public consultation exercise was undertaken that involved a public announcement in the local press, community council awareness through the Association of East Lothian Community Councils, copies of the proposals in all East Lothian libraries and publication and associated survey on the Council's Consultations Hub on the webpage.
- 3.18 A total of five responses were received to the consultation and raised the following points:
- 3.19 The Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland are supportive of the need to protect conservation areas better and felt that the classes of development that the Council proposes to remove permitted development rights, namely Class 7 relating to the proposed relaxation of controls on gates and fences, Class 7A relating to the relaxation of controls over windows in conservation areas and Class 35 relating to harbours were all classes that should be withdrawn.
- 3.20 The Musselburgh Conservation Society is supportive of the Council's proposal to include Class 7A and retain the previous requirement for planning permission for the replacement of windows in a conservation area.
- 3.21 The Inveresk Village Society welcomes the Council's proposals to update the Article 4 Direction and agrees with the stance that the Council proposes in respect of Class 7A which will maintain current control through the need for planning permission.
- 3.22 North Berwick Community Council were generally supportive though consider that each conservation area should be considered individually rather than setting an overall policy.
- 3.23 A local resident of North Berwick opposes the Council's proposals to update the Article 4 Direction suggesting that all conservation areas should be assessed and boundaries reviewed as stage 1 of a process only following which would the need for an Article 4 Direction review be assessed and that the process is premature in the absence of full understanding of the character and appearance of each and every conservation area.
- 3.24 In response to these comments those in support of the proposed Article 4 Direction are noted. With regard to the comment on a review of conservation areas it is recognised that it is important that designations of

all types are kept up to date and this is carried out through the development plan process. Through the process of preparation of the East Lothian Local Development Plan 2 work is already underway in reviewing conservation areas, their boundaries and the preparation of conservation area character assessments in readiness for the Proposed Plan stage. Any subsequent changes to conservation area boundaries may require future changes to Article 4s. This includes an assessment of each conservation area though in practice the same potential issues arise with each of the classes, except Class 35 which covers harbours.

- 3.25 However, the reason for this early update of the Article 4 Direction is because Phase 3 of the Scottish Government GPDO changes came into force on 24 May 2024 and this could result in development that harms the overall quality of East Lothian's conservation areas in the period before LDP2 is produced. Additionally, it could place additional pressure on the Planning Service. It is important that the position is rebalanced in favour of the current approach that has served East Lothians conservation areas well with good planning management over time.
- 3.26 In terms of energy consumption, studies have shown that uPVC windows can have a much shorter lifespan than timber frames and when they reach the end of their life they have to be replaced as a whole unit, as opposed to timber framed windows which can be repaired. uPVC window frames cannot be easily recycled and add to waste and energy use in the making of their replacement. Timber framed windows can also be effective in energy efficiency as well as having the ability to be repaired which is effective in terms of whole life costs.
- 3.27 Therefore, the use of modern materials such as uPVC in conservation areas does not have a positive climate related impact and could have an immediate negative impact on the character of East Lothians conservation areas.
- 3.28 The proposed Article 4 Direction would therefore withdraw permitted development rights for the following classes of development under the GPDO in all of East Lothians conservation areas:

Class 6C – This Class permits the installation, alteration or replacement of a chimney flue, forming part of a biomass heating system, on a dwellinghouse or building containing a flat.

Justification: While Class 6C does not permit a flue on the principal elevation of a building in a conservation area, many of East Lothian's conservation areas contain buildings where other elevations of a building are also prominent. Without planning control on materials and design the provision of a flue on any part of a building in a Conservation Area could have a significant visual impact on the area without control over materials or design. A flue can often be manufactured in a shiny metal and therefore could be a visually prominent fixture and if prominent, is considered could have a significant visual impact to the detriment of the conservation area.

Application: The removal of Class 6C will apply to all 30 designated conservation areas in East Lothian.

Class 6F – This Class controls the installation, alteration or replacement of a flue, forming part of a combined heat and power system, on a dwellinghouse or building containing a flat.

Justification: While this Class does not permit a flue that would protrude more than 1m above the highest part of a roof or if it would be fixed to the principal elevation of a building in a conservation area, many of East Lothian’s conservation areas contain buildings where other elevations of a building are also prominent such as on a corner plot. Without planning control on materials and design the provision of a flue on any part of a building in a Conservation Area could have a significant visual impact on the area as there would be no control over its materials or design. A flue is often made of a shiny metal and therefore could be a visually prominent fixture and if prominent, is considered could have a significant visual impact to the detriment of the conservation area.

Application: The removal of Class 6F will apply to all 30 designated conservation areas in East Lothian as listed in Table 1.

Class 7 – In summary, this class relates to the erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure in a non-residential situation that is not permitted if over 1m in height and within 20m of a road or 2m elsewhere.

Justification: Not all buildings in a conservation area are residential and the appearance of walls fences and gates could harm the character and appearance of the conservation area and should be subject to control.

Application: The removal of Class 7 will apply to all properties within all 30 designated conservation areas in East Lothian as listed in Table 1.

Class 7A – This Class permits the alteration or replacement of an existing window in a building in a conservation area where the window is part of the principal elevation or a side elevation where that elevation fronts a road and the window as altered or replaced would not be the same, or substantially the same, as the window to be altered or replaced in the following respects (i) the manner in which the window is opened and closed, (ii) the number, orientation and colour of the panes comprised in the window, (iii) the dimensions and colour of the frame of the window or any astragal bars comprised in the window subject to the prior notification of East Lothian Council as planning authority in respect of the design and external appearance of the proposed alteration to or replacement window, and a written description of the proposed development, the materials to be used and a plan indicating the site. The planning authority must respond within 28 days.

Justification: The process of prior notification permitted by this class does not provide sufficient detailed information in the form of detailed drawings to ensure that the proposed window in a principal or prominent elevation of a building in a conservation area would adequately match the qualities of the existing window in particular its dimensions and any detailed architectural mouldings. Without planning control on materials and design the provision of a replacement or altered window could have a significant visual impact on the conservation area. Since their earliest designation in

1969 East Lothian as planning authority has managed its conservation areas carefully including the encouragement of traditional materials in its window replacements to the stage where there are very few non-traditional windows in its conservation areas. The heritage benefits and resultant cumulative economic benefits in terms of tourism that this brings to East Lothian is sufficiently important to justify the removal of this Class of permitted development in East Lothian conservation areas. Similar standards of energy efficiency in replacement windows can be made in timber windows. It is also worth noting that without this it would negate the effect of various grant schemes in East Lothian conservation areas that encouraged the installation of traditional window materials.

Application: The removal of Class 7A will apply to all properties in all 30 designated conservation areas in East Lothian.

Class 8 – this Class permits the formation, laying out and construction of a means of access to a road which is not a trunk road or a classified road, where that access is required in connection with development permitted by any class in this Schedule other than classes 3E or 7.

Justification: The construction of a means of access within designated conservation areas could be proposed in a way that could be harmful to the character of a conservation area.

Application: The removal of Class 8 will apply to all 30 designated conservation areas in East Lothian.

Class 11B – this Class permits the change of use of a building such as a shop or a professional or other service to a use within class 4 (business).

Justification: Many of East Lothian's conservation areas include designated town or local centres. A class 4 (business) use in such an area could be detrimental to that area in terms of being a more lightly used space that undermines the vibrancy and viability of the area and should therefore be subject to planning control.

Application: The removal of Class 11B will apply to all 30 designated conservation areas in East Lothian.

Class 27 – this class permits the carrying out on land within the boundaries of a private road or private way of works required for the maintenance or improvement of the road or way.

Justification: Many conservation areas contain private roads, tracks and paths that form part of the character of the area. Without planning control on materials and design there could be a significant visual impact on the conservation area.

Application: The removal of Class 27 will apply to all 30 designated conservation areas in East Lothian.

Class 33 – in summary, this class allows works by a local authority for work not exceeding £250,000.

Justification: Works by the local authority that cost less than the sum mentioned can still have a visual impact on the character and appearance of a conservation area and should be controlled.

Application: The removal of Class 11B will apply to all 30 designated conservation areas in East Lothian.

Class 35 – in summary, this Class permits dock, pier, harbour, water transport, canal or inland navigation undertakings. Specific to East Lothian only harbours and piers are relevant for those conservation area which have these features.

Justification – Those conservation areas that include harbours and piers may require works to them from time to time. This class is only removed in Conservation Areas which contain harbours and seeks to control the appearance of permitted development works on operational land.

Application: The removal of Class 35 will apply to the designated conservation areas of Cockenzie and Port Seton, North Berwick and Dunbar.

Class 38 – in summary, this Class permits water undertakings including the laying underground of mains, pipes and other apparatus; installation of associated booster station, valve or switch gear housing of up to 29 cubic metres in capacity above ground and extension or alteration to existing water infrastructure building of up to 1,000 square metres.

Justification – where water infrastructure is required in a conservation area control is required to ensure that such infrastructure does not harm the character or appearance of the conservation area and was included in the extant Article 4 Direction for East Lothian.

Application - The removal of Class 38 will apply to all 30 designated conservation areas in East Lothian.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Introduction of the Article 4 Direction would ensure that the Council could continue to control replacement windows in accordance with the Council's policy on replacement windows contained within the adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance on Cultural Heritage and the Built Environment.

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subject of this report will not have a significant impact on equality and can be expected to have a positive impact on the wellbeing of the community and the environment.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial - None
6.2 Personnel - None.
6.3 Other - None

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Appendix 1: List Of All Conservation Areas in East Lothian

AUTHOR'S NAME	Keith Dingwall
DESIGNATION	Chief Planning Officer
CONTACT INFO	kdingwall@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	07 June 2024

Appendix 1

List of all Conservation Areas in East Lothian

Musselburgh	Haddington	Dunbar
Inveresk	Athelstaneford	Belhaven
Tranent	Gifford	West Barns
Preston, Prestonpans	Garvald	Innerwick
Harlawhill, Prestonpans		Oldhamstocks
Cockenzie and Port Seton	North Berwick	Stenton
Pencaitland	Aberlady	Spott
Ormiston	Gullane	Tynninghame
East Saltoun	Dirleton	East Linton
New Winton	Drem	
Glenkinchie	Whitekirk	

REPORT TO: East Lothian Council

MEETING DATE: 25 June 2024

BY: Executive Director for Education and Children's Services

SUBJECT: Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People at Risk of Harm in East Lothian Community Planning Partnership

5

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To report to Council on the outcomes of the Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People at Risk of Harm in East Lothian Community Planning Partnership.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Council is asked to:

- Note the contents of the Inspection report (Appendix 1) including the evaluation of very good (major strengths) for the evaluation of the impact on children and young people.
- Note that inspectors have confidence in our multi-agency approaches to support and protect children at risk of harm.
- Note that the Care Inspectorate and its scrutiny partners are confident that the partnership in East Lothian has capacity to make changes in the areas which require improvement.
- Congratulate and thank staff from across the East Lothian parentship on a positive inspection and on the key strengths identified by the inspection team.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Inspection Model

The inspection team included inspectors from the Care Inspectorate, Healthcare Improvement Scotland, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland and Education Scotland. The team also included

young inspection volunteers who receive training and support to bring their knowledge and experience of care or protection services to the help evaluate the impact of our work.

Inspectors collated and reviewed evidence against all 22 quality indicators within the [Quality framework for children and young people in need of care and protection \(careinspectorate.com\)](https://www.careinspectorate.com) and used a six point scale to provide a formal evaluation of quality indicator 2.1: impact on children and young people.

3.2 The joint inspection for children at risk of harm is conducted at the request of Scottish Ministers to consider the effectiveness of services for children and young people up to the age of 18 at risk of harm. The inspections aim to provide assurance on the extent to which services can demonstrate the following:

- Children and young people are safer because risks have been identified earlier and responded to effectively.
- Children and young people's lives improve with high-quality planning and support, ensuring they experience sustained loving and nurturing relationships to keep them safe from harm.
- Children and young people and families are meaningfully and appropriately involved in decisions about their lives. They influence service planning, delivery and improvement.
- Collaborative strategic leadership, planning and operational management ensure high standards of service delivery.

3.3 The inspection took place over six months and involved surveys and focus groups for staff, children, young people and their families, case record reading, the submission of a collaborative position statement and a wide range of documents. Inspectors met with approximately 130 staff members.

3.4 **Inspection Findings**

For joint inspections, one evaluation is provided for quality indicator 2.1 as it applies to children at risk of harm. This indicator considers the extent to which children and young people:

- feel valued, loved, fulfilled and secure
- feel listened to, understood and respected
- experience sincere human contact and enduring relationships
- get the best start in life

Inspectors found important strengths that had significant positive impacts on children and young people's experienced and East Lothian received the Grade of **Very Good**. Further information about the Care Inspectorate's six point scale can be found here: [Quality framework for children and young people in need of care and protection](https://www.careinspectorate.com)

3.5 Inspectors identified the following key strengths:

- Children and young people at risk of harm were receiving support from a range of services which was effectively improving their safety.
- Children and young people are experiencing enduring relationships with staff. Staff understand the importance of these relationships in supporting positive outcomes for children and young people.
- For most children and young people at risk of harm the support they received from both statutory and commissioned services was improving their wellbeing.
- Children and young people at risk of harm were routinely listened to and meaningfully involved in decisions that affect their lives.
- Children and young people are being effectively informed about and understood their rights.

3.6 Inspectors identified the following areas for improvement:

- Independent advocacy is well established, and the partnership is committed to filling the gap which means that currently some children and young people at risk of harm do not have access to this support if they want it.
- There were examples of meaningful involvement at strategic level, but partners were not consistently using the views of children and young people and their families to inform service improvements.

3.7 **Next Steps**

Leaders from across the partnership are delighted with the inspection outcomes and wish to thank all staff for the partnership working that supported such positive outcomes. The inspection findings highlight the positive partnership relationships that exist across East Lothian and inspectors conclude that children and young people are safer as a result of our staff's practice and how they respond to risk. This gives us confidence in our approach and it is great to have this recognised and celebrated in this way.

Leaders are already considering the recommendations for improvement which mirrored our collective self-evaluation. The coordination and oversight groups established to support the inspection will continue to meet regularly to ensure that we approach the improvement required collaboratively.

4 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None

5 EQUALITIES 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 Report of a joint inspection of services for children and young people at risk of harm in East Lothian community planning partnership (Appendix 1).

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DATE	27 May 2024



care
inspectorate

Report of a joint inspection of services for children and young people at risk of harm in East Lothian community planning partnership

Prepared by the Care Inspectorate in partnership with Education Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland

7 May 2024



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Introduction

Our remit

At the request of Scottish Ministers, the Care Inspectorate is leading joint inspections of services for children and young people at risk of harm.

The remit of these joint inspections is to consider the effectiveness of services for children and young people up to the age of 18 at risk of harm. The inspections look at the differences community planning partnerships are making to the lives of children and young people at risk of harm and their families.

Joint inspections aim to provide assurance on the extent to which services, working together, can demonstrate the following.

1. Children and young people are safer because risks have been identified early and responded to effectively.
2. Children and young people's lives improve with high-quality planning and support, ensuring they experience sustained loving and nurturing relationships to keep them safe from further harm.
3. Children and young people and families are meaningfully and appropriately involved in decisions about their lives. They influence service planning, delivery and improvement.
4. Collaborative strategic leadership, planning and operational management ensure high standards of service delivery.

The terms that we use in this report

- When we say **children at risk of harm**, we mean children up to the age of 18 years who need urgent support due to being at risk of harm from abuse and/or neglect. We include in this term children who need urgent support due to being a significant risk to themselves and/or others or are at significant risk in the community.
- When we say **young people**, we mean children aged 13-17 to distinguish between this age group and younger children.
- When we say **parents** and **carers**, we mean those with parental responsibilities and rights and those who have day-to-day care of the child (including kinship carers and foster carers).

- When we say **partners**, we mean leaders of services who contribute to community planning. This includes representatives
- When we say **staff**, we mean any combination of people employed to work with children, young people and families in East Lothian.

Appendix 2 contains definitions of some other key terms that we use.

Key facts

**Total population:
112,450 people
on 30 June 2022**

This is an increase 2.6% from 30 June in 2021. Over the same period, the population of Scotland decreased by 0.8%

NRS Scotland

In 2022, 18% of the population were under the age of 16, higher than the national average of 16%

NRS Scotland

In 2022/23, East Lothian had a rate of 1.9 for number of children on the child protection register (per 1,000 of the 0 – 15yr population), lower than the Scottish average of 2.3

The rate of child protection investigations (per 1,000 of the 0 – 15yr population) was 17.5, this was higher than the Scottish average of 13.2

Childrens social work statistics 2021/22



8 (6%) of East Lothian data zones are in the 20% most deprived in Scotland. It is estimated over 1,151 children (6%) age 0-16 could be living in poverty in East Lothian in 2019/20.

In 2021/22, it is estimated that 21.1% of children in East Lothian were living in poverty after housing costs, this is lower than the overall Scottish proportion which stood at 24.5%.

SIMD

UK Govt children in low income families

East Lothian had 104 incidents per 10,000 population of domestic violence recorded by Police Scotland in 2022/23. This was lower than the national average of 114.

Domestic abuse recorded by Police Scotland 2021/22

Our approach

Inspection teams include inspectors from the Care Inspectorate, Healthcare Improvement Scotland, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland and Education Scotland. Teams also include young inspection volunteers, who are young people with direct experience of care or child protection services. Young inspection volunteers receive training and support and contribute to joint inspections using their knowledge and experience to help us evaluate the quality and impact of partners' work.

We take a consistent approach to inspections by using the [quality framework for children and young people in need of care and protection](#). Inspectors collect and review evidence against all 22 quality indicators in the framework to examine the four inspection statements. We use a six-point scale (see appendix 1) to provide a formal evaluation of quality indicator 2.1: impact on children and young people.

How we conducted this inspection

The joint inspection of services for children at risk of harm in the East Lothian community planning partnership area took place between 31 October 2023 and 3 April 2024. It covered the range of partners in the area that have a role in meeting the needs of children and young people at risk of harm and their families.

- We listened to the views and experiences of **39** children and young people and **55** parents and carers. This included face to face meetings, telephone or video calls and survey responses.
- We reviewed practice by reading a sample of records held by a range of services for **60** children and young people at risk of harm.
- We reviewed a wide range of documents and a position statement provided by the partnership.
- We carried out a staff survey and received **408** responses, with **352** fully completed from staff working in a range of services.
- We met with **approximately 130** staff who work directly with children, young people and families.
- We met with members of senior leadership teams, committees and boards that oversee work with children at risk of harm and their families.

We are very grateful to everyone who talked to us as part of this inspection.

As the findings in this joint inspection are based on a sample of children and young people, we cannot assure the quality of service received by every single child and young person in East Lothian who may be at risk of harm.

Key messages

- Children and young people were safer as a result of staff's effective recognition and response to risks and concerns.
- Partners worked well together using inter-agency referral discussions to plan responses if children and young people were at risk of harm.
- Most children and young people experienced positive relationships with staff that had helped to keep them safe.
- The Single Point of Access had enabled many children and young people to receive effective support for their mental health and wellbeing.
- Children and young people at risk of harm felt that staff working with them listened to and respected their views.
- There were examples of meaningful involvement at strategic level, but partners were not consistently seeking, collating and using the views of children and young people and their families to inform service improvements.
- Leaders worked well together through clear governance structures and reporting arrangements. Staff had confidence in their leaders.
- Partners had not fully established ways to collect, analyse and report on the difference services were making. They had scope to develop a greater understanding of this.

Statement 1: Children and young people are safer because risks have been identified early and responded to effectively

Key messages

- Children and young people were safer as a result of staff's effective recognition and response to risks and concerns.
- Partners had commenced an ambitious programme of transforming children's services with the aim of providing preventative and early support for families.
- Staff were confident in their ability to recognise and report child abuse, neglect and exploitation, and assess and analyse risks.
- Partners worked well together using inter-agency referral discussions to plan responses if children and young people were at risk of harm.

Preventative approaches

East Lothian has one of the highest growing child populations in Scotland. It has a relatively low rate of families on low incomes, when compared to the national rate. However, there are areas of high deprivation and pockets of poverty throughout the local authority. National factors, including the lasting impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and cost-of-living crisis, have also negatively affected families. Tackling poverty and addressing inequalities was a key priority for the partnership. Partners had a strong awareness of poverty-related data and had carefully used this to inform their approaches to addressing poverty. In targeted areas, staff working across a range of services had helped to address poverty and disadvantage at an early stage.

Practice example: the Pennypit Centre

An example of effective targeted provision of support was the Pennypit Centre and the Pennypit Community Development Trust, a community centre in the Prestonpans area. This delivered early intervention and preventative support to families facing poverty and disadvantages. Staff in the centre knew their community well, understood local need and provided support sensitively and flexibly.

As a result, a range of tailored services had made a positive difference to local children and families, such as links with foodbanks, money advice, young dads' group, food parcels and clothing provision, breakfast clubs, low-cost birthday parties and local facilities for holding meetings for families.

Many third sector organisations were providing helpful support to children, young people and families across the area. Examples included: **Circle**, Homestart, The Bridges Project, Children 1st, Cyrenians, Women's Aid, Midlothian Young Peoples Advice Service (MYPAS), the Motorcycle project, Heavy Sound and the Volunteer Centre East Lothian (VCEL) Youth Befriending Service. However, waiting lists for some services had meant that some families had to wait for the right support.

Other preventative work included police school link officers who worked collaboratively in schools to provide crime prevention education programmes. Early and effective interventions had been developed by multi-agency partners with the aim of preventing criminal activity, preventing exploitation and improving relationships.

Addressing needs at an early stage

Partners had experienced an increasing demand for support. In particular, referrals to social work services had increased by 35% over a 5-year period. Leaders recognised the need to continue to drive towards providing early and effective support to families, both as part of their commitment to keeping **The Promise** and also to help them to manage the increasing referrals to statutory services. As a result, education and children's services had started an ambitious programme to transform services, with the aim of intervening early and preventatively. One aspect of service redesign included the Families Together East Lothian service. This was being partly funded by Scottish Government's Whole Family Wellbeing Fund. The service had started in two pilot areas and was providing targeted support to families for a 12-week period to help prevent the need for further social work involvement or involvement from other services.

Education services had developed a locality planning forum approach in pilot areas. This approach brought together multi-agency staff across school clusters to help find creative solutions to supporting children and young people who had been identified as needing additional support. Staff reported that this helped them to work together, share ideas and approaches and intervene early to address concerns. There were plans to extend this throughout East Lothian.

The **Getting it Right for Every Child** (GIRFEC) approach was well-embedded. The majority of staff who completed our survey agreed that the GIRFEC approach was having a positive impact on the lives of children and young people at risk of harm. Staff demonstrated confidence in working together through **child planning meetings**. These helped staff to work collaboratively to identify concerns and plan support.

Overall, the collaborative GIRFEC approach had led to staff working well together to identify and work with children, young people and families who needed support. This was reflected in the low rates of children being referred to the **Scottish children's reporter administration** (SCRA) and in the low rates of children subject to compulsory supervision orders.

Identifying and responding to concerns

Staff were confident in their ability to identify safety concerns for children and young people and knew how to respond. Almost all staff who completed our survey were confident in their knowledge, skills and ability to recognise, report and respond to signs of child abuse, neglect and exploitation. Almost all staff knew the standards of practice expected of them. They also felt supported to be professionally curious with the aim of keeping children and young people safe. Staff had good access to both multi-agency and single agency child protection training. This was reflected in our staff survey, with almost all staff who responded agreeing that the training they had attended had benefitted their work with children and young people at risk of harm.

Partners were committed to continuous development, particularly in supporting staff to identify and respond to child protection concerns. One example of this was that the chief executive of East Lothian council had requested that Education Scotland review their child protection policies, practices and guidance. This review was undertaken in 2022 and had resulted in the strengthening of education staff's role in multi-agency working in child protection processes. Education leaders had enhanced their quality assurance of child protection processes in schools. This ongoing focus had increased the confidence of education staff in thresholds for intervention and making child protection referrals.

Another example of development in approaches to identify protection concerns, was the launch of a neglect toolkit in 2023. Over 180 staff had attended training and this had equipped staff with the knowledge and skills to respond to concerns about the impact of poverty and neglect. Further training and awareness briefings are scheduled, along with plans to evaluate the impact of the toolkit.

Partners were working well together to identify and respond to domestic abuse concerns. **The Safe and Together** model and **multi-agency risk assessment conferences** (MARAC) were embedded in practice.

In our record reading, we evaluated partners' initial response to concerns as good or better in most records. There was routine communication with staff in **universal services** and concerns were shared in a timely manner. Clear decisions had been made about next steps.

Investigating protection concerns

When children and young people were at risk of harm, staff responded effectively. Information was shared appropriately when there were concerns about a child's safety. Immediate action was taken to keep them and other children safe if this was needed. Legal measures were almost always explored and interim safety plans were developed for almost all children in the records that we read. We evaluated the quality of follow-up to concerns as good or better in most of the records that we reviewed.

The **inter-agency referral discussions (IRDs)** process was an area of strong practice. They helped staff to share information and make informed joint decisions about actions necessary if children and young people were at risk of harm. This included when concerns were reported out with core working hours. In the records we read, we found that IRDs were routinely happening and that police, health and social work were almost always fully involved. Additionally, the timescales for IRDs were almost always met. In all of the records that we read, clear decisions were made and written records were completed. The IRD process was supported and enhanced by regular audits and robust managerial oversight. All IRDs were quality assured by a multi-agency group and findings were helpfully used to direct further improvement work and had led to consistently high standards of practice. Learning themes from quality assurance had been further explored in development workshops with relevant staff.

Staff routinely considered the need for medical examinations and joint investigative interviews. The introduction of the **Scottish child interview model (SCIM)** and the creation of dedicated interviewers had ensured a co-ordinated **trauma informed approach** to the investigation of child protection concerns. This was helping to improve the quality of the investigative process for children and young people at risk of harm. For staff involved in SCIM this included support for vicarious trauma and wellbeing.

Partners had worked collaboratively to develop the **Sycamore Centre**, a centre specifically designed to provide a quiet, supportive space to carry out joint investigative interviews and medical examination if required. This space is now operational and will be used from early-mid April onwards. The ethos of the centre is trauma-informed and it has incorporated the principles of '**Bairns' Hoose**' standards. The sycamore suite may be used for medical examinations if required but most children and young people requiring a medical examination will visit the purpose-built, child-friendly Acorn Suite at the Royal Hospital for children and young people.

Vulnerable Young People's and **Care and Risk Management (CARM)** procedures were in place for when there were concerns about older young people. These were used as necessary following agreement at an IRD. They were being consistently applied and they helped guide staff to work collaboratively if young people were at risk of harm.

Impact of identification and response to concerns

Children and young people were safer because concerns were being effectively identified and responded to by staff. When we spoke with staff, children and parents, we heard very good examples of how they had received support that had helped them become safer. Through our surveys, most children and young people reported that they felt safe all or most of the time. The majority of parents and carers who responded to our survey reported that their child was safer as a result of the support they had received. Our review of records showed that for most children and young people, risks of harm had reduced because of the help that had been provided.

Statement 2: Children and young people's lives improve with high quality planning and support, ensuring they experience sustained loving and nurturing relationships to keep them safe from further harm

Key messages:

- Most children and young people experienced positive relationships with staff that had helped to keep them safe.
- Children, young people and families were benefitting from high quality assessment and planning approaches.
- The Single Point of Access had enabled many children and young people to receive effective support for their mental health and wellbeing.
- Children and young people with very high levels of risk and need were being well supported by multi-agency staff to remain with family or in care settings locally.

Assessment and planning to reduce risk

Our review of records highlighted that the partnership's approach to assessment and planning for children and young people was an area of strength. Staff were confident in their approaches to this aspect of their work. We evaluated the quality of assessments and child's plans as good or better in almost all the records we reviewed, demonstrating consistent high-quality practice. The partnership had a well-embedded **Signs of Safety** approach to assessments and plans. This helped staff to define harm, outline danger and identify safety goals in a way that was accessible to families and other staff. Assessments routinely included the views of children and young people and their parents and carers. All records that we read had a chronology and most contained multi-agency information. However, we evaluated the quality of chronologies as less strong than assessments and plans. Partners had recognised this as an area for development.

Following the publication of the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland in 2021, the partnership finalised and implemented the Edinburgh and Lothians Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedures in December 2023. This resulted in changes to child protection planning meetings and reviews. There was very good attendance and involvement from social work, police, health and education staff in these meetings. This helped partners to work together to plan and review risks and needs for children and young people. Risks were suitably explored and clear decisions were made at almost all planning meetings in the records that we reviewed.

We evaluated the quality of reviews as good or better in most records that we read. Independent reviewing officers routinely ensured children and young people were supported prior to and during review meetings. They helpfully encouraged children and young people to share their views.

As noted previously, for older young people, vulnerable young people's procedures and care and risk management procedures were also routinely being used to plan if young people were at risk or displaying signs of trauma. We found that staff were working well together through these processes and they were being used consistently. If young people were at risk of harm in the community, or if they were harming themselves or others, we evaluated the impact of work to reduce these risks as good or better in most of the records that we reviewed. Partners were keen to continue to make further improvement in their work to keep children and young people safe and had plans to further develop their **contextual safeguarding** approaches.

Support for children and young people at risk of harm

The majority of staff responding to our survey were confident that children and young people who had experienced abuse and neglect were being supported to recover from their experiences. Our review of records highlighted strengths in relation to the impact of work to reduce risks and harm experienced by children and young people.

We heard positive examples of staff working together to address risks and needs. Practical help and therapeutic supports were available to families from universal services in education and health settings and through a range of third sector organisations such as Homestart and the Bridges. Targeted and intensive supports were provided by statutory services and third sector organisations. Families had good access to a wide range of creative and flexible support.

Various third sector organisations had been commissioned to provide children, young people and families with specialist support to address safety concerns. There were strong links between Children's Services and **Midlothian and East Lothian Drugs and Alcohol Partnership** and together they had jointly funded social workers to support children affected by parental drug and alcohol use. An example of specialist support was the provision of MYPAS to address the drug and alcohol use of young people. This service had effectively supported almost 50 young people during the 2022/23 reporting period and had evidenced significant reductions in their drug and alcohol use.

Children's 1st were providing Family Group Decision Making which had helped families to come together to make plans if children were at risk of harm. Families using the service reported they had strengthened family connections, given children voices in their plans and had helped families to provide solutions to concerns.

Children's services had partnered with the **National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children** and were one of three areas nationally to take part in the Harmful Sexual Behaviour Programme. The aim of this is to help partners to

develop and improve approaches to children and young people displaying harmful sexual behaviour. While it was too early to tell the impact of this work, it is an illustration of the partnership's approach to working collaboratively with third sector organisations to provide targeted and specialist support to children and young people at risk of harm.

Circle was providing targeted support for families with very young children, most of whom had been referred to the service during pregnancy to address concerns arising from drug or alcohol use, domestic abuse or parenting support. We heard examples of how this whole family support service, provided by family support workers, had positively impacted families with very young children and had led to improved safety and wellbeing.

Practice example: Olivebank Child and Family Centre

Over the past year, significant changes had been made to the Olivebank Child and Family Centre and the service now provides perinatal and postnatal support to families with children up to the age of two years across the East Lothian area. The service has worked with a wide range of parents and young children to address issues such as parental drug and alcohol use, parental mental health concerns, supporting new parents who need additional practical and emotional support and supporting care experienced parents.

Support is flexible and can be up to five days per week. It is designed to meet the needs of each unique family referred to the service and includes practical, emotional, financial support for families as well as running parenting programmes and other groupwork. In order to demonstrate the impact of the service, staff record impact information three times a year, using a bespoke assessment for each child and family. This assessment considers parental and baby mental health and wellbeing, early years developmental milestones, the parent-child attachment. Staff in the service also carefully considered the experiences of very young children.

This together with feedback from families, is helping the service to map impact on an individual level. The service is currently considering how to best aggregate this information to track progress and consider the impact of the service as a whole.

As part of the partnership's commitment to keeping The Promise, the strategic approach to ensuring that children, young people and families remain in East Lothian had helped some children to return to their communities and had prevented others from moving away. This meant that services and staff in East Lothian were supporting children and young people with very high levels of complex needs and risks to remain within the local area. Staff were working well together to carefully plan creative care and support for those children and young people who were at high risk of requiring alternative care arrangements as a result of trauma and other complexities.

This approach had been well supported by senior leaders in children's services who had a very good awareness of the children and young people with the highest level of risks and needs, and the pressures on local services. Further work was underway to develop the capacity of services to provide intensive community-based supports. Children's services had recently commissioned Action for Children to deliver a new intensive outreach service - Chances - the impact of which will need to be evaluated in due course.

Mental health and wellbeing support

The partnership had developed a **Single Point of Access** utilising staff in education, health, social work and the third sector. This provided a triage approach to mental health and wellbeing requests for assistance and supported early intervention. Through this approach, staff were able to select the most appropriate service from a suite of options including counselling, wellbeing support, art therapy, group work, and support from young people's mental health youth workers. As a result, in the past year around 700 children received effective support to address their mental health and emotional wellbeing needs. However, some services, particularly counselling, had lengthy waiting lists because of the volume of referrals.

This approach supports the screening of **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service** (CAMHS) referrals and ensures that children and young people are receiving the most appropriate and timely support for their mental health and wellbeing. Waiting times for CAMHS had significantly reduced since the commencement of Single Point of Access and are lower in East Lothian than in neighbouring areas. CAMHS provided services to children and young people with more complex mental health needs was providing a crisis intervention service and an unscheduled care service to support young people in crisis. However, some staff working with children and young people and a few families reported that they still struggled to access timely support at times of crisis.

Quality of relationships

Most children and young people at risk of harm were benefiting from trusting relationships with staff working with them. All the children that we heard from had the support of an adult they could trust. Most told us that they felt listened to and had had their rights explained to them. The majority of staff who completed our survey agreed that children and young people at risk of harm were thriving as a result of nurturing and enduring relationships with the people involved with them.

The Signs of Safety approach included the use of a range of tools such as 'the three houses' and 'words and pictures.' Staff were encouraged to spend quality time with children and their families and routinely used tools to help them to communicate well with children and their families.

There were very good examples of children and young people benefiting from their relationships with social work staff, school staff and staff from a variety of third sector

projects. However, there were a few children and young people who told us that they had experienced changes of staff involved in supporting or working with them, which had impacted on them. Likewise, while the majority of parents and carers told us that their trusting relationships with staff had helped them, a few parents and carers shared that they had found it difficult to access support.

Similar to issues faced across Scotland, staff and leaders told us about the staffing challenges that had arisen, particularly since the Covid-19 pandemic. Extensive efforts had been made to recruit, retain and support staff across agencies through the grow your own approach. This focuses on attracting, developing, supporting, and retaining employees by working with local colleges and universities to train and support newly qualified staff. Recruitment procedures highlighted their organisational commitment to workload management, promoting wellbeing and supporting a trauma informed workforce. These efforts had led to recent improvements in staffing levels, particularly in social work services.

Statement 3: Children, young people and families are meaningfully and appropriately involved in decisions about their lives. They influence service planning, delivery, and improvement.

Key messages:

- Children and young people had a very good awareness of their rights.
- Children and young people were being well supported by staff to participate, share their views and contribute to decision-making.
- Children and young people at risk of harm felt that staff working with them listened to and respected their views.
- Partners were not consistently seeking, collating and using the views of children and young people and their families to inform service improvements.

Rights-based practice

Children and young people had a very good awareness of their rights. Rights-based approaches in schools had helped increase awareness and understanding for both staff and pupils. Work across the partnership meant that rights-based language was well-embedded and helped staff, children and young people and families to understand children's rights and the importance of the **United Nations Convention on the rights of the child (UNCRC)**.

As a result of the partnership's focus on children's rights, staff understood the importance of ensuring that children's rights to express their views, feelings and wishes were central to their work. Staff worked well to ensure that children and young people shared their views and contributed to decision-making.

Involvement of children and young people in decision-making

Children and young people at risk of harm were suitably involved throughout key protective processes, including during investigations, at meetings and when plans were reviewed. During investigations, the views of children had been considered in most of the records we read. A majority of children and young people contributed to multi-agency meetings and reviews. Their views were also routinely sought prior to meetings led by Independent Reviewing Officers, who are responsible for chairing meetings. The ways in which children were listened to, heard, and involved by staff was rated as good or better in most of records that we read.

The Signs of Safety approach to assessments and planning had helped social work staff to ensure that the views and experiences of children and their families were central to assessments, plans and reviews. Families found this approach helpful and understandable. Other services using Signs of Safety, such as Olivebank, Family

Nurse Partnership, Health Visiting and Circle, were working well to promote the involvement of very young children and emphasised the importance of understanding and interpreting the behaviour of very young children in their work.

Overall, children and young people at risk of harm felt that staff working with them listened to and respected their views. In our children and young people survey, almost all of the respondents agreed that they had been listened to and that they have someone who supports them to express their views. In the staff survey, a majority of respondents felt that children and young people, parents and carers were able to contribute and participate meaningfully in decisions that affected their lives.

Independent advocacy

When children and young people were care experienced or when they attended children's hearings, they had access to independent advocacy. Advocacy staff were involved in supporting the work of the East Lothian **Champions Board** as well as individually advocating for children and young people. We received positive feedback from children and young people about the support from advocacy staff.

Children and young people that we met, read the records of, and who completed our surveys had a very good understanding of their right to be heard. They were being well supported by staff who knew them to share their views in important meetings. While two services provide advocacy, neither was commissioned to work with children and young people at risk of harm, unless they were care experienced or attending children's hearings. Partners advised of ongoing efforts to secure funding to fill this gap, but this had not yet been achieved.

Influence of children and young people

Partners had a clear vision for the promotion of children's views and experiences in service improvement. As a result, the views of children, young people and families had influenced service developments. This included informing school improvement plans, education improvement plans and wider children's services planning.

Young people also had an influence in the creation of the Youth Vision Strategy 2023 to 2026 through the **Young People's Advisory Group**. Children and young people also had opportunity to influence Poverty Action planning. Some children, young people and families had shared their experiences and had been encouraged to outline key areas that they would like to see improve.

Third sector organisations had involved children, young people and families in the planning and evaluation of their services. Very good examples included Circle, MYPAS and the Bridges project. In these examples, children, young people and families who used the services had shared their experiences, provided feedback and worked closely with staff to influence the strategic direction of the services.

Children's services planning processes included consultation and engagement with the East Lothian Champions Board. The East Lothian Champions Board was well

established and brought together young people with lived experience to share their views and influence service delivery. Through the East Lothian Champions Board senior leaders of key services had been identified as ‘ambassadors.’ This connected senior leaders with young people and helped views and experiences to be heard and understood.

An example of the involvement of young people was that partners had worked collaboratively with Who Cares Scotland to publish a ‘Home and Belonging’ report which explored care leavers’ experiences. The report was co-produced by a care experienced young person and a senior housing strategy officer. It included the views of a range of young people across East Lothian. The impact of this report was that it informed key strategic planning, including the 2024-29 Local Housing Strategy and East Lothian Partnership Corporate Parenting Plan 2024-27.

Other examples of consultation with children and young people included helping to identify priorities for the transforming services for children programme and supporting the design of whole family support. These were good examples of how the partnership had consulted with children and young people as part of strategic planning. The partnership recognised that more could be done to ensure that this was being done consistently in order that the views of children and young people at risk of harm were consistently used to inform service improvements.

Statement 4: Collaborative strategic leadership, planning and operational management ensure high standards of service delivery

- Leaders, operational managers and staff shared high aspirations and a strong value base for the delivery of services.
- Leaders worked well together through clear governance structures and reporting arrangements. Staff had confidence in their leaders.
- Staff felt well supported through supervision arrangements, peer support and the support of their managers.
- Partners had not fully established ways to collect, analyse and report on the difference services were making.

Vision, values and aims

The Community Planning Partnership had an agreed, clear and ambitious vision that East Lothian should be prosperous, community-minded and fair. Partners had placed improving outcomes for children, young people and families at the centre of their aims. Their shared vision was articulated in the Children and Young People's Services Plan 2023 – 2026 as "Making sure East Lothian's babies, children and young people are happy, healthy and heard". Most staff who completed our survey agreed that leaders had a strong vision for the delivery and improvement of services.

Key strategic plans were well connected through the shared vision. Plans provided a framework for leaders of services for children and young people to share their ambitions for children and young people at risk of harm. The children's services plan was clearly aligned with the Promise and was helpfully framed around the Promise foundations. It was also underpinned by a rights-based approach in line with the UNCRC.

Leaders, operational managers and staff shared a strong value base and high aspirations for the delivery of services. Leaders were visible and approachable. Most staff who responded to our survey felt that leaders were highly visible, communicated well and knew the quality of work they were able to deliver. We observed leaders to have strong working relationships that were respectful and supportive. Elected members also valued their close working relationships with senior leaders across the partnership and felt confident in the leadership arrangements.

Leadership of strategy and direction

Leaders and elected members were working in a context of increasing demand for services along with increasing pressure on financial resources. Together, they continued to prioritise services for children and young people at risk of harm. They

recognised the importance of services that were working to keep children and young people safe and supported.

Children's services planning sits within a clear governance and accountability structure, led by the **East Lothian Children's Strategic Partnership (ELCSP)**. Leaders had streamlined the children's services plan to focus on three key areas: children and young people's rights; children and young people's mental health and whole family wellbeing. Leaders had built in an annual review of progress in order to maintain focus and ensure they continue to have the right priorities.

Strategic planning is overseen by elected members through the education and children's services committee. Elected members were well sighted on service developments, performance measures and identified risks. The governance structure and reporting arrangements provided a suitable mechanism for leaders, senior managers, third sector representatives and elected members to oversee services for children and their families.

The **East and Midlothian Public Protection Committee (EMPPC)** provided effective leadership of child protection. Reporting arrangements to the **Critical Services Oversight Group (CSOG)** ensured leaders were well-sighted on current and emerging risks, both in a local and national context. Working across the two local authority areas (East Lothian and Midlothian) had enabled partners to share information, learning and resources and helpfully benchmark performance. The jointly resourced public protection office provided the conduit from strategic direction to operational practice.

Leadership of people and partnerships

There was evidence of positive working relationships across the whole partnership. Leaders worked well together and this provided an example and set expectations for operational managers and staff. Staff had very good collaborative working relationships across agencies and this was promoted and visible across the partnership. Staff were well supported to work jointly across services and were proud of the contribution they were making.

Staff benefited from the range of opportunities available to support their development and staff were positive about the quality of learning and training available to them. Almost all staff who completed our survey reported that the training they had undertaken had increased their confidence and skills in working with children and young people at risk of harm.

The importance of relational work and trauma informed practice was a key priority for leaders. Developing a trauma informed workforce had been prioritised and training was underway across the partnership. We heard very good examples of staff understanding the impact of trauma and working together to prevent the re-traumatisation of children and young people through careful joint planning. This understanding of the importance of trauma-informed practice was also reflected in our conversations with senior leaders and elected members.

The learning and practice development sub-group of the EMPPC ensured the multi-agency learning and development framework focused on key priority areas. It was shaped against local priorities and influenced by action plans arising from learning reviews and local audit activity. The next step for the partnership was to develop an understanding of the difference development opportunities were making on improving the experiences of children, young people and families.

Staff felt well supported through supervision arrangements, peer support and the support of their managers. Staff told us that they felt valued, listened to and respected. Most staff who completed our survey received regular supervision. There were particularly positive survey responses from social work and health staff about their supervision arrangements. The introduction of an education support officer for child protection had helped education staff to better access support and advice in relation to child protection matters.

Recruitment of staff across a range of services throughout East Lothian was a challenge for leaders, as it has been throughout Scotland. The capacity of services was an area of concern for some staff members. However, leaders had a strong understanding of the impact of recruitment challenges and had worked hard to develop solutions. The 'grow your own' approach was an example of a strategy to address this.

Leadership of improvement and change

Partners were committed to an ambitious transformational change programme. An evidence-based approach had been taken to map their systems and processes and understand children's journeys through services. Consultation with families, staff and other stakeholders was integral to the process which included reviewing the key purpose, outcomes and operating principles for the whole of children's services. However, progress on this change programme had been delayed by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, changes in leadership arrangements and staffing pressures.

At the time of the inspection, the redesign programme was already underway it is intended to make transformational changes to the re-direction of services towards prevention, early intervention and family support, aligned with The Promise. Various approaches and tests of change had commenced in education and children's services, such as Child Planning Framework locality teams, Families Together East Lothian approaches and changes to Olivebank, as outlined earlier. Other developments have included the introduction of a third sector commissioning group, which has brought greater openness and clarity for commissioned services.

The redesign programme also includes partners' commitment to keeping children and young people in East Lothian and reducing statutory involvement with children and their families. Through the 'Belonging to East Lothian' policy approach, partners had significantly reduced their numbers of looked after children and had kept more children at home or in community settings in East Lothian. This had taken a significant amount of strategic drive and operational effort. For children and young

people who were identified as being at risk of harm, this meant that they were more likely to remain at home and be provided with intensive supports to sustain these arrangements.

Self-evaluation, quality assurance and the use of data

Leaders demonstrated a commitment to improving the quality of services for children and young people at risk of harm. They were working well together to drive improvements in priority areas whilst balancing the need for stability. The CSOG and EMPPC had recently undertaken self-evaluation activities which had helped them to assess their own effectiveness. They had re-structured the sub-group arrangements and created a new child protection sub-group to allow more focus on child protection matters. This was an example of leaders' willingness to try new approaches and make changes to leadership arrangements if required.

Improvement work across the partnership was influenced by a range of learning opportunities. Quality assurance activities and learning from case reviews underpinned improvement activities for child protection practice. Examples of recent audit activities included a review of Care and risk management (CARM), signs of safety audit and an audit by NHS Lothian on cause for concern reports. Staff and managers were involved in quality assurance activities which helped to connect strategic goals with frontline practice.

The performance and care governance group had recently developed a quality assurance framework for children's services which was helping them to oversee audit and quality assurance activities. However, the range of self-evaluation and quality assurance activities across the partnership was not yet being systematically pulled together to provide an overarching view of service performance to inform longer term improvement priorities.

Partners were routinely gathering a wide range of data. Examples included the child protection minimum data set, SCIM data set, drug and alcohol data set and performance related data for children's service planning. These data sets were process driven and did not demonstrate the impact of services on the lives of children and young people. While some individual services were gathering impact-related information, this was not being routinely gathered, aggregated and analysed to inform the planning of service delivery. As a result, the partnership had not yet fully developed mechanisms necessary to fully understand the impact services were having on the lives of children, young people and their families.

Evaluation of the impact on children and young people - quality indicator 2.1

For these inspections we are providing one evaluation. This is for quality indicator 2.1 as it applies to children at risk of harm. This quality indicator, with reference to children at risk of harm, considers the extent to which children and young people:

- feel valued, loved, fulfilled and secure
- feel listened to, understood and respected
- experience sincere human contact and enduring relationships
- get the best start in life

Evaluation of quality indicator 2.1: **Very Good**

We found important strengths that had significant positive impacts on children and young people's experiences.

- Children and young people at risk of harm were receiving support from a range of services which was effectively improving their safety.
- Children and young people are experiencing enduring relationships with staff. Staff understand the importance of these relationships in supporting positive outcomes for children and young people
- For most children and young people at risk of harm the support they received from both statutory and commissioned services was improving their wellbeing.
- Children and young people at risk of harm were routinely listened to and meaningfully involved in decisions that affect their lives.
- Children and young people are being effectively informed about and understood their rights.

We identified two areas where the partnership will need to consider how to ensure consistency in experience and outcomes for children and young people at risk of harm and their families.

- Independent advocacy is well established, and the partnership is committed to filling the gap which means that currently some children and young people at risk of harm do not have access to this support if they want it.
- There were examples of meaningful involvement at strategic level, but partners were not consistently using the views of children and young people and their families to inform service improvements.

Whilst improvements are required to maximise the wellbeing and experiences of children and young people, the strengths identified clearly outweigh areas for improvement. Therefore, we evaluated quality indicator 2.1 impact on children and young people as Very Good. See appendix 1 for more information on our evaluation scale.

Conclusion

The Care Inspectorate and its scrutiny partners are confident that the partnership in East Lothian has the capacity to make changes in the areas that require improvement.

This is based on the following:

- Leaders, including elected members, recognised the need for continuous improvement. They had demonstrated commitment in their collaborative working and investment in new approaches and services.
- Evidence of strong partnership working, and staff and leaders demonstrating their commitment to improving outcomes for children, young people and families.
- There was evidence of effective joint working and self-evaluation across the partnership having led to improvement in key processes. They were taking steps to address areas for improvement already identified, most of which matched the findings of our inspection.

What happens next?

The Care Inspectorate will request that a joint action plan is provided that clearly details how the partnership will make improvements in the key areas identified by inspectors. We will continue to offer support for improvement and monitor progress through our linking arrangements.

Appendix 1: The quality indicator framework and the six-point evaluation scale

Our inspections used the following scale for evaluations made by inspectors which is outlined in the [quality framework for children and young people in need of care and protection](#). Published in August 2019, it outlines our quality framework and contains the following scale for evaluations:

- **6 Excellent** - Outstanding or sector leading
- **5 Very Good** - Major strengths
- **4 Good** - Important strengths, with some areas for improvement
- **3 Adequate** - Strengths just outweigh weaknesses
- **2 Weak** - Important weaknesses – priority action required
- **1 Unsatisfactory** - Major weaknesses – urgent remedial action required

An evaluation of **excellent** describes performance which is sector leading and supports experiences and outcomes for people which are of outstandingly high quality. There is a demonstrable track record of innovative, effective practice and/or very high-quality performance across a wide range of its activities and from which others could learn. We can be confident that excellent performance is sustainable and that it will be maintained.

An evaluation of **very good** will apply to performance that demonstrates major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for people. There are very few areas for improvement. Those that do exist will have minimal adverse impact on people's experiences and outcomes. While opportunities are taken to strive for excellence within a culture of continuous improvement, performance evaluated as very good does not require significant adjustment.

An evaluation of **good** applies to performance where there is a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh areas for improvement. The strengths will have a significant positive impact on people's experiences and outcomes. However, improvements are required to maximise wellbeing and ensure that people consistently have experiences and outcomes that are as positive as possible.

An evaluation of **adequate** applies where there are some strengths, but these just outweigh weaknesses. Strengths may still have a positive impact but the likelihood of achieving positive experiences and outcomes for people is reduced significantly because key areas of performance need to improve. Performance that is evaluated as adequate may be tolerable in particular circumstances, such as where a service or partnership is not yet fully established, or in the midst of major transition. However, continued performance at adequate level is not acceptable. Improvements must be made by building on strengths while addressing those elements that are not contributing to positive experiences and outcomes for people.

An evaluation of **weak** will apply to performance in which strengths can be identified but these are outweighed or compromised by significant weaknesses. The weaknesses, either individually or when added together, substantially affect peoples' experiences or outcomes. Without improvement as a matter of priority, the welfare or safety of people may be compromised, or their critical needs not met. Weak performance requires action in the form of structured and planned improvement by the provider or partnership with a mechanism to demonstrate clearly that sustainable improvements have been made.

An evaluation of **unsatisfactory** will apply when there are major weaknesses in critical aspects of performance that require immediate remedial action to improve experiences and outcomes for people. It is likely that people's welfare or safety will be compromised by risks that cannot be tolerated. Those accountable for carrying out the necessary actions for improvement must do so as a matter of urgency, to ensure that people are protected and their wellbeing improves without delay.

Appendix 2: Key terms

Note: more key terms that we use are available in [The Guide](#) to our inspections.

Bairn's Hoose: is Scotland's approach to the Icelandic 'Barnahus,' which means 'children's house.' Bairns' Hoose offers holistic, child-centred support to those who have been victims or witness of abuse and to children under the age of criminal responsibility whose behaviour has caused harm.

Care and risk management (CARM): are processes which are applied when a child between the ages of 12 and 17 has been involved in behaviours which could cause serious harm to others. This includes sexual or violent behaviour which may cause serious harm. CARM processes are also applicable when an escalation of behaviours suggests that an incident of a seriously harmful nature may be imminent.

Champions boards: allow young people to have direct influence within their local area and hold their corporate parents to account. They also ensure that services are tailored and responsive to the needs of care experienced young people and are sensitive to the kinds of vulnerabilities they may have as a result of their experiences before, during and after care. Young peoples' views, opinions and aspirations are at the forefront in this forum and are paramount to its success. Champions boards build the capacity of young people to influence change, empower them by showing confidence in their abilities and potential, and give them the platform to flourish and grow.

Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS): are multi-disciplinary teams that provide assessment and treatment/interventions in the context of emotional, developmental, environmental and social factors for children and young people experiencing mental health problems, as well as training, consultation, advice and support to professionals working with children, young people and their families.

Child planning meetings: a single multi-agency planning process around the child's plan with involving those practitioners who support the child and family and are likely to be participants at a child's plan meeting. This can be one off or ongoing meetings.

Circle: Circle is a third sector organisation that works alongside whole families to offer practical, emotional, parenting, connecting and advocacy whole family support

Critical services oversight group (CSOG): CSOG provides governance over the East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee and maintains an overview of wider Public Protection issues. It maintains oversight of the findings and learning from Learning Reviews, self-evaluation and external scrutiny.

Children's services plan: is for services that work with children and young people. It sets out the priorities for achieving the vision for all children and young people and what services need to do together to achieve them.

Contextual safeguarding: an approach that recognises that as young people grow and develop, they are influenced by a whole range of environments and people outside of their family.

East Lothian and Midlothian public protection committee (EMPPC): brings together all the organisations involved in protecting individuals in East Lothian and Midlothian. Their purpose is to make sure local services work together to protect children and adults from abuse and keep them safe.

Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC): is a national policy designed to make sure that all children and young people get the help that they need when they need it.

Independent advocacy: is when the person providing advocacy is not involved in providing the services to the individual, or in any decision-making processes regarding their care.

Inter-agency referral discussion (IRD): is the start of the formal process of information sharing, assessment, analysis and decision making following reported concern about abuse or neglect of a child or young person under the age of 18 years, in relation to familial and non-familial concerns. This may include discussion of concern relating to brothers and sisters, or other children within the same context, and can refer to an unborn baby that may be exposed to current or future risk. They may also be known as initial referral discussions, or initial referral tripartite discussions.

Midlothian and East Lothian Drugs and Alcohol Partnership (MELDAP): is a locally based, inter-agency strategic partnership responsible for commissioning and developing local strategies for tackling problem alcohol and drug use and promoting recovery.

Multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC): is a regular, local meeting where information about domestic abuse victims at risk of the most serious levels of harm (including murder) is shared between representatives from a range of local agencies to inform a co-ordinated action plan to increase the safety of the victim and their children.

Safe and Together: is a model containing a suite of tools and interventions designed to help staff improve their awareness and understanding of domestic abuse. The model is based on three key principles: keeping children safe and together with their non-abusive parent, ensuring safety, healing from trauma, stability and nurture; partnering with the non-abusive parent as a default position ensuring efficient, effective and child-centred practice; and intervening with the perpetrator to reduce the risk and harm to the child through engagement, accountability and criminal justice.

Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM): is a new approach to joint investigative interviewing that is trauma informed. It maintains the focus on the needs of the child

in the interview, minimises the risk of further traumatisation and aims to achieve best evidence through improved planning and interview techniques.

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA): an executive non-departmental public body of the Scottish Government with responsibility for protecting children at risk.

Sycamore Centre: The Sycamore Centre includes two children's house, Aspen and Rowan, each have 2 interview suites which provide a quiet, supportive space for children and young people that can be tailored to individual needs. This is a partnership between NHS Lothian, Police Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council, Mid Lothian and East Lothian Councils and working with third sector colleagues. The ethos of the Sycamore Centre is trauma informed.

Trauma informed approach: being 'Trauma Informed' means being able to recognise when someone may be affected by trauma, collaboratively adjusting how we work to take this into account and responding in a way that supports recovery, does no harm and recognises and supports people's resilience.

The Promise: was established to take forward the work of the Independent Care Review. In 2021, it published its plan for 2021-2024, outlining key outcomes that aim to ensure that Scotland's children and young people grow up loved, safe and respected, so they can realise their full potential.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child (UNCRC): is a widely ratified international statement of children's rights.

Universal services: is the term given to those services used by the whole population of children and young people, mainly in health and education, including schools and nurseries, GP and health visiting.

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REPORT TO: East Lothian Council
MEETING DATE: 25 June 2024
BY: Executive Director for Council Resources
SUBJECT: Response to Boundary Commission Review

6

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek ratification of an alternative proposal for constituency alignment, submitted to Boundary Commission for Scotland.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the Boundary Commission for Scotland consultation on the proposed new Scottish Parliamentary Constituencies is ongoing and representation to stage.
- 2.2 To ratify the alternative proposal for constituency alignment that was submitted to the Boundary Commission as detailed in paragraph 3.6 and Appendix 1 of this report, noting that this could not be approved in advance as a consequence of the timing of the consultation period.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Boundary Commission for Scotland (known as Boundaries Scotland) commenced its second review of Scottish Parliamentary constituencies in September 2022. On 17 May 2023, it published its initial proposals, and on 27 June 2023 the Council agreed to submit an objection to the proposals. A proposal was submitted at a local inquiry session held in Musselburgh on 7 December 2023 which was subsequently ratified by Council on 12 December 2023 (see Background Papers referred to at paragraphs 7.1 and 7.2 of this report).
- 3.2 Following the local inquiry, Boundaries Scotland published its revised proposals for constituencies. A consultation on the revised proposals commenced on 16 April 2024, for a statutory one-month period until 15 May 2024.
- 3.3 An emergency motion entitled “Opposition to the Proposed Scottish Parliamentary Constituency Boundary Changes” was put forward to

Council on 23 April 2023 (please see Background Paper referred to at paragraph 7.3 of this report), which was supported by Council. It instructed the Leader of the Council to further develop and put forward representation on behalf of the Council to Boundaries Scotland.

- 3.4 Work was undertaken by the Leader of the Council, in conjunction with political colleagues in neighbouring local authority areas, to further develop the proposal approved by Council on 23 April 2024. Through this work an alternative proposal was also developed.
- 3.5 As there was no opportunity to have an alternative proposal formally considered by Council in advance of the 15 May deadline, the proposal was circulated to all Councillors informally for their views. As there was majority support for the alternative proposal, the Council Leader presented this alternative proposal along with the proposal already approved by Council on 23 April to Boundaries Scotland in advance of the closing date for the consultation, on the basis that he would seek formal ratification for the alternative proposal at this meeting and confirm the Council's position to Boundary Scotland after this Council meeting.
- 3.6 The alternative proposal put forward is more particularly set out in Appendix 1 to this report and is summarised as follows:
 - to rename the area referred to as "Lothian East" to "East Lothian"
 - to retain the Tranent and Macmerry parts of the Tranent, Wallyford and Macmerry ward within East Lothian
 - to move Wallyford and Whitecraig into the proposed Edinburgh Eastern and Musselburgh constituency, noting that these two villages have historical and community links with Musselburgh, which Tranent does not
 - to bring the proposed Edinburgh Eastern and Musselburgh constituency closer to the electoral quota by moving some parts of City of Edinburgh Council Ward 14, Craigentenny and Duddingston (polling districts EE14C, EE14G and EE14H that are contiguous to the Portobello and Craigmillar ward) from Edinburgh North Eastern into Edinburgh Eastern and Musselburgh.
- 3.7 Boundaries Scotland will submit final recommendations to Scottish Ministers by 1 May 2025. If subsequently approved by the Scottish Parliament, the new boundaries will be effective at the next Scottish Parliament election, expected in May 2026.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 If the revised proposals put forward by Boundaries Scotland are accepted, the change in electoral boundaries will have impacts for representation of voters, delivery of elections and for residents, staff and Elected Members

engaging with Members of Parliament. The alternative proposal would minimise these impacts to a great extent.

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 Report to Council of 27 June 2023 - Response to Boundary Commission Review

[Agendas, reports and minutes | East Lothian Council](#)

- 7.2 Report to Council of 12 December 2023 - Response to Boundary Commission Review

[Agendas, reports and minutes | East Lothian Council](#)

- 7.3 Emergency Motion to Council of 23 April 2024 - "Opposition to the Proposed Scottish Parliamentary Constituency Boundary Changes"

[Agendas, reports and minutes | East Lothian Council](#)

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DATE	10 June 2024

Alternative Boundary Proposals**Lothian East to remain East Lothian****Edinburgh Eastern and Musselburgh**

East Lothian	Electors	Schools	Council
Preston Seaton Gosford	15,138	Preston Lodge High	EL
North Berwick Coastal	12,168	North Berwick High	EL
Haddington & Lammermuir	16,280	Knox Academy	EL
Dunbar & East Linton	12,567	Dunbar Grammar	EL
Tranent and Macmerry	11,390	Ross High	EL
Total	67,543		

Edinburgh Eastern & Musselburgh

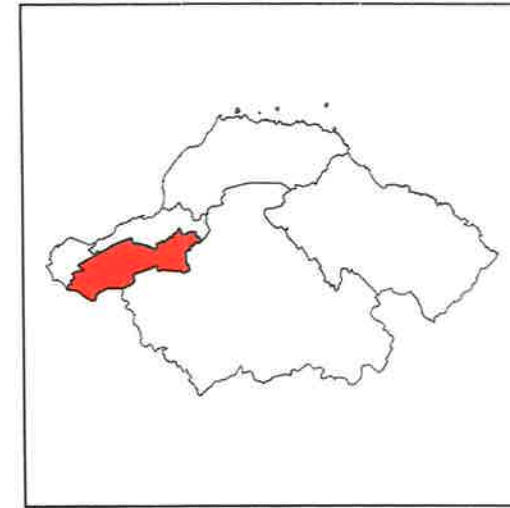
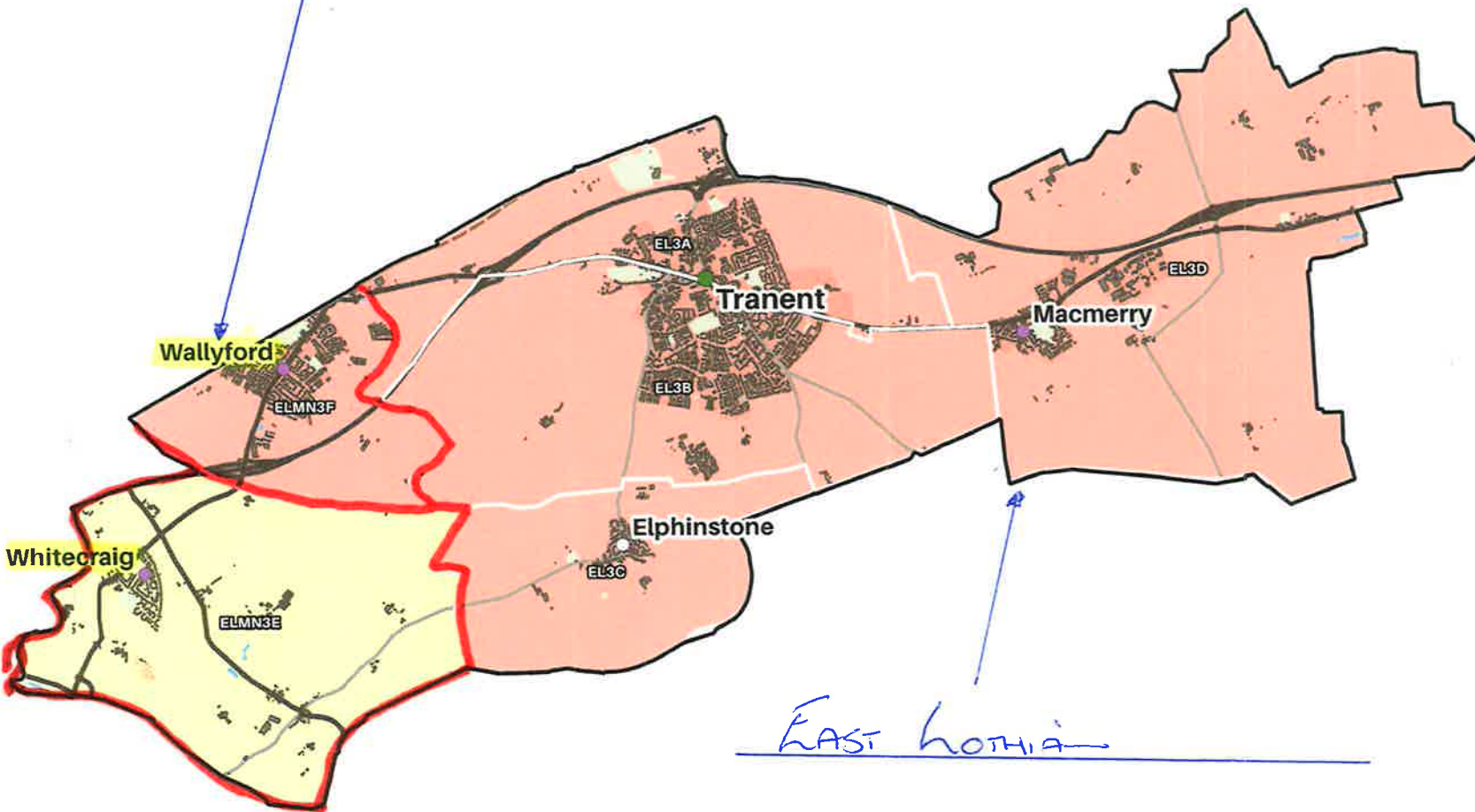
Portobello & Craigmillar	26,292	Various	City Ed
Craigentinney & Duddingston 14	8,639	Various	City Ed
(Part of Polling Districts 14)			
(EE14C, EE14G & EE14H)			
Musselburgh	16,811	Musselburgh Grammar	EL
Wallyford and Whitecraig	4,630	Rosehill High	EL
Total	56,372		

Edinburgh North Eastern Ward 14

Proposed Boundary			
Craigentinny & Duddingston	64,322	Various	City Ed
Alternative Boundary			
Remove Polling Districts			
(EE14C, EE14G & EE14H)			
	8,639		
Total	55,683		

Tranent, Wallyford and Macmerry Ward

Edinburgh Eastern & Musselburgh



East Lothian Council

2022 Results

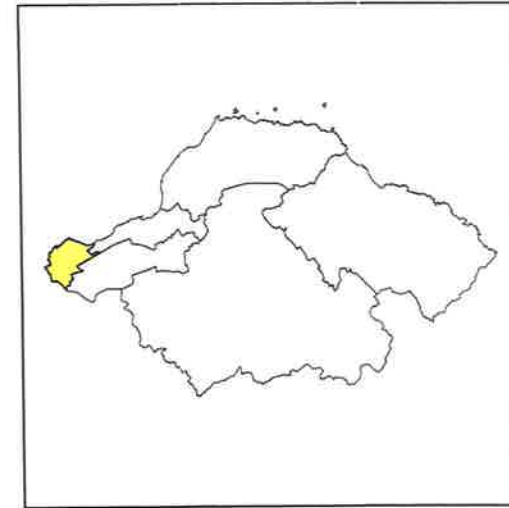
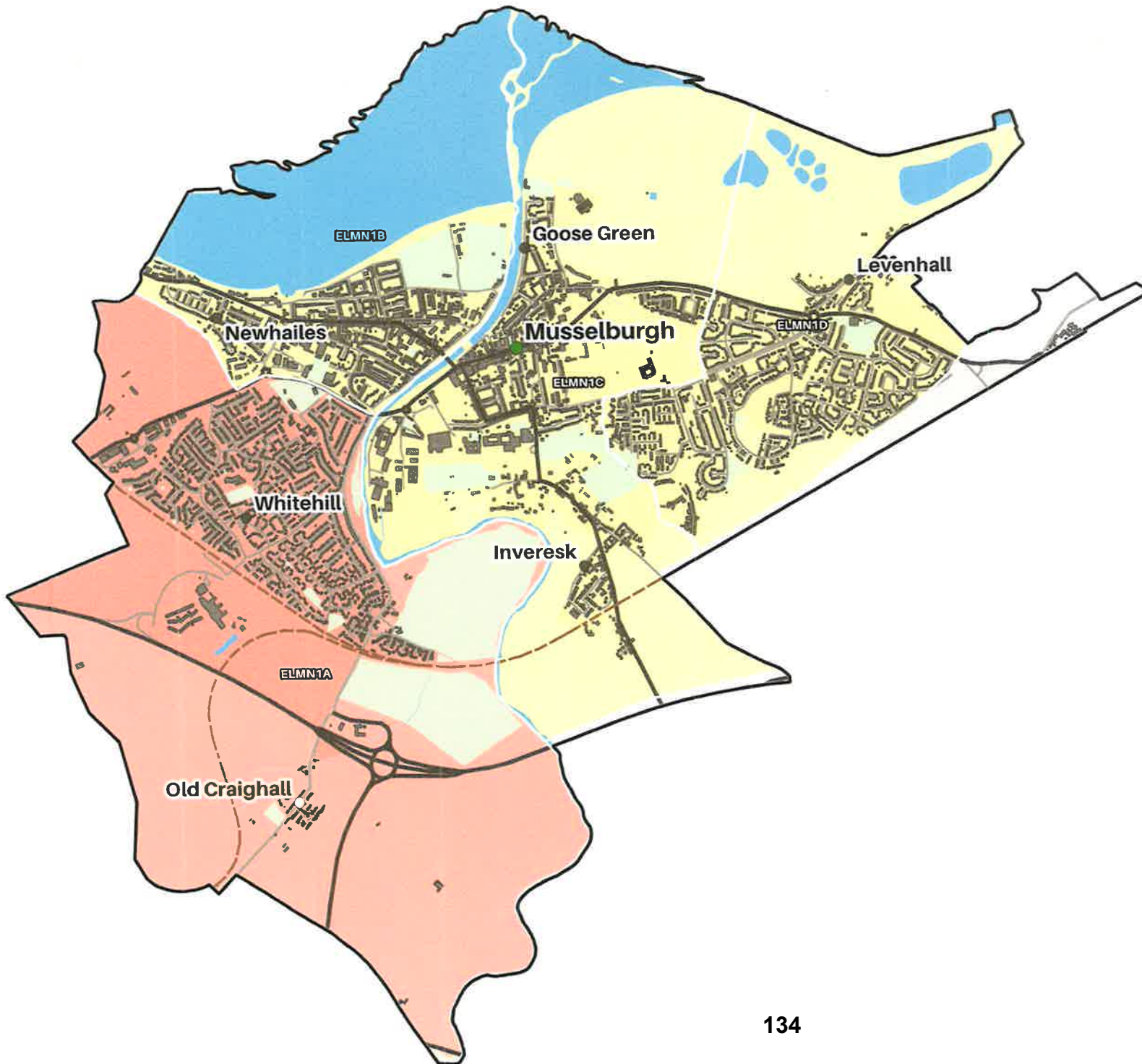
- Councillor 1: Labour
- Councillor 2: SNP
- Councillor 3: Labour
- Councillor 4: SNP
- Councillor 5:

Estimated Lead per Polling District

- SNP
- Labour
- Green
- Independent 2
- Uncontested
- Conservative
- Lib Dem
- Independent
- Other



Musselburgh Ward



East Lothian Council

2022 Results

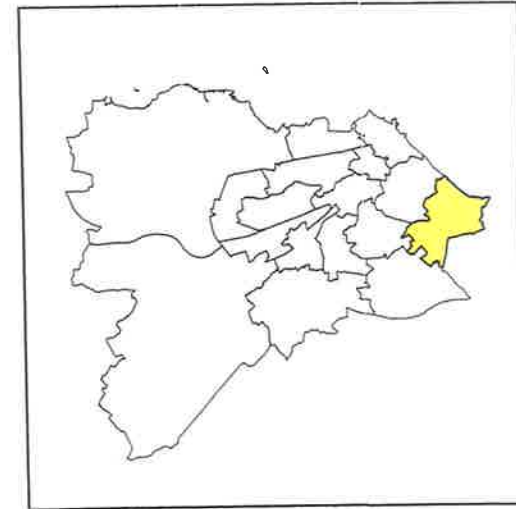
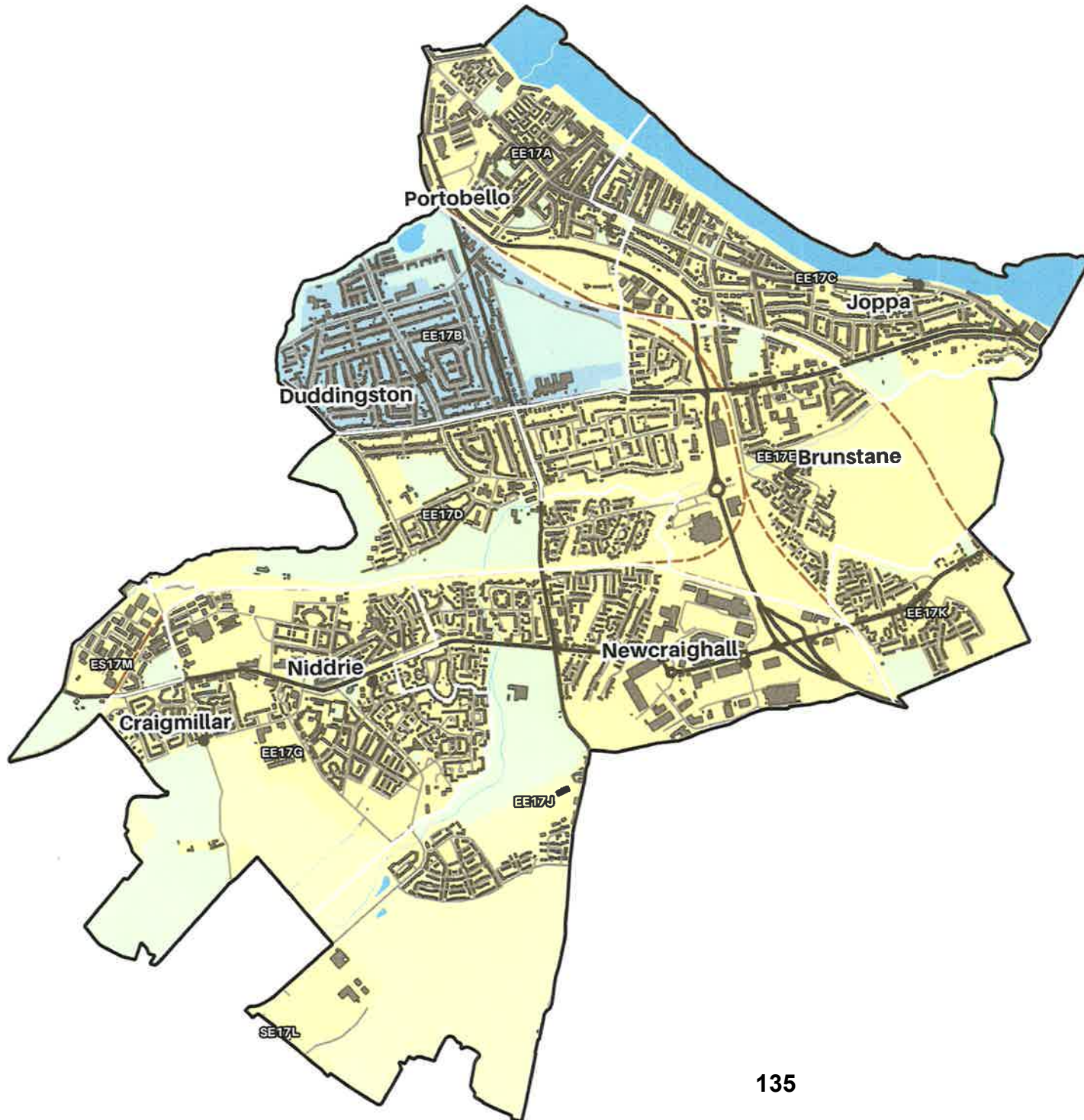
- Councillor 1: SNP
- Councillor 2: Labour
- Councillor 3: Green
- Councillor 4: Labour
- Councillor 5:

Estimated Lead per Polling District

- SNP
- Conservative
- Labour
- Lib Dem
- Green
- Independent
- Independent 2
- Other
- Uncontested



Portobello and Craigmillar Ward



City of Edinburgh Council

2022 Results

- Councillor 1: SNP
- Councillor 2: Labour
- Councillor 3: Green
- Councillor 4: Conservative
- Councillor 5:

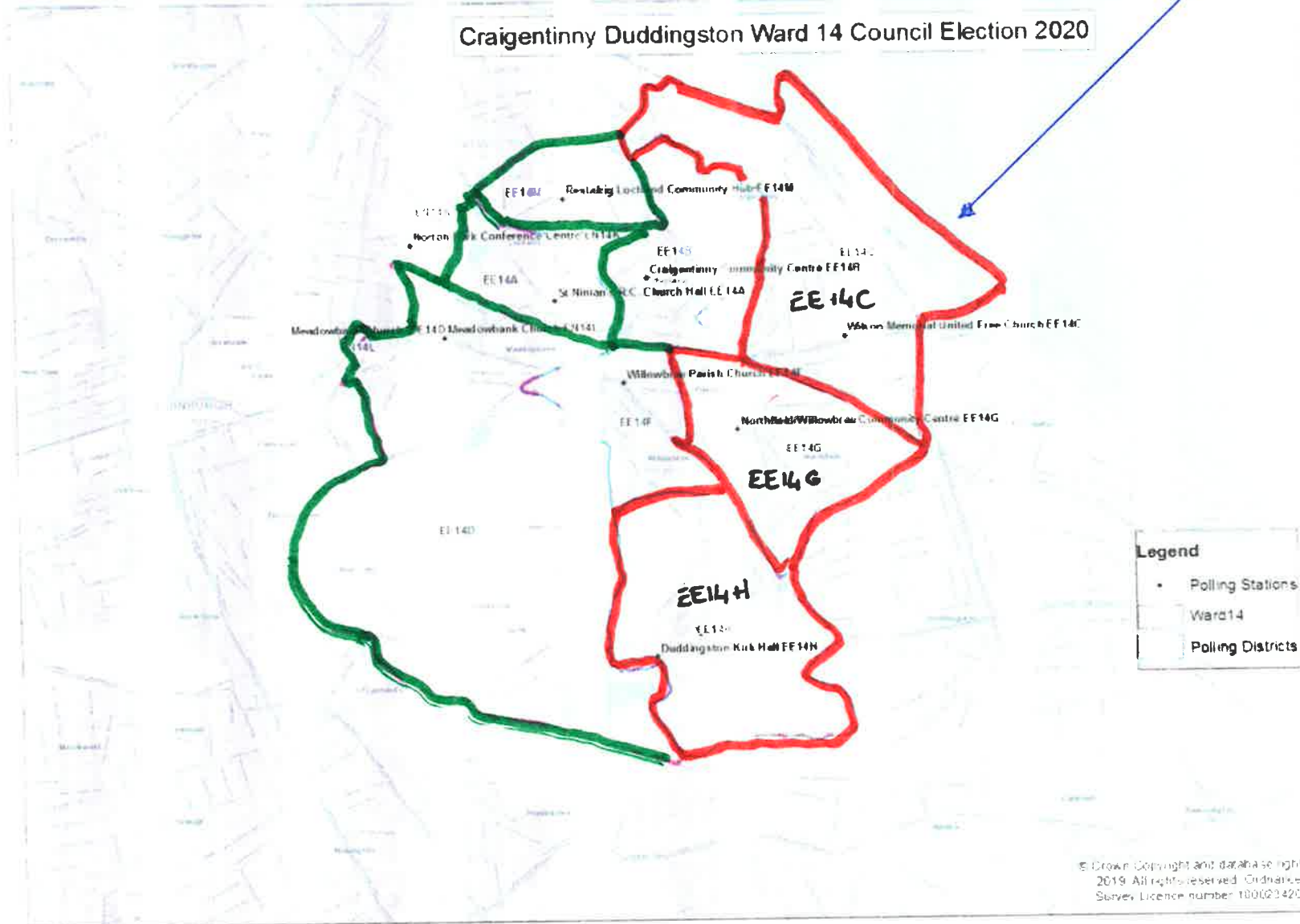
Estimated Lead per Polling District

- SNP
- Labour
- Green
- Independent 2
- Uncontested
- Conservative
- Lib Dem
- Independent
- Other



Edinburgh Eastern. e Musselburgh

Craigentiny Duddingston Ward 14 Council Election 2020



REPORT TO: East Lothian Council
MEETING DATE: 25 June 2024
BY: Executive Director for Council Resources
SUBJECT: Summer Recess Arrangements 2024

7

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To advise Members of the arrangements for dealing with Council business during the summer recess 2024.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Council is requested to:

- 2.1 Note the application of the recess business arrangements, in accordance with Standing Order 15.6, outlined at Section 3.1; and
- 2.2 Note that a summary of business carried out during the recess period will be brought to the Council meeting of 27 August 2024, and that copies of all reports approved during the recess period will be lodged in the Members' Library.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Rule 15.6 of the Council's Standing Orders states that:

Between the last scheduled Council meeting prior to the summer/election recess and the first meeting following the summer/election recess, a minimum of two of the Provost, Depute Provost, Leader, Depute Leader (if appointed), together with the Convener/Depute Convener of the appropriate committee, will deal in their discretion with the urgent business of the Council presented to them for consideration by the Chief Executive, or officers authorised by him/her to act on his/her behalf.

For the avoidance of doubt, matters that require approval of two-thirds of Councillors cannot be dealt with under this Standing Order.

3.2 The deadline for business being submitted under the above arrangements is noon on 14 August 2024. This will allow for the relevant approvals to be secured and for the Council report outlining the business requiring the application of SO15.6 to be prepared in accordance with the deadlines for the Council meeting of 27 August.

3.3 Business dealt with under delegated powers and submitted to the Members' Library will continue to be processed using the normal procedures.

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

AUTHOR'S NAME	Lel Gillingwater
DESIGNATION	Team Manager – Democratic and Licensing
CONTACT INFO	lgillingwater@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	10 June 2024

REPORT TO: East Lothian Council

MEETING DATE: 25 June 2024

BY: Executive Director for Council Resources

SUBJECT: Submissions to the Members' Library Service,
8 April – 9 June 2024

8

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 8 April and 9 June 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

AUTHOR'S NAME	Lel Gillingwater
DESIGNATION	Team Manager – Democratic Services & Licensing
CONTACT INFO	lgillingwater@eastlothian.gov.uk x7292
DATE	10 June 2024

**MEMBERS' LIBRARY SERVICE RECORD FOR THE PERIOD
8 April – 9 June 2024**

Reference	Originator	Document Title	Access
40/24	Executive Director for Council Resources	Deletion of Funded post of Child Healthy Lifestyle Co-ordinator	Private
41/24	Executive Director for Council Resources	Staffing Report for the Joint Evaluation of Strategic Planning and Performance Officer	Private
42/24	Executive Director for Place	East Lothian Play Sufficiency Play Assessment: Technical Report and Appendices (2 files)	Public
43/24	Head of Development	SOLE External Evaluation Report Year 1	Public
44/24	Head of Development	East Lothian Local Economy Strategy – Evidence Paper	Public
45/24	Head of Infrastructure	Grant of Servitude Rights to Connect to a Drainage Pipe at Dunbar Industrial Estate	Private
46/24	Head of Infrastructure	Lease for Units at Newhailes Industrial Estate, Musselburgh	Private
47/24	Head of Infrastructure	Haddington Flood Protection Scheme – Update	Public
48/24	Head of Development	Routes4Communities Report	Public
49/24	Executive Director for Council Resources	Staffing Report for the Review of Remit and Change of Job Title of the Communication and Engagement Officer Post to Equalities and Engagement Officer	Private
50/24	Executive Director for Council Resources	ELC Procurements for Q4 23_24	Public
51/24	Head of Infrastructure	Sale of Commercial Property, Haddington	Private
52/24	Head of infrastructure	Sale of Commercial Property, Dunbar	Private
53/24	Head of Finance	Bad Debt & Credit Balance Write Offs Q3-Q4 2023-2024	Public
54/24	Head of Infrastructure	Sale of Industrial Units, Wallyford	Private
55/24	Executive Director for Council Resources	Service Review Report – SDR Review Officer	Public
56/24	Head of Corporate Services	Establishment Changes for April 24	Private
57/24	Executive Director for Place	Proposed Tree and Woodland Strategy for East Lothian – Appendices A - F	Public
58/24	Executive Director for Place	Proposed Tree and Woodland Strategy for East Lothian - Supporting Papers	Public
59/24	Head of Infrastructure	Decriminalised Parking Enforcement Contract Procurement Recommendation	Public
60/24	Chief Planning Officer	Development Plan Scheme No 15 (2023)	Public
61/24	Executive Director for Place	Service Review – Housing Assets & Compliance	Private
62/24	Head of Infrastructure	Proposed Roof Finish Replacement at John Muir House, Haddington	Private

63/24	Head of Communities	Fisherrow Centre - Capital Improvements and Cessation of Service Level Agreement	Private
64/24	Head of Corporate Support	Quarterly Customer Feedback Report	Public
65/24	Executive Director for Council Resources	Service Review Report – Strategy & Operations Team, Education Services	Private
66/24	Executive Director for Council Resources	Creation of Biodiversity Assistant	Private

9 June 2024