Key themes

Key themes in order of priority for attention:

1. **Access to health services** - there were a number of concerns raised about access to health services - including pressured GP surgeries, access to accident and emergency services, demands of a growing older population and difficulties accessing health services from some rural areas. There were also a number of questions regarding future provision at the East Lothian community hospital. There will be opportunities to explore some of these issues as part of the new Integrated Health and Social Care Locality Plans to be developed later this year.

2. **Community Facilities and Resources** – There are a wide range of facilities across the ward - from village and church halls to the Town House and Corn Exchange, from Enjoy Leisure facilities and sports pitches to informal greenspace and public parks. Are these spaces all being used effectively / to capacity? Are they assets or burdens to communities? Are they fit for purpose? How do we ensure that we are maximising the value of the assets the community has?

3. **Opportunities for children and young people** – there appears to be a good range of activities for children and young people in Haddington (sporting / music/ extra-curricular) but there are some gaps. The rural villages identified difficulty in providing local opportunities for children and young people eg. after school and weekend activities, due in part to the often small numbers of children / young people in each age group in each area and limited transport between villages. The lack of effective and efficient broadband in large areas of the ward further impacts on young people's learning and social opportunities.

4. **Community cohesion** – Is the Haddington and Lammermuir ward a community... or is it a case of Haddington being surrounded by a range of separate and distinct rural communities? More importantly should it be?
   Alongside this broader question are a range of factors impacting on community cohesion in the ward including:
   - there is a historic lack of cohesion between Haddington West and the Nungate - whereas Nungate residents have many reasons to go to the town centre there are few reasons for people to visit Nungate;
   - school catchment boundaries across Humbie, Saltoun and Bolton and in Athelstaneford have an impact and may affect both people's housing choices and where young people feel they belong;
   - lack of social housing in some areas (and concentrations in others) makes it difficult for people to remain in their local area , something evidenced by the highest levels of Waiting List Pressure across the county being in these rural areas.
   - there are additional challenges for older people wishing to remain living in some of the rural communities due to a lack of suitable housing options and difficulties accessing health services / social opportunities.

5. **Broadband –** Broadband provision is particularly poor or nonexistent in rural areas and is now virtually essential for everyday life – for homework, work and business, entertainment and keeping people connected with family and friends. As the measures outlined in the East Lothian Broadband Strategy and Scottish Government Step Change Programme are unlikely to have a significant impact for large areas of this ward what can be done at a local level to increase access to usable broadband?

6. **Transport** – The general consensus was that there is a lack of affordable and reliable transport within the Haddington and Lammermuir area and also for linking Haddington to Edinburgh. The transport issue affects access to local services, particularly for those who don't drive, and particularly limits young people's options in relation to work, study, leisure and independence. Further public transport is non-existent in some rural areas and all options need to be explored where commercial services are not viable. Affordable, frequent and reliable transport was also identified as key to expanding tourism and the strengthening the local economy.

7. **Local Economy** – it was acknowledged there had been improvements in Haddington Town Centre over recent years but that there was still work to be done to support local businesses (both in town and rural areas) to develop and be sustainable – while there was seen to be good support available for enabling easy set up there was still perceived need for more ongoing support related to promoting innovation, planning, broadband, business units, low carbon options. It was felt that there were opportunities to expand tourism in the town centre and rural areas of the ward, and to develop leisure, food and drink draws in the area.

8. **Volunteering** – There is a strong tradition of volunteering across the community but it seems the pool of volunteers are becoming both older and harder to find – Are people being put off volunteering by it becoming bureaucratised? Is there the same culture of volunteering among 20- 40 year olds – for example participation in the Duke of Edinburghs Award develops a culture of volunteering among young people (and is under high demand in the area) but the lack of adult volunteers to lead groups restricts the numbers who can participate. Smaller communities also have had difficulty in providing enough volunteers to run local activities - but is it a question of insufficient volunteering or is it a question of providing more support to share volunteering across communities? How do we raise awareness of the value of volunteering and the opportunities available?