

<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	East Lothian Council
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	26 August 2025
<b>BY:</b>	Executive Director for Council Resources
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Council Plan Action Plan Update
<b>REPORT STATUS:</b>	Public

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## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek approval of updated Council Plan actions, based on the three overarching priorities which were adopted in 2024.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the revised/updated actions in support of the Council Plan 2022-27 (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 Note the intention to initiate development work on a new Council Plan for 2027-32, including work to review overarching priorities.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The East Lothian Council Plan 2022-2027 continues the journey towards realising our vision for an even more prosperous, safe and sustainable East Lothian, with a dynamic and thriving economy, that enables our people and communities to flourish.
- 3.2 The Council Plan was adopted whilst the country was still in the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, one of the three over-arching objectives set out in the Plan was Recovery and Renewal from COVID-19. This was based on the Recovery and Renewal Plan adopted by the Council in October 2021. In June 2023 the Council agreed to close this Plan as 'Recovery and Renewal' from the pandemic had become 'business as usual' with 'building back better' then embedded with the

Council Plan and other key strategies such as the Local Housing Strategy, Economy Strategy and all service plans.

- 3.3 The Council Plan retains two of its original overarching objectives: Reduce poverty and inequality – supporting our communities to deal with the growing levels of poverty and inequality; Respond to the Climate Emergency – meeting our net zero climate change targets.
- 3.4 A report considered by Council on 27 February 2024 noted that, since the adoption of the Council Plan in August 2022, the context and key factors that influenced its objectives and priorities had changed, highlighting factors such as the long-term economic impacts of the pandemic, inflation and the significance of population growth and demographic changes. This, of course, has significant implications in an increasingly challenging financial environment for local government.
- 3.5 The report noted that, in order to respond to new challenges and the limited resources it has, the Council needed to focus on delivering a smaller number of priorities than was originally set out in the Council Plan. Council approved a proposal to re-prioritise the Council Plan. Three interlinked, complementary priorities which are aligned to the Council Plan's overarching and long-term thematic objectives were devised: 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.
- 3.6 The Council Plan Action Plan originally contained 68 specific actions. On 27 February 2024, in agreeing to re-prioritise the Council Plan, Council noted that a further report recommending a new action plan based on these priorities and the Council budget would be brought forward. The Council Management Team have since reviewed the original actions under the lens of the three updated priorities set out above.
- 3.7 This review has seen the number of actions reduced to 36, with each one linked to one of the revised priorities. Some of the original actions are considered 'business as usual', while others have been consolidated to produce a revised set of actions which are more directly aligned with the three priorities. It is hoped that this represents a simpler and clearer presentation of actions, providing officers with a sharper focus on delivery given the need to focus on a small number of priorities than originally set out in the Council Plan.
- 3.8 As highlighted at the 12 June 2025 meeting of the Policy and Performance Review Committee, a review of our approach to performance reporting has been taking place, with work progressing well within the Council Management Team to review the current indicators and select the specific indicators to be presented to PPRC from September 2025. The intention is to ensure that the updated 36 Council Plan actions are reflected in this work, as part of a golden thread

between the Council Plan, council strategies generally and performance reporting.

- 3.9 Whilst Council is being asked to agree to the 36 revised Council Plan actions today, it is recognised that we cannot stand still and are operating in an increasingly challenging and dynamic environment – but one in which it is important to grasp the opportunities which lie ahead, particularly in relation to growing the local economy and contributing to achieving a more prosperous, safe and sustainable East Lothian. Therefore, with a view to developing a new Council Plan for 2027 and beyond, it is our intention to commence work on a review of the overarching priorities referenced above to ensure that our strategic aims and the priorities and actions which support them, remain relevant for the longer term and reflective of our aspirations for East Lothian and that of our local communities.
- 3.10 We will begin work on development of the new Council Plan following the 2026/27 budget process. It is our intention to align the next Council Plan with our budget-setting and change processes.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Council Plan and creation of a consolidated set of priorities and commitments assists the Council in ensuring that corporate and service planning is well founded on a clear vision and strategic direction. This will also assist the Council in delivering services in accordance with our statutory Best Value obligations.

#### **5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Finance: No new implications
- 5.2 Human Resources: No new implications
- 5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): No new implications
- 5.4 Risk: No new implications

#### **6 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1 ***Select the statement that is appropriate to your report by placing an 'X' in the relevant box.***

An Integrated Impact Assessment screening process has been undertaken and the subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on: equality and human rights; tackling socio-economic disadvantages and poverty; climate change, the

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environment and sustainability; the Council's role as a corporate parent; or the storage/collection of personal data.

**or**

The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and impacts have been identified as follows:

X

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Equality and human rights	Y
Socio-economic disadvantage/poverty	Y
Climate change, the environment and sustainability	Y
Corporate parenting and care-experienced young people	Y
Storage/collection of personal data	N
Other	N/A

No negative impacts have been identified as a result of the updated Council Plan actions. The actions will support achievement and delivery of the three overarching priorities, providing a simpler and clearer presentation and a sharper focus on delivery.

The Integrated Impact Assessment relating to this report has been published and can be accessed via the Council's website:

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality\\_and\\_diversity/12014/integrated\\_impact\\_assessments](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality_and_diversity/12014/integrated_impact_assessments)

## **7 APPENDICES**

### **7.1 Appendix 1: 2022-2027 Council Plan – revised actions**

## **8 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

### **8.1 2022–2027 Council Plan Action Plan, available at:**

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/16948/east\\_lothian\\_council](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/16948/east_lothian_council)

## 9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

### Report Author(s)

<b>Name</b>	Stewart Cooper
<b>Designation</b>	Service Manager – Communications
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<b>Date</b>	1 August 2025

### Head of Service Approval

<b>Name</b>	Hayley Barnett
<b>Designation</b>	Head of Corporate Support
<b>Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed</b>	Confirm IIA has been carried out.
<b>Approval Date</b>	7 August 2025

## Appendix 1: 2022–2027 Council Plan – revised actions

Priority 1: Ensure the financial sustainability of the council through the delivery of approved savings and transforming the way we deliver services

	<b>Objective/action</b>
<b>1</b>	Implement the council's Digital Strategy to maximise provision of digital services, digital engagement with customers and maintain reliable and resilient digital infrastructure.
<b>2</b>	Implement the council's 2023-27 Workforce Plan which is focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sustaining a skilled, flexible, high performing and motivated workforce</li><li>• Supporting and initiating transformational change</li><li>• Building and sustaining leadership and management capacity.</li></ul>
<b>3</b>	Implementing the council's financial and transformation strategies, ensuring the council remains financially sustainable, and that available resources are targeted to support the delivery of core council priorities.

Priority 2: Target resources on statutory services and focus on the highest risks and those most in need

	<b>Objective/action</b>
<b>4</b>	Implement the four key objectives of the East Lothian Poverty Plan 2024-2028.
<b>5</b>	Implement the East Lothian Council 2021-2025 Equality Plan's 38 actions based around seven high level equality outcomes.
<b>6</b>	Improve the employability of East Lothian's workforce, promoting skills development and training in core sectors and supporting apprenticeship and modern apprenticeship opportunities.
<b>7</b>	Reduce the poverty related attainment gap, raise the attainment and achievement of our children and young people and help our children and young people achieve their potential.
<b>8</b>	Reduce homelessness and number of those living in temporary accommodation.
<b>9</b>	Ensure resources follow people's needs for social care services and continue to shift the balance of care through developing community-based options and maximising opportunities to live independently for as long as possible.
<b>10</b>	Review our early years offer to make sure we provide the best start through integrated arrangements with key partners and working with providers and parents to roll out enhanced hours of early learning in a flexible way.

<b>11</b>	Implement the Children and Young People's Service Plan, including developing whole family support services to provide effective early help.
<b>12</b>	Ensure children's rights are placed at the heart of everything we do and incorporate the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into council policies and practices.
<b>13</b>	Seek to enhance children and adolescent community mental health services (CAMHS) and provide targeted mental health and wellbeing support for children and young people and their families.
<b>14</b>	Continue to embed the recommendations of the Independent Care Review to shift policy, practice and culture to <b>#KeepThePromise</b>
<b>15</b>	Embed trauma informed and trauma responsive practice into everything we do – recognising the prevalence of trauma such as Adverse Childhood Experiences, and its impact on the emotional, psychological and social wellbeing of people.
<b>16</b>	Implement the Integration Joint Board's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan.
<b>17</b>	Support carers and young carers to build resilience in order for them to sustain their caring role whilst meeting their potential.
<b>18</b>	Continue to develop services and facilities to allow people to remain in their own home for as long as it is safe to do so, including working with our NHS partners to further develop the hospital to home and hospital at home services to get people home from hospital quickly and enable them to stay at home.
<b>19</b>	Work with NHS Lothian to improve access to GP facilities and services in our communities.
<b>20</b>	Work in partnership to provide suitable housing to enable self-care and independent living across East Lothian for older people and people with extra care needs.
<b>21</b>	East Lothian will continue to comply with the duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, working collaboratively and proactively with partner agencies on matters relating to CONTEST and Prevent.

Priority 3: Deliver key infrastructure, economic development and environmentally sustainable projects within available council resources and maximising external funding

	<b>Objective/action</b>
<b>22</b>	Implement approach to streamline the number of council assets held and to ensure those operated are maximised in terms of use. Linked to this, services should be designed around our local communities, with powers devolved to local levels wherever possible, including to community councils and area partnerships, with citizens involved in decisions in a

	meaningful way – fulfilling our commitment to devote at least 1% of our revenue budget to participatory budgeting.
<b>23</b>	Implement the Climate Change Strategy 2025-2030.
<b>24</b>	In partnership with stakeholders, develop a strategy to address coastal erosion, marine pollution and encourage biodiversity along the coast.
<b>25</b>	Deliver the East Lothian Local Economy Strategy 2024–2034 by supporting a fair, green and resilient economy through aligned planning policy and regional collaboration. This includes integrating the goals of the Local Economy Strategy into Local Development Plan 2 and the Regional Prosperity Framework, with a focus on growing community wealth, enabling just transition investment, growth in rural employment, and maximising the potential of strategic sites such as Cockenzie, Blindwells, Dunbar, and the Edinburgh Innovation HUB and Park.
<b>26</b>	Prepare, consult on and then adopt Local Development Plan 2, taking account of any local place plans that communities bring forward and allocating sufficient land for development.
<b>27</b>	Proactively lead the development and promotion of East Lothian's strategic sites, including the Edinburgh Innovation Hub, Cockenzie, Blindwells, and Dunbar, to attract long-term, socially and environmentally responsible inward investment. Ensure this investment delivers secure, high-quality local employment, strengthens local supply chains, and contributes to inclusive economic growth and the development of community wealth.
<b>28</b>	Support the growth and resilience of East Lothian's business base by targeting advice, funding, and capacity-building support to SMEs, start-ups, and rural enterprises, with a focus on socially and environmentally responsible businesses, local supply chain development, and inclusive employment. Encourage innovation, entrepreneurship and new models of ownership such as social enterprises and cooperatives, aligned to opportunities in priority sectors including clean energy, food & drink, tourism, digital, and care.
<b>29</b>	Work with energy companies to ensure as many jobs as possible come to East Lothian via the development of the off-shore windfarms, whilst seeking to retain employment for highly-skilled employers as Torness power station is decommissioned.
<b>30</b>	Continue to invest in our school estate, including new primary schools and extensions or upgrades to schools across the county, to meet growing demand in line with the Learning Estate Strategy.
<b>31</b>	Review the current Local Housing Strategy and complete the development and implementation of the new East Lothian Housing Strategy 2024-2029, whilst identifying new models to deliver affordable housing.



<b>32</b>	Invest in delivering over 700 new council homes and continue working with our registered social landlord partners to deliver over 400 new homes for social rent.
<b>33</b>	Continue to maximise funding and invest in homes to improve their energy efficiency to help reduce bills, prioritising the insulation and decarbonisation of all housing, helping to tackle fuel poverty as well as the climate crisis across all tenures.
<b>34</b>	Review the existing Local Transport Strategy, with actions that where resourced help to reduce emissions, enable active travel and enhance public transport.
<b>35</b>	Deliver a revised and updated Open Space Strategy that will seek to ensure provision of quality, useable, accessible local greenspace, enabling access to parks, greenspaces and the natural environment across our communities; and actions to protect and enhance open space / greenspace for people and nature where resourced to do so.
<b>36</b>	Support the provision of improved broadband and seek improved mobile telephony, including in rural areas.