

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

**TUESDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2026
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HOUSE, HADDINGTON
AND VIA HYBRID MEETING FACILITY**

1a

Committee Members Present:

Councillor S Akhtar (R)
Councillor R Bennett (R)
Councillor L Bruce (R)
Councillor C Cassini
Councillor D Collins (R)
Councillor F Dugdale
Councillor J Findlay
Councillor A Forrest
Councillor N Gilbert (R)
Councillor N Hampshire
Councillor L Jardine

Councillor C McFarlane
Councillor C McGinn
Councillor G McGuire
Councillor S McIntosh
Councillor K McLeod
Councillor J McMillan (Provost and Convener)
Councillor L-A Menzies
Councillor B Ritchie (R)
Councillor T Trotter
Councillor C Yorkston

Council Officials Present:

Mr L Rockey, Chief Executive
Ms L Brown, Depute Chief Executive – Communities and Children
Ms S Fortune, Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy
Ms F Wilson, Director of Health and Social Care
Ms H Barnett, Head of Corporate Support
Ms L Byrne, Head of Children's Services
Mr K Dingwall, Head of Development
Ms E Dunnet, Head of Finance
Mr D Hood, Head of Operations (Adult Social Care)
Mr E John, Head of Communities and Partnerships
Ms N McDowell, Head of Education
Ms W McGuire, Head of Housing (R)
Mr T Reid, Head of Infrastructure
Ms E Barclay, Democratic Services Assistant
Ms J Boyle, Quality Improvement Manager for Equity and Inclusion
Mr S Cooper, Service Manager – Communications (R)
Mr C Grilli, Service Manager – Governance (R)
Mr D Henderson, Service Manager – Service Accounting
Ms I Nisbet, Service Manager – Adult Social Work
Mr C Price, Project Manager (Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme)
Mr A Stubbs, Service Manager – Roads
Ms C Webb, Service Manager – Adult Social Work

(R) = remote participant

Visitors Present:

Mr J Baxter, Jacobs (for Item 5)

Clerk:

Mrs L Gillingwater

Apologies:

Councillor L Allan

The Convener advised that the meeting was being held as a hybrid meeting, 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 five years from the date of the meeting.

The clerk recorded the attendance of Members by roll call.

Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement:

Councillor McIntosh declared an interest in Item 15 – Common Good Application, as a member of East Lothian Climate Action Network, an organisation connected to applicant. She left the meeting for the duration of this item.

Announcements

On behalf of the Council the Provost conveyed his best wishes to those in the community who would be observing and celebrating forthcoming religious and cultural traditions, including Ramadan, the Chinese New Year, and Lent.

1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

The minutes of the following meetings of East Lothian Council were approved: 9 December 2025.

2. ACTION LOG

The Council agreed to note the list of actions and to close those actions recommended for closure.

3. SUBMISSIONS TO THE MEMBERS' LIBRARY SERVICE, 22 NOVEMBER 2025 TO 30 JANUARY 2026

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources noting the reports submitted to the Members' Library since the meeting of the Council in December 2025.

Decision

The Council agreed to note the reports submitted to the Members' Library Service between 22 November 2025 and 30 January, as listed in Appendix 1 to the report.

4. QUARTER 3 FINANCIAL REVIEW 2025/26

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy providing an update on the in-year financial position at the end of December 2025.

The Service Manager for Service Accounting, David Henderson, presented the report, drawing attention to the key aspects relating to the General Services revenue and capital budgets, the Housing Revenue Account, council tax collection and rents. He highlighted the one-off use of reserves which had prevented an overspend, and warned of significant challenges in the medium term.

In response to questions from Members, Mr Henderson set out the challenges and risks relating to increasing service demands, borrowing, slippage in the capital programme, and the wider national economy. He also outlined recovery actions for overspent services.

In relation to the budget overspend for the new Whitecraig Primary School, Tom Reid, Head of Infrastructure, indicated that this related mainly to technical issues; he expected negotiations to conclude in the coming weeks.

As regards the IJB's position, the Director of Health and Social Care, Fiona Wilson, confirmed that, at this stage, the additional funding was not recurring and that there was a need to look at priorities going forward.

The debate followed, with Members welcoming the improved financial position at the end of Quarter 3 but recognising the ongoing pressures on a number of key services and the one-off use of reserves to balance the budget. It was acknowledged that additional funding for local government was required to address these pressures and the continued growth in East Lothian. Members paid tribute to staff for their efforts to work within approved budgets.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the outcome of the Quarter 3 financial performance against approved budgets, including progress towards delivering agreed budget efficiencies;
- ii. to note the risks and other factors that may impact that position by the year-end and the range of ongoing intervention measures approved by Council;
- iii. to note the additional Scottish Government funding received since Council approved the budget in February 2025;
- iv. to note the update on the Integration Joint Board (IJB) position;
- v. to note the changes in the budgets delegated to the IJB following the changes in services delegated to the IJB approved by Council in December 2025;
- vi. note the key performance information for council tax collection, rent collection and Scottish Welfare Fund spending;
- vii. note the revised General Services capital budget and forecast spend and the update on Prudential and Treasury indicators; and
- viii. note the Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital forecast spend.

5. MUSSELBURGH FLOOD PROTECTION SCHEME – UPDATE ON PUBLIC LOCAL INQUIRY AND NEXT STEPS

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy updating the Council on the decision of the Scottish Ministers to call in the proposed Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme ('the proposed Scheme') for consideration as provided for under paragraph 6 of schedule 2 of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 ('the Act') and thereby cause a Public Local Inquiry ('PLI') to be held. The report also provided an update on the Council's proposed approach to participating in the PLI; provided an update on the delivery strategy for the proposed Scheme and the main constraints associated with it; provided an update on a recent national decision from January 2026 to impose a cost cap on the remaining Cycle 1 flood protection projects, including Musselburgh; and presented the emerging logic for commencing the detailed design of the proposed Scheme earlier than previously intended.

The Head of Infrastructure, Tom Reid, presented the report, advising that a Reporter would now be appointed to hold the PLI. He provided a summary of the PLI process, noting that it would likely take 12–24 months to complete. Mr Reid also advised of the funding situation regarding flood protection schemes, and the implications of a funding cap for the proposed Scheme. He stressed the importance of the Project Team continuing with the development of a detailed project plan. A further update report would be presented to Council in April 2026.

Mr Reid responded to a series of questions from Members regarding the cost cap and the funding now available for flood protection schemes; keeping the community updated with developments; the costs of the Scheme to date – 80% of which had been covered by grant funding; the possibility of phasing the project – options for which would come back to Council; and the scope for changing the design following the PLI.

An amendment to the recommendations had been submitted by Councillors McIntosh and Jardine, as follows:

Proposed additional recommendations

[It is recommended that the Council:]

2.5 Notes also that the possibility of phasing the construction may allow for greater alignment with existing Scottish Government policy on coastal adaptation which advocates a managed adaptive approach; and

2.6 Notes also that recent developments as regards funding and COSLA have been discussed with group leaders and that this is a useful forum for regular information-sharing and ongoing scrutiny which could add value to ongoing discussions with both the Scottish Government and COSLA.

Councillor McIntosh presented the amendment. She stressed the importance of keeping the community updated regarding the PLI, and she hoped that the Council would take account of the representations made during that process. She also hoped that the delivery plan would provide flexibility and scope for phasing of the project, and suggested that any phasing should be aligned with the Coastal Change Adaptation Plan (CCAP). She was, however, concerned about ongoing disruption if the project was delivered on a phased basis. She requested that any developments should be shared with all political groups.

Councillor Jardine seconded the amendment. She highlighted the impact of a major flood event on homes and businesses in Musselburgh. She called for greater scrutiny of the

process going forward and suggested that the UK Government should provide a funding framework for communities at risk of flooding.

There followed a debate, with Members warning of the significant risk of flooding in Musselburgh, and the potential impact on the community. It was suggested that dealing with the sea wall at a later stage may be much more expensive, and that there were benefits of doing the whole project at this stage. It was hoped that the Scottish Government would be in a position to provide the funding for the Scheme. The PLI was welcomed by Members, as this would allow the community to put forward their views, and there was general support for the amendment.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the recommendations versus the amendment. There was unanimous approval for the amendment, which was therefore carried.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the decision of the Scottish Ministers to call in the proposed Scheme and hold a PLI to enable an independent review of the proposed Scheme, and that at the end of this process, the Scottish Ministers will make the final decision on the Scheme as provided for under the Act;
- ii. to note the proposed approach to develop a Scheme Delivery Strategy to support the future delivery of this complex project on the basis that the final decision by the Scottish Ministers is to approve the proposed Scheme without modifications;
- iii. to note the requirement to commence early detailed design of the proposed Scheme to ensure the Scheme remains within Cycle 1 funding and associated timescales, and that officers would continue to further develop and refine proposals, and these details outlining proposed delivery strategies would be considered at a future Council meeting prior to any formal commencement of design work;
- iv. to note the recent national position to introduce a funding cost cap for Cycle 1 schemes. The Project Team was reviewing the impact of this and how the Scheme could be progressed under the new Cycle 1 financial constraints including through delivery of a phased approach to the Scheme, with further details to be brought back to a future Council meeting;
- v. to note also that the possibility of phasing the construction may allow for greater alignment with existing Scottish Government policy on coastal adaptation which advocates a managed adaptive approach; and
- vi. to note also that recent developments as regards funding and COSLA have been discussed with group leaders and that this is a useful forum for regular information-sharing and ongoing scrutiny which could add value to ongoing discussions with both the Scottish Government and COSLA.

6. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH LOTHIAN HEAT CIC

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy providing an update on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that the Council was seeking to enter into with Lothian Heat Community Interest Company (LHCIC).

The Head of Development, Keith Dingwall, presented the report, advising of the progress made in developing the MoU and anticipating that the MoU would be signed off by both parties within a week of this meeting.

In response to questions from Members, Mr Dingwall advised there was no need to carry out due diligence regarding the MoU as it was not legally binding. He indicated that the Council's Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Officer would continue to explore funding opportunities regarding heat networks and similar initiatives.

It was noted that an online training course organised by the Heat Source Network would take place in March. Mr Dingwall undertook to look into this.

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

Decision

The Council agreed to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with Lothian Heat CIC, as appended to the report.

7. CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

A report was submitted by the Chief Social Work Officer presenting the Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report for 2024/25 to Members.

The Head of Children's Services, Lindsey Byrne, presented the report, highlighting its key aspects, including the increase in referrals for both adult and children's social work services; the growing demand for services; and recent achievements, such as support for new social workers, improved support for kinship carers, improved governance, the delivery of a new core and cluster model for people with learning disabilities in Tranent, and improvements in the delivery of mental health and guardianship services.

Ms Byrne and her colleagues Isobel Nisbet and Ceira Webb (Service Managers within Adult Social Work) responded to questions from Members on guardianships and raising awareness of power of attorney; the reasons for the increase in referrals; challenges relating to recruitment of social workers, and initiatives underway in this area; support for kinship carers; efforts to attract more foster carers; support for those transitioning from child to adult services; improvements to mental health and justice services; and the timescales for concluding the review of services for children with disabilities; and advocacy services.

There followed a debate, with Members welcoming the report and paying tribute to the leadership team and staff working within social work services. The demand for these services and the pressures on staff were highlighted, particular with regard to a growing population in East Lothian, the cost-of-living crisis, and the ongoing impact of COVID-19.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the 2024/25 Annual Report of the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) and assurance about the provision of social work services in East Lothian; and
- ii. to note the collective commitment to the protection and care of vulnerable children and adults across the county.

8. REGIONAL ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy providing an update on regional partnership working and noting discussions to develop a regional partnership proposition.

The Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy, Sarah Fortune, presented the report, noting that this report would be presented to all partner authorities by the end of March. She pointed out that the focus of such a regional partnership would be on developing strategic areas of policy, such as housing, skills, transport, economic development and infrastructure, with the aim of maximising opportunities in these policy areas across the Edinburgh and South East Scotland region. She added that it was anticipated that a legislative framework would be established to allow for regional partnerships to have a legal status, with powers and responsibilities. Enabling funding had been made available to support the development of the regional partnership proposal.

Ms Fortune responded to questions from Members, explaining that intention of the regional partnership would be to explore and maximise opportunities and funding streams on a regional basis, and work with the private sector to deliver economic development opportunities. She highlighted strategic projects already underway or completed, such as Blindwells and the Edinburgh Innovation Hub, and noted that regional working would be aligned with strategic plans.

Members welcomed the concept of regional partnership working for large-scale projects, and the associated collaboration with other parties, such as universities and the business community. The importance of robust financial modelling, governance and democratic accountability was highlighted. It was suggested that there should be a focus on prosperity rather than growth, and it was hoped that local issues, such as the replacement of the Brunton Hall, could be considered.

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

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the proposed approach for developing a draft regional partnership proposition in response to the First Minister's announcement 'to introduce enabling legislation in the next Parliament to allow regional partnerships to seek legal status, unlock new powers, and design delivery models tailored to local priorities;
- ii. to note that the Scottish Government intend to consult on the future options for operational models and have committed to work closely with CoSLA and regional partnerships;
- iii. to note that all councils involved in the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal will have the opportunity to consider a similar report; and

- iv. that the Council should engage and support the engagement of a consultant to explore opportunities for further regional collaboration, noting that the outcome and any recommendations will come back to Council to inform future considerations around regional approaches.

9. UPDATE ON PROPOSED REDETERMINATION ORDER: BANKTON JUNCTION SOUTH ROUNDABOUT OF THE A1

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy providing the Council with an update on the promotion of a proposed Redetermination Order in respect of the conversion of a section of carriageway at the Bankton Junction South Roundabout of the A1, following the period of public consultation on the Order.

The Service Manager for Roads, Alan Stubbs, presented the report, advising of the representations received in relation to the proposed Redetermination Order public consultation. He confirmed that, having considered and assessed the representations made, officers had concluded that the preferred technical design solution should not be altered. He sought approval from Members to submit the proposed Redetermination Order and unresolved representations to Scottish Ministers through Transport Scotland, and he advised of the subsequent steps in the process.

Responding to questions from Members, Mr Stubbs advised that quality assurance of the work would be carried out by the developer and their contractor, and that the Council would also monitor and inspect the work done. He undertook to provide an update on whether the works had been affected by the recent poor weather and also to provide contractor contact details for residents during the construction phase. As regards displacement of traffic resulting from the Redetermination Order, Mr Stubbs confirmed that the results of the road safety audit had indicated that traffic should be able to operate safely using alternative routes in the area.

During the debate, the need for the Redetermination Order was questioned and it was suggested that the changes may have an adverse impact on neighbouring streets. However, the proposal was largely supported on the basis that the impact would be minimal and that road safety concerns would be addressed.

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

In favour (20):	Councillors Akhtar, Bennett, Bruce, Cassini, Collins, Dugdale, Findlay, Forrest, Gilbert, Hampshire, Jardine, McFarlane, McGinn, McGuire, McIntosh, McMillan, Menzies, Ritchie, Trotter, Yorkston
Against (1):	Councillor McLeod
Abstentions (0)	

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the representations received from members of the public to the proposed Redetermination Order for the conversion of a section of carriageway at the Bankton Junction South Roundabout of the A1;
- ii. to note the representations received to the proposed Order which had not been withdrawn and the consideration by Council officers summarised within the report, particularly at paragraph 3.6 (of the report);

- iii. that no changes should be made to the proposed Redetermination Order that was approved by Council on 26 August 2026; and
- iv. approve the submission of the proposed Redetermination Order together with the unresolved objections to it, and proceed to the Scottish Government's Department for Planning and Environmental Appeals for consideration by an independent Reporter to be appointed by Scottish Ministers, who will recommend to the Council if the Redetermination Order should progress in the manner currently proposed.

10. PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy responding to the requirements of the Planning Enforcement Powers motion approved at the Council meeting of 28 October 2025.

The Service Manager for Planning, Graeme Marsden, presented the report. He reported that the number of enforcement cases had decreased over the past year. He suggested that the staffing resource could be used more flexibly to deal with enforcement matters, and that enforcement could be monitored and resources adjusted accordingly. He proposed that enforcement activity could be included in the Planning Service's annual performance report to the Policy & Performance Review Committee (PPRC).

Mr Marsden responded to questions from Members, advising: that the Planning Enforcement Charter was based on a template issued by the Scottish Government; that the resolution of cases was broadly in line with that of other local authorities; that some cases remained open for some time due to the nature of the case and/or the lack of response from the complainee; on the costs associated with planning enforcement; that the fee for retrospective planning permission incurred a 25% increase on the normal fee; that he felt most enforcement powers were appropriate and proportionate; and that, on occasion, negotiation with the developer was required to reach an acceptable solution.

An amendment to the recommendations was submitted by Councillors Jardine and Menzies, as follows:

Proposed additional recommendations

[Members are recommended to:]

2.3 Agree that, in order to support continuous improvement and strengthen public confidence in planning enforcement, officers will undertake a benchmarking of East Lothian's enforcement reporting arrangements against those of comparable Scottish local authorities, including review of:

- published service standards and communication commitments;
- frequency and format of statistical reporting to Members;
- accessibility of enforcement data for the public; and
- transparency of escalation and statutory powers usage.

2.4 Further agree that a short report will be brought to the Policy and Performance Review Committee within six months outlining findings and any recommended improvements to reporting or transparency arrangements.

Councillor Jardine presented the amendment, commenting on the complexities around planning enforcement and noting that the expectations of the public regarding planning enforcement were not always aligned with the legislation. Given that much of the planning

enforcement process is not visible to the public and could cause frustration and lead to complaints, she stressed the importance of having clearer reporting of enforcement cases, service standards, investigation timescales, performance reporting, and so on. She called for a benchmarking exercise in this regard to be undertaken, with a view to strengthening confidence in the system and reducing the administrative burden on the Planning Service.

Councillor Menzies formally seconded the amendment.

There followed a debate, with Members noting their general agreement with the amendment. There was also agreement with the proposal to include enforcement matters within the annual performance report to the PPRC. Some Members voiced their frustrations at developers who breached planning conditions, and it was hoped that enforcement measures would deter such behaviour.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the recommendations versus the amendment. There was unanimous approval for the amendment, which was therefore carried.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. that a wider report on the performance and activity of the Council's Planning Service, to include planning enforcement, should be brought to the PPRC on an annual basis;
- ii. to instruct the Chief Planning Officer to continue to monitor planning enforcement activity and adjust resource accordingly within the wider Planning Service;
- iii. that, in order to support continuous improvement and strengthen public confidence in planning enforcement, officers would undertake a benchmarking of East Lothian's enforcement reporting arrangements against those of comparable Scottish local authorities, including review of:
 - published service standards and communication commitments;
 - frequency and format of statistical reporting to Members;
 - accessibility of enforcement data for the public;
 - transparency of escalation and statutory powers usage; and
- iv. that a short report would be brought to the Policy and Performance Review Committee within six months outlining findings and any recommended improvements to reporting or transparency arrangements.

11. STATUTORY CONSULTATION ON INCREASE TO ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS (ASN) PROVISION

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Children and Communities seeking approval to consult on the proposal to establish Specialist Additional Support Needs (ASN) provision at Law Primary School, Stoneyhill Primary School and Musselburgh Grammar School for August 2027.

The Quality Improvement Manager for Equity and Inclusion, Jennifer Boyle, presented the report, drawing Members' attention to referrals for ASN provision since 2020/21 and the current ASN provision capacity. She reported that there was currently a shortfall in available spaces and that there was a need to expand provision.

In response to questions from Members, Ms Boyle provided an explanation on provision forecasting and assessing the needs of children and young people. She confirmed that the views of learners and their families would be taken into consideration when shaping ASN provision, and that the consultation would involve public meetings, drop-in sessions and focus groups. She also highlighted the costs associated with external ASN placements. As regards the proposed locations of the ASN provision, Ms Boyle indicated that this related to capacity within existing schools and needs within the locality, as well as access to outside space. She stressed that specialist provision did not operate on a geographical placement model and that children and young people would not be disadvantaged if they lived in an area without such provision. She confirmed that the proposed provision was appropriate for the current time and that the situation would be reviewed each year and refined as required.

The consultation and proposals for additional ASN provision was welcomed by Members.

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

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note that formal statutory school consultations are required to establish new specialist ASN provisions, in line with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010;
- ii. to approve that officers undertake statutory consultations on the proposals to establish ASN provisions at Law Primary School, Stoneyhill Primary School and Musselburgh Grammar School; and
- iii. to note that the consultation period would start on 3 March 2026 and would continue for a period of six weeks, inclusive of 30 school days, concluding on 5 May 2026.

12. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Children and Communities updating Council on work underway to strengthen community engagement and seeking permission to commission an independent peer review to provide objective assessment and recommendations for future delivery.

The Head of Communities and Partnerships, Eamon John, presented the report, highlighting the importance of engaging with communities to ensure they felt listened to and represented, particularly during financially challenging times. He referred to the development of a Participation and Engagement Strategy through the East Lothian Partnership, and he proposed that a peer review of the Council's approach to community engagement would identify the Council's strengths and areas for improvement in this area. An update on the proposed peer review would be reported to Council in August.

In response to questions from Members, Mr John reported that the peer reviewer would be an individual with senior public service experience. Although there would be an upfront cost, he expected that recommendations from the review would result in the Council being less reliant on external consultants in the future. He made reference to positive community engagement carried out in recent years, noting that there was a desire to improve on that going forward. He also confirmed that Group Leaders would be involved in the process.

The report was welcomed by Members, who spoke of the need for better and more consistent engagement with communities, as well as the need to be more open and transparent.

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

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the work already underway to develop a Participation and Engagement Strategy through the East Lothian Partnership;
- ii. to approve an independent peer review of the Council's approaches to community engagement with clear recommendations to enhance and strengthen ongoing community engagement;
- iii. to delegate authority to the Depute Chief Executive – Children and Communities, supported by the Head of Communities and Partnerships, and in consultation with political group leaders, to secure the independent peer review; and
- iv. that a report would be brought back to Council with an update on progress by August 2026.

13. REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy seeking approval of proposed changes to the Standing Orders, the Scheme of Administration and the Scheme of Delegation.

The Head of Corporate Support, Hayley Barnett, presented the report, advising that the proposed changes were being proposed as part of the ongoing monitoring/review of the Council's Standing Orders.

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

Decision

The Council agreed to approve the proposed changes to the Council's Standing Orders, the Scheme of Administration and the Scheme of Delegation (as set out in Appendices 1-3 of the report), with all changes effective from 18 February 2026, with the exception of the change to Standing Order 10.1, at (iv) and (v), which will be effective from 1 April 2026.

Sederunt: Councillor Ritchie left the meeting.

14. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND EAST LOTHIAN LICENSING BOARD

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy seeking approval of proposed changes to the SNP Group's membership of the Licensing Sub-Committee and the East Lothian Licensing Board.

The Clerk presented the report, confirming that Councillor Menzies had successfully completed her Licensing Board training and was now eligible to participate in Licensing Board meetings.

Councillor Cassini was thanked for her contributions to both the Licensing Sub-Committee and Licensing Board, and the appointment of Councillor Menzies was welcomed.

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

Decision

The Council agreed to approve the appointment of Councillor Menzies to the Licensing Sub-Committee and the East Lothian Licensing Board, replacing Councillor Cassini.

Declaration of Interest: Councillor McIntosh declared an interest as a Member of East Lothian Climate Action Network, which has a connection to Lower Impact Living (Lil) CIC, the applicant for Common Good funding, and she left the meeting for the duration of the item.

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS – EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Council 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.

Application for Common Good Funding

A private report submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Children and Communities to increase the 2025/26 grants budget for Haddington Common Good Fund by £2,600 to allow for an application from Lower Impact Living CIC to be funded was approved.



MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL

TUESDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2026
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HOUSE, HADDINGTON
AND VIA HYBRID MEETING FACILITY

1b

Committee Members Present:

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

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

Council Officials Present:

Mr L Rockey, Chief Executive
Ms L Brown, Depute Chief Executive – Children and Communities
Ms S Fortune, Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy
Ms F Wilson, Director of Health and Social Care
Ms H Barnett, Head of Corporate Support
Mr K Dingwall, Head of Development
Ms E Dunnet, Head of Finance
Mr D Hood, Head of Operations (Health and Social Care)
Mr E John, Head of Communities and Partnerships
Ms W McGuire, Head of Housing
Mr T Reid, Head of Infrastructure
Ms E Barclay, Democratic Services Assistant
Mr S Cooper, Service Manager – Communications
Ms A-M Glancy, Service Manager – Corporate Accounting (R)
Ms P Gray, Communications Adviser
Mr C Grilli, Service Manager – Governance (R)
Mr D Henderson, Service Manager – Service Accounting
Mr P Ritchie, Service Manager – People and Council Support (R)

Visitors Present:

None

Clerk:

Mrs L Gillingwater

(R) = remote participant

Apologies:

Councillor E Allan
Councillor L Bruce

Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statements:

Transparency Statement – Councillor Menzies stated that she was a board member of EnjoyLeisure. Having applied the objective test, she believed there was no conflict of interest. The Convener noted that this transparency statement also applied to himself, Councillor McGinn and Councillor Ritchie.

Transparency Statement – at Item 3(c), Councillors McLeod and McGinn stated that they were Friends of Polson Park.

The Provost advised that the meeting was being held as a hybrid meeting, 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 five years from the date of the meeting.

The clerk recorded the attendance of Members by roll call.

1. BUDGET DEVELOPMENT 2026/27 ONWARDS

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy providing contextual information to support the budget setting for 2026/27 onwards, including an overview of the national funding settlement for local government, and the implications of this for East Lothian.

The Head of Finance, Ellie Dunnet, presented the report, highlighting the significant medium-term financial challenges facing the Council. She summarised the key points of the report, including the draft local government settlement and its impact on East Lothian; the anticipated funding allocation for the East Lothian Integration Joint Board (IJB), which remained subject to change; the position with reserves; and plans for future budget development.

Ms Dunnet responded to questions from Members regarding the impact of the settlement on the capital programme; the current position for funding flood protection schemes – noting that it was too soon to tell what the implications would be for the Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme; investment in winter maintenance, as a result of growth; projected income from parking charges; funding pressures within the IJB budget; and strengthening community engagement with regard to the budget process.

Members welcomed the continued cross-party working on the budget development process.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the local and wider economic context within which budgets have been developed, including the factors which have contributed to the funding gap;

- ii. to note the content of the 2026/27 local government finance settlement and the funding implications for East Lothian;
- iii. to note the draft 2026/27 Integration Joint Board (IJB) funding offer letter, attached at Appendix 1 to the report;
- iv. to note the statement on robustness of the budget, adequacy of reserves and key budget risks, attached at Appendix 2 of the report; and
- v. to note the indicative timetable and next steps for developing budget projections and closing the budget gap for 2027/28 onwards, set out in paragraphs 3.16 to 3.20 of the report.

2. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA), INCLUDING COUNCIL HOUSE RENT PROPOSALS 2026/27 TO 2030/31

(a) Administration and Cross-party Proposals

Councillor Forrest presented the Administration and Cross-party rent proposals. He highlighted the demand for council housing and the importance of people having a secure home. He paid tribute to staff working within all areas of housing and property, noting that the Council was on track to deliver 150 new kitchens, 416 new bathrooms, 114 adapted replacement bathrooms, 66 adaptations, 13 extensions, and new windows and doors for more than 500 properties. He also drew attention to the ongoing work to build more new homes, reduce voids, and improve energy efficiency. With reference to the recent consultation with tenants, Councillor Forrest proposed a rent rise for 2026/27 of 7%, which would allow the Council to continue to invest in homes and maintain standards.

The Administration and Cross-party rent proposals were seconded by Councillor McGinn.

(b) SNP Group Proposals

Councillor Menzies presented the SNP Group's rent proposals. She indicated that an 8% rent increase would allow for the delivery of 119 new homes, 24 more than proposed by the Administration and Cross-party Members, and that this would help address the county's housing emergency. She spoke of the demand for housing in East Lothian; of the average waiting time for applicants on the housing list; and of the low turnover of stock, particularly with smaller properties. Councillor Menzies also highlighted the pressure on the Property Maintenance Service, suggesting that additional resources would be required to meet future demand. She pointed out that East Lothian had among the lowest council house rent levels but among the highest private sector rent levels in Scotland, which had led to greater demands for council housing and on the Homelessness Service. She proposed an 8% rent increase for 2026/27.

The SNP Group's rent proposals were seconded by Councillor Gilbert.

(c) Debate and Decision

There followed a debate on the HRA proposals. It was recognised that East Lothian's council house rents remained comparatively low; however, it was also pointed out that work on the comprehensive rent review was ongoing, and that the cost-of-living crisis should also be taken into account when considering rent increases. Some Members highlighted the need for greater government support to build new homes in order to address the housing emergency. There was agreement that more new homes were required and that it was important to

maintain the existing housing stock. The adaptation programme to allow people to remain in their own homes was welcomed, as was the provision of core and cluster housing.

Summing up for the SNP Group, Councillor Menzies noted that she didn't disagree with the Administration and Cross-party proposals, but she felt that they did not go far enough or fast enough. She was of the view that her group's proposed rent increase was manageable and tolerable, and that council house rents should be brought into line with those of other local authorities.

Summing up for the Administration and Cross-party Members, Councillor Forrest pointed out that East Lothian was one of the fastest-growing but one of the lowest-funded local authorities in Scotland, and he stressed that more funding from the Scottish Government for housing was required to meet demand. He argued that a 7% increase reflected the views of tenants put forward during the recent rent consultation exercise.

The Provost moved to the roll-call vote on the Housing Revenue Account budget proposals:

For Admin. and Cross-party proposals (15): Councillors Akhtar, Bennett, Collins, Dugdale, Findlay, Forrest, Hampshire, McFarlane, McGinn, McGuire, McIntosh, McLeod, McMillan, Ritchie, Yorkston
For SNP Group's proposals (5): Councillors Cassini, Gilbert, Jardine, Menzies, Trotter

Against (0)
Abstentions (0)

The Administration and Cross-party proposals were therefore carried.

Decision

The Council agreed to approve the Administration & Cross-party Housing Revenue Account budget proposals, noting that this would give rise to a 7% increase in rents, bringing the average weekly rent to £93.58, equivalent to an average weekly increase of £6.12.

3. GENERAL SERVICES REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET, INCLUDING COUNCIL TAX PROPOSALS 2026/27 TO 2030/31

(a) Administration and Cross-party Proposals

Councillor Hampshire presented the Administration and Cross-party General Services proposals, which included a council tax increase of 7.5% for 2026/27. He outlined the financial challenges currently facing the Council, noting that approving a lower council tax rise would result in cuts to services, use of reserves, increased borrowing or greater financial problems in the future. He set out a number of key commitments, including investment in holiday clubs for children with disabilities, youth work, an additional winter maintenance vehicle, and social care services. He stated that the proposals would protect core statutory services as well as providing investment in a number of key areas and delivering long-term sustainability.

The Administration and Cross-party General Services proposals were seconded by Councillor Akhtar.

(b) SNP Group Proposals

Councillor Jardine presented the SNP Group's General Services proposals, which included a council tax increase of 5.8% for 2026/27. She highlighted the SNP Group's proposal to pilot a gender-based approach to budgeting, which she believed would help tackle inequality and improve governance. She drew attention to key aspects of the proposals, including: additional premiums on second and long-term empty homes; and pausing non-essential, non-additional support needs-related capital projects relating to school estate to allow for a comprehensive review to be undertaken. In moving the proposals, Councillor Jardine argued that the proposals were fair, balanced, and would ensure long-term financial sustainability.

The SNP Group's General Services proposals were seconded by Councillor Trotter, who made reference to the difficult choices facing the Council in order to continue delivering services.

(c) Debate and Decision

The Provost moved to the debate. It was acknowledged that the budget development process had been challenging, especially at a time of continued growth across East Lothian. The impact of council tax increases on residents was also acknowledged. The wider issues of local government funding and spending autonomy was referenced by several Members, and suggestions were put forward to seek to address the financial challenges. The growing demand on key areas such as social work services was also highlighted. A number of Members drew attention to and welcomed a variety of proposals, such as investment in areas such as tackling anti-social behaviour; active travel routes; holiday clubs for children with disabilities; facilities for children with additional support needs (ASN); the school estate; youth work; town centres; and community and leisure facilities.

Summing up for the SNP Group, Councillor Jardine confirmed that her group's proposals for the capital budget would protect ASN provision. She welcomed the proposals in relation to the Polson Park project. She also highlighted the impact of austerity and the need to protect households from council tax increases, adding that reserves could be used to moderate pressures on residents during the cost-of-living crisis. In closing, she noted that her group's proposals were measured, would protect households, and would maintain financial discipline.

Summing up for the Administration and Cross-party Members, Councillor Hampshire commented that cross-party working was the best way to protect services. He highlighted a number of measures in the proposals, including investment in youth work, ASN provision, social care, and improvements to Tranent town centre. He also spoke of the funding pressures on local government and suggested that councils needed their own fiscal framework and greater autonomy over their spending.

The Provost moved to the roll-call vote on the General Services budget proposals:

For Admin. and Cross-party proposals (12):	Councillors Akhtar, Bennett, Dugdale, Forrest, Hampshire, McFarlane, McGinn, McIntosh, McLeod, McMillan, Ritchie, Yorkston
For SNP Group's proposals (5):	Councillors Cassini, Gilbert, Jardine, Menzies, Trotter
Against (0)	
Abstentions (3)	Councillors Collins, Findlay, McGuire

The Administration and Cross-party proposals were therefore carried.

Decision

The Council agreed to approve the Administration & Cross-party General Services budget proposals, noting that this would give rise to a 7.5% increase in council tax levels for 2026/27, with a Band D level of £1,697.62.

4. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2026/27 TO 2030/31

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy seeking approval of the Treasury Management and Investment Strategies for 2026/27 to 2030/31.

The Service Manager for Corporate Accounting, Ann-Marie Glancy, presented the report, setting out the Council's responsibilities in relation to treasury management and investment. She drew attention to the key aspects of the report (as set out in Sections 3.6-3.23 of the report), noting that the full Strategy Statement had been lodged in the Members' Library (February 2026 Bulletin, Ref: 19/26). She also advised on the reporting arrangements for treasury management updates.

In response to questions from Members, Ms Glancy undertook to organise a Members' briefing from the Council's investment advisers before the end of the current term. She confirmed that the figures set out in her report had been based on the Administration and Cross-party budget proposals and there would therefore be no need to alter them as those proposals had now been approved.

A number of Members thanked Ms Glancy and her team for their work in this area and for the advice provided to Members.

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

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to approve the Treasury Management Strategy, referenced within Sections 3.6 to 3.20 of the report;
- ii. to approve the Investment Strategy, referenced within Sections 3.21 to 3.23 of the report;
- iii. to approve the repayment of loans fund advances using the methodology detailed in Section 3.7 of the report;
- iv. to approve the operational boundaries for external debt, as detailed in Section 3.16 of the report;
- v. to approve the authorised limits for external debt, as detailed in Section 3.17 of the report;
- vi. to approve the delegation of authority to the Chief Financial Officer in conjunction with the Head of Finance to effect movement between external borrowing and other long-term liabilities, as detailed in Section 3.18 of the report; and

- vii. to note the detailed Treasury Management Strategy Statement, available in the Members' Library (Ref: 19/26, February 2025 Bulletin).

5. PROPOSED PUBLIC HOLIDAY, MONDAY 15 JUNE 2026

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy informing the Council of the Scottish Government's decision to declare a National Bank Holiday on Monday 15 June 2026, to mark Scotland's participation in the Men's World Cup Finals for the first time since 1998, and to consider whether this should be declared a public holiday or an additional day of annual leave to be granted to employees.

The Head of Corporate Support, Hayley Barnett, presented the report. She made reference to proposals for public holidays in recent years, and drew attention to the potential costs of providing an additional public holiday or annual leave day.

An amendment was submitted by Councillors Jardine and Gilbert:

Proposed amended recommendations:

[Members are recommended to:]

- 2.1 Agree not to designate Monday 15 June 2026 as an additional public holiday nor to allocate an additional day of annual leave, noting the significant financial implications outlined in the report;
- 2.2 Instruct the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy to ensure appropriate service contingency planning is undertaken in advance of 15 June 2026, including workforce absence mitigation and business continuity arrangements across critical services; and
- 2.3 Request a short report to the Members' Library following 15 June 2026 outlining the operational impact, including any unplanned financial costs arising from workforce absence or service disruption, to inform future decision-making on similar national occasions.

Councillor Jardine presented the amendment, suggesting that it would strengthen the governance around the decision not to award an additional public holiday or day's annual leave. She anticipated that 15 June 2026 would not be an ordinary Monday and that there may be strain on services; therefore, contingency planning was required.

Councillor Gilbert seconded the amendment, arguing that it would provide a responsible balance between acknowledging the significance of the occasion and protecting the Council's financial position. It would also ensure that planning for any impact on services would be undertaken.

The debate followed, with Members speaking in support of not approving an additional public holiday or day's leave, given that the football match would take place overnight on the Saturday/Sunday, and that the Council would incur significant costs to provide the holiday. It was also noted that the Trades Unions were also supportive of this position. Some Members were in favour of monitoring absences on 15 June.

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

For – Recommendation (10): Councillors Akhtar, Bennett, Dugdale, Forrest, Hampshire, McFarlane, McGinn, McMillan, Ritchie, Yorkston

For – Amendment (9): Councillors Cassini, Collins, Findlay, Gilbert, Jardine, McGuire, McIntosh, Menzies, Trotter
Against (0)
Abstentions (1): Councillor McLeod

The report recommendation was therefore carried.

Decision

The Council agreed not to approve an additional public holiday or allocate an additional annual leave day on Monday 15 June 2026.

Signed

Provost John McMillan
Convener of the Council

The webcast for this meeting will be available at the link below for five years from the date of the meeting: https://eastlothian.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/1050702

East Lothian Council
Action Record, February 2025 – February 2026

2

Action Ref.	Meeting Date	Item Number and Title	Action(s) Agreed	Action Owner(s)	Target Completion Date	Actual Completion Date	Comments/Responses/ Additional Information
26/01	17 02 26	06 MoU with Lothian Heat CIC	Additional question: To provide Members with information on training session on 18 March re. district heat networks	Head of Development		20 02 26	Recommended for closure Training session information provided to Members
26/02	17 02 26	08 Regional Economic Partnership	Additional question: To share the consultants' brief for the Regional Partnership with Members	Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy			Not yet finalised
26/03	17 02 26	09 Redetermination Order – Bankton Junction South Roundabout	Additional question: To advise Members if the recent adverse weather had caused any delays to the work	Service Manager – Roads		18 02 26	Recommended for closure Members advised on 09 03 26 that: adverse weather and existing site conditions had resulted in some delay, but that the surfacing works at the eastbound slip road were now complete, and final draining works, barrier installation and white lining to be completed and inspection by 09 03 26

Action Ref.	Meeting Date	Item Number and Title	Action(s) Agreed	Action Owner(s)	Target Completion Date	Actual Completion Date	Comments/Responses/ Additional Information
							works on the north roundabout were ongoing with drainage and traffic management in place; due to be completed in April 2026
26/04	17 02 26	09 Redetermination Order – Bankton Junction South Roundabout	Additional question: To clarify the terminology within the Public Objections Schedule, particularly ‘objection’ vs ‘note’	Service Manager – Roads		18 02 26	Recommended for closure Members advised on 09 03 26 that ‘objections’ required a response and ‘general comments/notes’ did not require a response
26/05	17 02 26	09 Redetermination Order – Bankton Junction South Roundabout	Additional question: Residents to be provided with contractor contact details	Service Manager – Roads		25 03 26	Recommended for closure Contractor contact details (publicly available online): Niall McLean: Niall.McLean@hsgplc.co.uk 07483 473900 Scott Waite: scott.waite@hsgplc.co.uk 0191 373 4485 Gabriel Fella: Gabriel.Fella@hsgplc.co.uk 07977 817635
26/06	17 02 26	10 Planning Enforcement	Additional question: To advise Members if any local authority have co-	Chief Planning Officer		10 03 26	Recommended for closure The Chief Planning Officer is unaware of any local authority co-designing its

Action Ref.	Meeting Date	Item Number and Title	Action(s) Agreed	Action Owner(s)	Target Completion Date	Actual Completion Date	Comments/Responses/ Additional Information
			designed its Planning Enforcement Charter				Planning Enforcement Charter; this will be covered in the report to PPRC in September 2026
26/07	17 02 26	10 Planning Enforcement	Additional question: If available, for data to be provided to Members re. repeat enquiries/formal complaints	Chief Planning Officer			Recommended for closure To be covered in the report to PPRC in September 2026
26/08	17 02 26	10 Planning Enforcement	Additional question: To consider providing Members with updates on open cases	Chief Planning Officer			Recommended for closure To be covered in the report to PPRC in September 2026
26/09	17 02 26	10 Planning Enforcement	iii to undertake a benchmarking exercise of East Lothian's enforcement reporting arrangements against those of comparable planning authorities, including review of: - published service standards and communication commitments - frequency and format of statistical reporting to Members	Chief Planning Officer			Recommended for closure To be covered in the report to PPRC in September 2026

Action Ref.	Meeting Date	Item Number and Title	Action(s) Agreed	Action Owner(s)	Target Completion Date	Actual Completion Date	Comments/Responses/ Additional Information
			accessibility of enforcement data for the public transparency of escalation and statutory powers				
26/10	17 02 26	10 Planning Enforcement	iv. to report back to PPRC within six months with the findings and recommended improvements [of the review set out in 25/35]	Chief Planning Officer	August 2026 [this will be completed in September 2026, due to the timing of the PPRC meeting]		Recommended for closure To be covered in the report to PPRC in September 2026
26/11	24 02 26	04 Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27 – 2030/31	Additional Question: To arrange a Members’ briefing on treasury management and investment	Service Manager – Corporate Accounting	By the end of the current council term		Recommended for closure Briefing is scheduled to take place on 9 June 2026

COMMITTEE:	East Lothian Council
MEETING DATE:	28 April 2026
BY:	Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy
REPORT TITLE:	Submissions to the Members' Library Service, 31 January to 31 March 2026
REPORT STATUS:	Public

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 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

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the reports submitted to the Members' Library Service between 31 January and 31 March 2026, 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 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Finance: None

5.2 Human Resources: None

5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): None

5.4 Risk: None

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

X

or

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

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

[Enter information on impacts that have been identified]

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

7 APPENDICES

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – Bulletin of business submitted to the Members' Library, 31 January to 31 March 2026

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 East Lothian Council Standing Orders: Standing Order 3.4

9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

Report Author(s)

Name	Lel Gillingwater
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Date	31 March 2026

Head of Service Approval

Name	Hayley Barnett
Designation	Head of Corporate Support
Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed	Confirmed
Approval Date	31 March 2026

**MEMBERS' LIBRARY SERVICE RECORD FOR THE PERIOD
31 JANUARY – 31 MARCH 2026**

Reference	Originator	Document Title	Access
07/26	Head of Infrastructure	Sale of Land, Musselburgh	Private
08/26	Depute Chief Executive – Children and Communities	Review of Customer Services and Libraries Management Structure and Reader Services Support Team	Private
09/26	Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy	Redesign of the Information Governance Team	Private
10/26	Head of Infrastructure	Building Warrants Issued Under Delegated Powers – January 2026	Public
11/26	Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy	Realignment of Revenues and Corporate Accounting Services	Private
12/26	Head of Development	Draft Scotland's Climate Change Plan 2026-2040 – East Lothian Council's Response	Public
13/26	Head of Infrastructure	Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme – CoSLA Report	Private
14/26	Head of Development	Edinburgh Innovation Hub Update	Private
15/26	Head of Corporate Support	Establishment Changes for January 2026	Private
16/26	Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy	Creation of a Project Officer within Information Governance	Public
17/26	Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy	Budget Consultation 2026/27	Public
18/26	Depute Chief Executive – Children and Communities	Rent Consultation 2026/27	Public
19/26	Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy	Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy	Public
20/26	Head of Infrastructure	Sale of Land and Grant of Associated Servitudes, Cockenzie	Private
21/26	Depute Chief Executive – Children & Communities	Service Review – Families Together East Lothian	Private
22/26	Depute Chief Executive – Children and Communities	Permanence of the Equity & Inclusion Education Outreach Service	Private
23/26	Depute Chief Executive – Resources	Staffing Report for Team Leader – Financial Support within Revenues	Private
24/26	Head of Corporate Support	Establishment Changes for February 2026	Private
25/26	Head of Corporate Support	Quarterly Customer Feedback Reporting	Public
26/26	Head of Infrastructure	Proposed Lease Extension of Ground Lease – Macmerry	Private

27/26	Head of Finance	ELC Procurement Contracts Awarded Below Regulated Thresholds, Financial Year 2025-2026	Public
28/26	Head of Children's Services	Children's Services Section 10 Funding 2026/27	Public
29/26	Chief Officer, East Lothian Integration Joint Board	Final East Lothian IJB Strategic Plan 2025-2030	Public
30/26	Head of Infrastructure	Building Warrants Issued February 2026	Public

COMMITTEE:	East Lothian Council
MEETING DATE:	28 April 2026
BY:	Depute Chief Executive – Children and Communities
REPORT TITLE:	East Lothian Community Planning Partnership Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2026-2036
REPORT STATUS:	Public

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the new Local Outcome Improvement Plan for 2026-2036.
- 1.2 To update Members on the updated language for community planning in East Lothian.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 To consider and note the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) which was approved by the East Lothian Community Planning Partnership Board (EL CPP) on 9 March 2026.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The EL CPP Board agreed to the earlier development of a new Local Outcome Improvement Plan at their meeting in October 2024. The current LOIP was due to end in 2027. This decision was in recognition of the vast amount of work that would need to be undertaken for a refresh, the number of actions which had already been completed and the feelings reflected by community members that their voice was not reflected in the plan.
- 3.2 Coproduction of the plan was undertaken through a series of Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs) and Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact

Assessments (CRWIAs), which planned the engagement and participation of the community with partners from October 2024–July 2025.

- 3.3 By bringing together data available and community voice an Officers Group was established in July 2025 and has been meeting monthly to develop the themes and priorities based on this feedback. This work informed the three key themes: Living Well, Keeping Safe and Money Matters.
- 3.4 Throughout August and September, the key themes and priority areas were taken back to the community through a video and questionnaire for feedback. The responses agreed that the themes and priorities reflected community need.
- 3.5 A draft of the key themes and priorities were brought to the Board in October. The Officers group had progressed the work of two of the streams.

Keeping Safe – online and phone safety, safer communities, gender based violence and abuse, substance use and climate resilience and adaptation.

Money Matters – drew on the priority areas from the Poverty Plan which aligned with feedback: good quality jobs that pay fairly, enough money from benefits, a good life with access to the essentials, climate change ready, and stigma-aware and trauma informed with lived experience.

The third theme Living Well, required further officer work and undertook a further piece of engagement with the community in February 2026. This identified and condensed the four original priorities into three: Wellbeing, Staying Connected, and Health and Active Places and Spaces. Once again, the feedback was that these reflected the community need.

- 3.6 The final combined IIA/CRWIA took place in February 2026 which can be accessed [here](#). It identified ten action areas. These actions have all been undertaken or information requested by officers identified.

The Child Friendly IIA, is available [here](#).

- 3.7 The Officers Group have developed Logic Frameworks and handed these over to the strategic groups leading on Living Well, Keeping Safe and Money Matters for their development and embedding.
- 3.8 Two new strategic groups have been established for the delivery and governance of the LOIP, which join the Poverty Working Group already established, leading on the three themes Living Well, Keeping Safe and Money Matters.
 - 3.8.1 A Living Well strategic group which will be co-chaired by VCEL and NHS Lothian Partnership and Place team representatives.

- 3.8.2 A Keeping Safe Oversight group will bring together key pieces of work through; Community Justice Partnership, Community Safety Group, Mid and East Lothian Drugs and Alcohol Partnership, East and Midlothian Public Protection Committee, Children's Strategic Partnership and Equally Safe.
- 3.9 At the East Lothian Partnership Board meeting on 9 March 2026 members approved the plan, the governance structure and adoption of a change of language.
- 3.9.1 The East Lothian Partnership will now be known as the East Lothian Community Planning Partnership (EL CPP).
- 3.9.2 The Governance Group will now be known as the Board.
- 3.9.3 The East Lothian Plan will now be known as the East Lothian Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP).

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The East Lothian Community Planning Partnership Local Outcome Improvement Plan was developed considering and reflecting relevant policies from partners. Details of these are provided in the East Lothian Local Outcome Improvement Plan Appendices pp. 17-19.
- 4.2 The LOIP will resource and inform in other partnership plans which are currently in development including Children's Services Plan, Area Plans (Locality Plans) and Community Engagement and Participation Strategy.

5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Finance: none
- 5.2 Human Resources: Commitment from partners to release staff to attend Officers Group
- 5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): Alignment of Area Partnership and One Council Partnership funding with the themes and priorities in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan. Alignment and prioritisation of any holiday hunger or poverty streams of funding under the Poverty Working Group actions.
- 5.4 Risk: The challenges in community planning are highlighted in the introduction from the Chair and within each section of Living Well, Keeping Safe and Money Matters. These include East Lothian being the second fastest growing population in Scotland, along with budget pressures on partners.

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 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:

☒

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	Y
Other	

[Enter information on impacts that have been identified]

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

7 APPENDICES

- 7.1 East Lothian Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2026-2036
- 7.2 East Lothian Local Outcome Improvement Plan Appendices

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 East Lothian Community Planning Partnership Engagement report can be accessed [here](#).

9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

Report Author(s)

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Head of Service Approval

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Designation	Head of Communities & Partnerships
Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed	Yes
Approval Date	31/03/2026

East Lothian Community Planning Partnership



Local Outcome
Improvement Plan
2026-36



Working together to promote
healthy, safe communities
and reduce poverty

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Foreword

As Chair of the East Lothian Community Planning Partnership, I am delighted to present our East Lothian Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) for 2026–2036.

This Plan sets out a shared ambition for how we, as partners across the public and voluntary sectors, will design and deliver services that make a meaningful and lasting difference to the lives of the people and communities of East Lothian. The plan represents over a year of engagement, collaboration and transformation, and we are proud that more than 25,000 people have helped shape the themes and actions within it.

Community planning within the context of public sector reform and the population health framework focuses on creating collaborative, people-centred systems that improve wellbeing, reduce inequalities, and strengthen local outcomes. By aligning services and bringing together sectors, we can shift from reactive service delivery to preventative, holistic approaches rooted in local priorities.

East Lothian is Scotland's second fastest-growing local authority, and while this growth brings real potential, it also arrives during a period of significant budget pressures for all partners.

More than ever, our collective ability to work together effectively, to intervene early, and to focus our support on those experiencing poverty and inequality is essential if we are to ensure that growth is managed sustainably and that the consequences of poverty and inequality which affect us all are addressed.

Critical to the success of the plan and ultimately, for the Partnership it was critical that the plan wasn't developed for communities but with them. The LOIP 2026–2036 is anchored by the priorities communities and partners have identified and which they believe will have the greatest impact over the next decade.

This new plan builds on firm foundations and effective partnership working over the previous decade. Over the past nine years, we have achieved over 48% of our targets — including delivering more affordable homes, increasing adult and youth employment, and reducing deliberate fires and missing-person incidents. But progress over the past decades also highlights that we must go further and faster if we are going to meet the needs of our communities. The creation of our new strategic group, *Living Well*, dedicated to improving health, wellbeing and reducing social isolation, is just one example of our renewed commitment.

As a partnership, we remain firmly dedicated to continuous improvement and to working alongside our communities to deliver the best possible outcomes for everyone in East Lothian. I am confident that in partnership with our communities we can shape a confident, fair and thriving future for our county.



Laurence Rockey | Chair of East Lothian Community Planning Partnership
& Chief Executive | East Lothian Council

Our Vision

Working together to reduce poverty, inequality and improve the wellbeing of people living in East Lothian.

Our Strategic Themes

Living Well

The Partnership is committed to supporting communities to maximise their health and wellbeing.

Our priority areas:

- Wellbeing
- Staying Connected
- Healthy and Active Places and Spaces

Keeping Safe

The Partnership is committed to supporting residents to keep themselves and their communities safe.

Our priority areas:

- Online and Phone Safety
- Safer Communities
- Gender Based Violence and Abuse
- Substance Use
- Climate Resilience and Adaptation

Money Matters

The Partnership believes everyone in East Lothian deserves to live a life free from poverty.

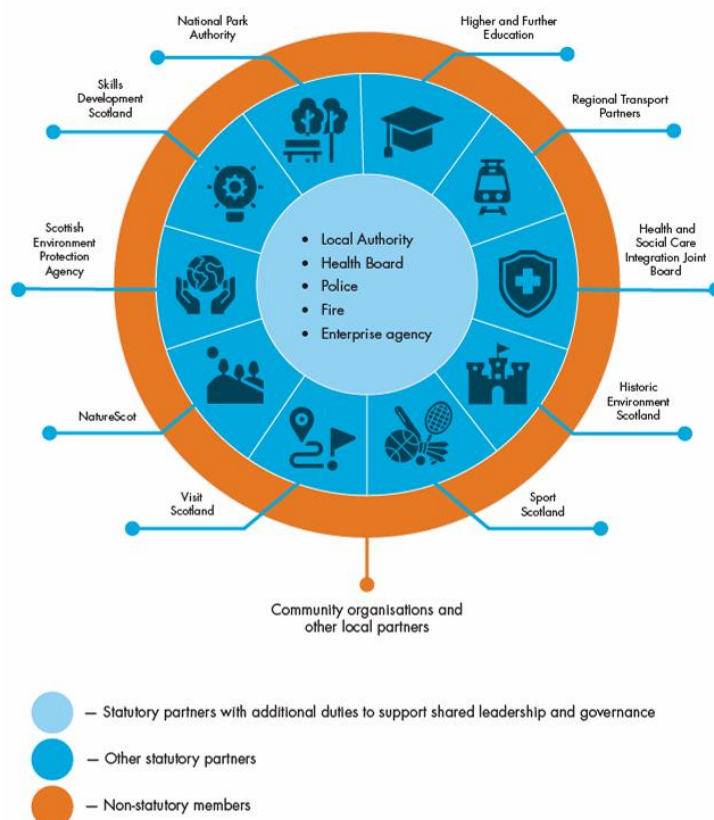
Our priority areas:

- Good Quality Jobs that Pay Fairly
- Enough Money from Benefits
- A good life with Access to the Essentials
- Climate Change Ready
- Stigma and Trauma Informed, with Lived Experience

About Us

East Lothian Community Planning Partnership (CPP) is a group of organisations from across the public, private, third and community sectors. We work together to make life better for the people of East Lothian. Our **Local Outcome Improvement Plan** focuses on where partners' collective efforts and resources can add the most value to our local communities, with particular emphasis on reducing inequality.

Structure of Community Planning Partnerships



Our focus is embedded in prevention, early intervention and reducing inequalities (inequity). The East Lothian CPP will work to the following definitions of Prevention, Early Intervention and Inequity, further detail in Appendix 4.

Prevention

Invest to stop problems happening in the first place.

Early intervention

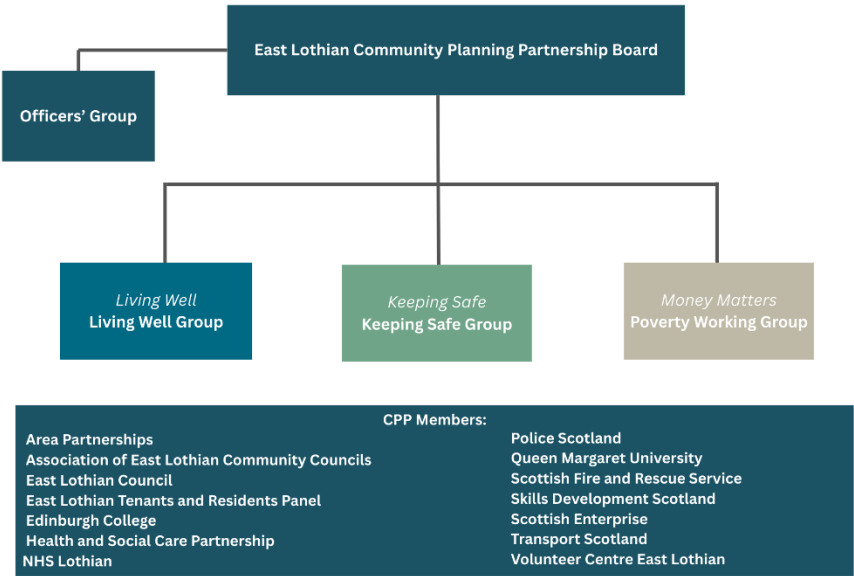
Focusing on early detection of a problem to support early intervention and support or reducing the level of harm.

Inequity

Identify where inequities exist, understand what drives them, and take targeted action to reduce them.

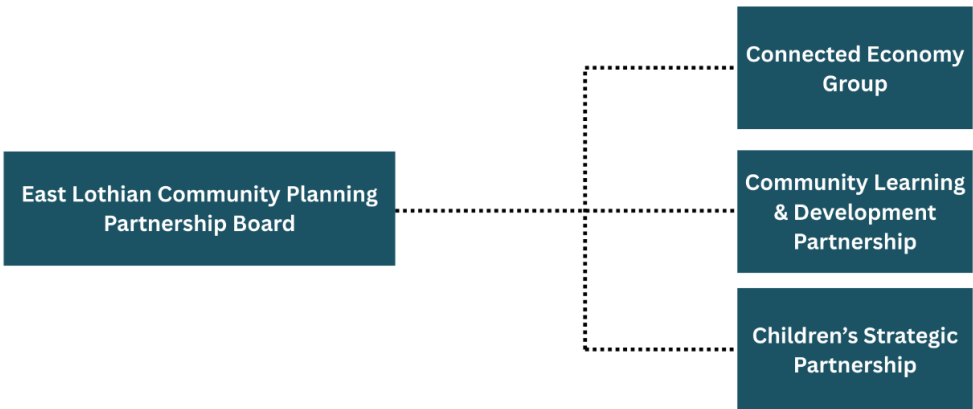
East Lothian Community Planning Partnership Structure

Our governance structure includes a Board, an action focused Officers Group and three strategic groups.



Reporting function

The East Lothian Community Planning Partnership has reporting and oversight function for the following groups:



The sub groups under Connected Economy and Childrens Strategic Partnership are highlighted in Appendix 7 (pg 19).

Improvement Plan

Since December 2024 the East Lothian Community Planning Partnership has been undertaking a development and improvement journey. Working with the Improvement Service, all partners took part in a self-assessment and workshops where we produced an Improvement Plan.¹

The areas of improvement identified, and progress so far includes

- A review of how ***Elected Members and community representatives*** engage with the leadership of the partnership.
 - Leaders of the three political parties have joined the Board
 - Inclusion of our local community planning partners in the Board; Area Partnerships, Association of East Lothian Community Councils and East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel
- Improving awareness and transparency of community planning and its ***governance and accountability***.
 - Updating our community planning webpages² and producing a monthly 1-page email bulletin
- Strengthening the monitoring and reporting to show the ***impact the partnership was making***.
 - Producing easy to read and plain English versions of documents and guides.
- Developing the CPP's approaches to ***community engagement*** to ensure the views of the wider community influence the work of the partnership.
 - Engagement Plan and process for the new LOIP with 25,000 voices represented
 - Work on a new CPP Community Engagement and Participation Strategy for August 2026

A short life working group of Board members will continue to lead on areas of improvement and partnership working, identified through the self-assessment process.

¹ Appendix 3

² <https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/community-planning>

Establishing a Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP)

The East Lothian LOIP is required by Section 6 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015¹.

The Act requires Community Planning Partnerships (CPP's) to produce a Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) setting out:

- A demonstration of clear, evidence-based and robust strong understanding of local needs, circumstances and aspirations of its local communities
- Translate that understanding of local needs, circumstances and aspirations into a genuine plan which reflects the CPP's priorities for improving outcomes and tackling inequalities in their area.
- Clearly and specifically state what will be different for communities as long-term outcomes in 10 years; and the contributory outcomes, indicators and targets by which progress towards these will be demonstrated over the short (1 year) and medium (3 years) terms.
- What steps will be undertaken over the medium term, either in the LOIP or in publicly accessible supporting documentation detailing how they are deploying resources, promoting prevention, reducing inequalities and building community capacity.

Scotland's National Performance Framework ³ (NPF) is Scotland's wellbeing framework and sets the vision for the kind of Scotland we all want to live in. This framework is currently under reform in 2026, but has strong links with our LOIP.⁴

The East Lothian CPP will be working over the next 6 months to finalise the data collection methods, measurement and performance management of this plan. This will ensure we are continuing improvement and can report annually on our progress to the Board, partners and communities.

³ <https://www.gov.scot/collections/national-performance-framework/?via=https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/>

⁴ Appendix 6

Strategic Needs Assessment

A Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) is used to gather evidence about the current and future needs of our population. An SNA⁵ was carried out in 2023-2024 and provided an analysis of the key trends, challenges and opportunities faced by East Lothian.

Key Issues Highlighted in the 2024 Strategic Needs Assessment



Our population is predicted to grow by 1,000 per year for next 20 years, which will put pressure on services



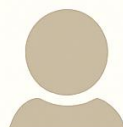
All partners are facing extreme budget pressures



We acknowledge the urgency of the climate emergency



Lack of affordable housing and high cost of private housing



Persistent poverty related attainment gap

The Children's Services Plan 2026-2029 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Health and Social Care Partnership Joint Strategic Needs Assessment add to the wider context of community need.

The CPP Strategic Needs Assessment is detailed in Appendix 1.

Using the key issues highlighted in the SNA and the review of the LOIP 2017-2027, we planned the community engagement and development of the LOIP using a series of Integrated Impact Assessments⁶(IIA) and Children Rights and Wellbeing Assessments⁷ (CRWIA).

These considered the potential consequences of a proposed action, policy, or project on people, the environment, and organisations to support informed decision-making. A copy is available [here](#).

This process guided our approach to listening and engaging communities.

⁵ https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/35094/2024_strategic_needs_assessment

⁶ https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality_and_diversity/12014/integrated_impact_assessments

⁷ https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality_and_diversity/12014/integrated_impact_assessments/2

Listening to local communities

To co-produce this plan East Lothian Community Planning Partnership engaged with partners to gather over **24,599** people's experiences on the issues which are important in their local communities, to inform the Local Outcome Improvement Plan.

- **9,592** children, young people and families' voices
- **15,007** community voices from the wider community
- Over **60** organisations contributed to this piece of work
- **140** plans, strategies and pieces of research and data

The engagement identified three key themes:

Safety, Health and Poverty



Climate resilience and adaptation, childcare, transport, and communities were also important themes

Some feedback from the engagement will not be addressed directly in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, but it will be taken forward by partner agencies through pieces of work, as outlined in Appendix 4.

Living Well

We are committed to supporting communities to maximise their health and wellbeing.

Communities highlighted three priorities under this theme: **Wellbeing** so people stay mentally and physically healthy, **Staying Connected** to reduce isolation and build peer support, and ensuring we promote **Healthy and Active Places and Spaces**.

Strategic Group: Living Well

Lead Agencies: Volunteer Centre East Lothian

NHS Lothian



East Lothian
**Community
Planning
Partnership** 

Key Data and Trends:

Projected population growth of **37.6%** in the **65+** age group by 2047 and growth of **109.1%** in the **75+** age group by 2047 ([National Records of Scotland](#))

80% of what affects health is out with the health and social care system ([Scotland's Population Health Framework 25-35](#))

There were 14 suicides in East Lothian in 2024, but only 6 were known to Mental Health Services.

50% of neurodivergent children go on to develop anxiety and/or depression according to recent research with onset in primary school ([EPIC Think Learn](#)).

Health Visiting Team identified Mental Health as the top issue affecting families they support, which is also reflected by perinatal health services.

OECD report rural wellbeing report on isolation and distance penalty with **RSABI** reporting an increase in their provision for mental health support to farmers with pressures of 49%

1/3 students at **Queen Margaret University** identify as carers.

Over one fifth of East Lothian's population (22.4%) report that their daily activity is

impacted to some degree by a longer-term health issue or disability. ([HSCP JSNA](#))

92% of carers identified it affects their mental health, 69% affects their physical health and 70% caring affects their relationships ([Carers of East Lothian](#))

A higher proportion of takeaway, gambling and alcohol establishments in deprived areas ([Public Health National Observation](#))

62.7% of 16-24 young people feel loneliness some or all the time ([CSP JSNA](#))

Lancelot Commission 2020 report on dementia prevention, intervention and care identified twelve potential modifiable risk factors which include less education, hypertension, hearing impairment, smoking, obesity, depression, physical inactivity, diabetes, low social contact, excessive alcohol consumption, traumatic brain injury and air pollution. 40% on dementias could potentially be prevented or delayed through targeted interventions.

High neurodiversity waiting lists in East Lothian, for example Adult ADHD waiting list is 118 weeks for initial appointments (31st August 2025). ([Scottish Parliament Information Centre \(SPICe\) 2025](#))

In the Residents Survey (2024) road and pavement repairs was the top priority for improvements in their local area at 75%.

Community voices

Margaret, 82: *At first, I didn't think anything could change. Now, I'm joining a weekly group and planning ahead.*

*Many young carers report persistent stress, anxiety, and low mood. Some express feeling overwhelmed, mentally drained, or "numb" from long-term exposure to distressing home environments. Several describe overthinking, feeling guilt when not helping, and being affected by the emotional states of parents or siblings. **Young Carers***

*During the focus group session, I was also struck by the importance all contributors placed on being able to speak to someone about how they feel - this very much reflects the wider student population who are increasingly accessing mental health and well-being support whilst studying. **QMU***

I think if anyone was on a waiting list like myself I think they should give out other resources local to you that could help if you are struggle while waiting. The only reason I found out about resources to use was my doctor. I think there should be more leaflets on the situation or even posters on the toilet doors from the inside with a list of organisations from phone numbers to emails to get the support and help you need.

John, 74: *I used to feel invisible. With support, I've gained confidence and can speak to services without fear.*

Living Well: Wellbeing

Communities of East Lothian have opportunities to build and maintain physical and mental wellbeing throughout life, preventing illness wherever possible and supporting those living with long term conditions.

1 Year Actions

- Promote engagement of mental health support and wellbeing tools for communities.
- Develop innovative, preventative approaches to suicide.
- Promote consistent resources for adults who are on waiting lists to help them manage their health and wellbeing while they wait.

3 Year Actions

- Grow social prescribing models across East Lothian by learning from current projects and strengthening links with doctor practices and in/outpatient services.
- Develop the reach of information hubs⁸ to include rural communities and further education locations both in person and online to raise awareness of support and activities across East Lothian.
- Improve how people move between mental health services and support at different stages of life.
- Identify whole system approach to improve healthy weight levels, identifying areas of higher risk and creating long term strategies.

10 Year Impact

People in East Lothian can more easily access high-quality, activities, resources, and spaces that support their wellbeing including those waiting for services.

⁸ Information hubs bring together friendly faces from charities, the council and the NHS – all in one place, right on your doorstep.

Living Well: Staying Connected

East Lothian communities are connected to one another and to the places they live, creating community spaces where people share, learn, and grow together. Through shared indoor and outdoor community spaces/activities and thoughtful use of technology people are enabled to come together and access opportunities that strengthen wellbeing and connection.

1 Year Actions

- Promote and raise awareness of community activities across the partnership and to communities which encourage connection.
- Promote, raise awareness of and embed peer support for carers.

3 Year Actions

- Enhance indoor and outdoor community spaces and improve access for intergenerational support, connection, and projects.
- Increase training and awareness of good brain health to assist in supporting pre-diagnostic and mild cognitive impairment in dementia and opportunities to stay connected and encourage connection.

10 Year Impact

People of all ages, backgrounds, and circumstances in East Lothian have regular opportunities to connect with others in warm, welcoming indoor spaces and welcoming outdoor spaces. Spaces are accessible, inclusive, and inviting. As a result, individuals feel a sense of belonging, build friendships, and have strong social networks that reduce isolation and strengthen community resilience.

Living Well: Healthy and Active Places and Spaces

East Lothian communities enjoy welcoming, inclusive public places and spaces where everyone can participate and live well. Our place will support physical and mental wellbeing by making it easy to be active, enjoy green, safe, and friendly spaces, and benefit from surroundings that encourage and support good health.

1 Year Actions

- Identify options to act on making local places and services more supportive of good health; for example, the food environment through planning and other opportunities/levers.

3 Year Actions

- Take forward actions on making local places and services more supportive of good health.
- Explore and deliver options to enhance and improve growing and greenspace quality and access in priority areas.
- Enhance opportunities for individuals to walk wheel and cycle.
- Support the development of inclusive community physical activities for everyone with a focus on those who face additional challenges such as carers.

10 Year Impact

People in East Lothian have easy access to safe, welcoming, and well-maintained spaces that encourage regular physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices. These spaces support individuals to be active, connect with nature, and participate in community life-helping maintain good health, independence, and fulfilling lives.

Living Well: Governance

Strategic Group:	<i>Living Well</i>
Lead Partners:	<i>Volunteer Centre East Lothian NHS Lothian</i>
Key Strategies:	<i>Appendix 6.4, Pg 17</i>

Governance Structure and Subgroups

As Living Well will be a new strategic group, they will establish any subgroups required as they progress.

Membership of the new Living Well strategic group will include Mental Health Partners, Youth Vision Steering Group, CLD Partnership, Suicide Prevention Group, Children’s Strategic Partnership Mental Health and Wellbeing Group, ELC - Education, Community Wellbeing Service and Children’s Services, HSCP, Dementia Friendly EL, QMU/Edinburgh College Student Services, Health and Wellbeing subgroups of Area Partnerships.



Keeping Safe



We are committed to helping residents keep themselves and their communities safe.

Communities highlighted five priorities under this theme: **online and phone safety**; **safer communities** that are clean, welcoming and well-lit; **gender-based violence and abuse** and its harmful impact; **substance use**; and **climate resilience and adaptation**.

Strategic Group: Keeping Safe Group

Lead Partners: TBC



Key Data and Trends:

In the **Residents Survey** Residents feeling safe walking alone after dark has dropped from 94% in 2019 to 72% in 2024.

The higher use of substances in areas with lower socioeconomic status (SIMD 20 areas) is a critical concern. It emphasises the importance of addressing health inequalities and providing targeted interventions and support to vulnerable populations. **MELDAP**

MSYP campaign in EL Schools 2nd most popular issue was safe places indoor and outdoor for young people. With gender-based violence being the 3rd most popular issue for campaigning.

Only 50% of communities with active resilience plan. **East Lothian Council**

Prestonpans ranked 2nd in Scotland for vulnerability within recent **Dynamic Coast Climate Vulnerability report**.

66% of women feel safe alone at night, vs 89% of Men. **Scottish Community Safety Network, 2020**

Coercive and controlling behaviours are so common, young people consider them normal. **SafeLives 2021**

LGBTQI are 3 times as likely to face discrimination and harassment, **Scottish Community Safety Network, 2020**

Transgender and gender non-conforming people are disproportionately affected by sexual violence victimisation, partner physical violence and homelessness, **Scottish Community Safety Network, 2020**

Minority Ethnic people are twice as likely to experience discrimination and harassment. **Scottish Community Safety Network, 2020**

Those identifying as religious feel 73.1% safe compared to 82.5% of non-religious people. **Scottish Community Safety Network, 2020**

Disabled people are 50% more worried about robbing and mugging, violent crime and sexual assault. **Scottish Community Safety Network, 2020**

Age affects community safety with children at higher risk of hospital admission for injury, teenagers with bullying, young adults being worried about violent crime and sexual assault and older people at higher risk of admission in hospital due to falls. **Scottish Community Safety Network, 2020**

Community voices

A place to go where we don't just have to walk the streets.

Haddington Youth Club

Adults need to take young people's safety seriously. Without feeling safe, without safety, we cannot feel respected, valued, included happy, heard, or healthy. **Youth Vision**

It's not just about young women getting support. It's about, stopping men from doing things, men and other people stopping them from doing the things that mean that women need support.

Your Vision: Support for young women

Issues with alleyways and street lighting.

**Families Together – Animation
Tranent Young People**

Feedback from a representative of an organisation working particularly with women from ethnic minority groups highlighted verbal intimidation and racist comments causing the women to avoid parks and civic spaces.

Open Space Strategy Feedback

Mum not physically abusive but mentally abusive—mind games and guilt trips.

He throws things, or blocks our bedroom door... makes me feel uncomfortable.

Young Carers

Keeping Safe: Online and Phone Safety

By understanding all the online and phone risks and working in a preventative approach, we can respond with care and knowledge. We can help create digital and online spaces where everyone feels safe, seen, and heard.

1 Year Actions

- Deliver workforce training on online harm, along with organised crime in relation to exploitation of young males, and financial scams targeting older people.
- Research resources to help young people, parents, and carers understand online risks linked to artificial intelligence, including deepfakes and identity cloning.

3 Year Actions

- Develop and enhance online/digital training in parenting programmes
- Develop online resources to help young people, parents, and carers understand AI-related online risks.

10 Year Impact

When awareness is raised, and training is in place, and people know where to go for help, everyone in our community can feel safe, supported, and respected online.

Keeping Safe: Safer Communities

Building stronger relationships between services, addressing issues early and activities that bring people together help to tackle community safety issues. Clean, well-lit spaces and places that welcome and respect everyone no matter their gender, identity, or background will help people feel safe, valued, and included.

1 Year Actions

- Strengthen a joint approach to contextual safeguarding by improving how concerns about risk are reported, shared, and acted on.
- Develop an East Lothian Charter to tackle racism reflecting Race Equality Framework for Scotland.

3 Year Actions

- Understand perceptions, and improve experiences, of safety through ensuring public outdoor spaces and routes feel safe and welcoming, to support lifelong wellbeing.
- Support adults who offend regularly by taking a person-centred approach and holding regular meetings between local services, health, housing, justice, fire, and police.
- Embed Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) within primary schools, secondary schools and across CLD Partners.

10 Year Impact

Communities will feel safer, have clean, well-lit spaces, respectful behaviour, and kindness for everyone. Residents will want to be actively involved in their community and green spaces.

Keeping Safe: Gender Based Violence and Abuse

Help should be kind, respectful, and easy to find whether in the community or online. We want our children and young people learning about respect and healthy relationships from an early age.

1 Year Actions

- Require mandatory Violence Against Women and Girls training for all partners working in early intervention and frontline services, with examples of good practice.
- Develop gender-based violence prevention in primary schools and youth work settings, focusing on healthy gender views and positive gender language.

3 Year Actions

- Increase understanding of Gender-Based Violence and Abuse for 16–25-year-olds through CLD partners, using evidence and lived experience.
- Use local data and partner knowledge to understand risks and gaps in Honor Based Violence and Abuse, working with partners across Edinburgh and Lothians.

10 Year Impact

Everyone, especially women and girls will feel safe, supported, and better understood. Children and young people will learn about respect and healthy relationships, helping to prevent harm before it happens. Services will be kind, trauma-informed, and easy to access, whether in the community or online. People from all cultures will feel included, and no one will be afraid to ask for help. Harmful ideas about gender and power will be challenged. People will have the right to live in a home where they feel safe.

Keeping Safe: Substance Use

Everyone affected by substance use feels safe, respected, and supported. With the right education, flexible and trauma informed services, and welcoming recovery spaces like recovery cafés, people will have real opportunities to heal, grow, and thrive no matter where they live or when they need help.

1 Year Actions

- Expand trauma-informed, substance-use-informed training beyond HSCP to all frontline services.
- Investigate positive risk-taking approaches used in Midlothian and identify best practice to inform East Lothian policies.

3 Year Actions

- Embed the *I am Me* programme across education and youth work settings.
- Embed positive approaches to managing risk within the wider Drugs and Alcohol strategy.

10 Year Impact

If the right support is in place including education, community support groups and trauma-informed services that are flexible and available during evenings and weekends then people will feel more able to ask for help without fear or judgement. Young people and adults will have better understanding of the risks, and those affected by substance use will have safe spaces to recover and connect. Services will meet people where they are, helping them feel respected, supported, and hopeful about their future.

Keeping Safe: Climate Resilience and Adaptation

We are all affected by climate change. Working with our communities we want to better understand, limit the impact, and identify effective solutions that protect and enhance nature, and seek to utilise nature-based solutions to help adapt to climate change.

1 Year Actions

- Support communities to lead, shape, and take ownership of their local Resilience Plans.
- Review the Community Safety Group membership and add partners working on climate resilience and adaptation.

3 Year Actions

- Deliver training and practical support within Resilience Plans for communities most affected by climate change, particularly those in areas of deprivation.
- Create an online space to help communities learn simple ways to reduce climate-related risks they face now and, in the future, such as flooding, drought, wildfires, pests, storms, and extreme heat or cold.

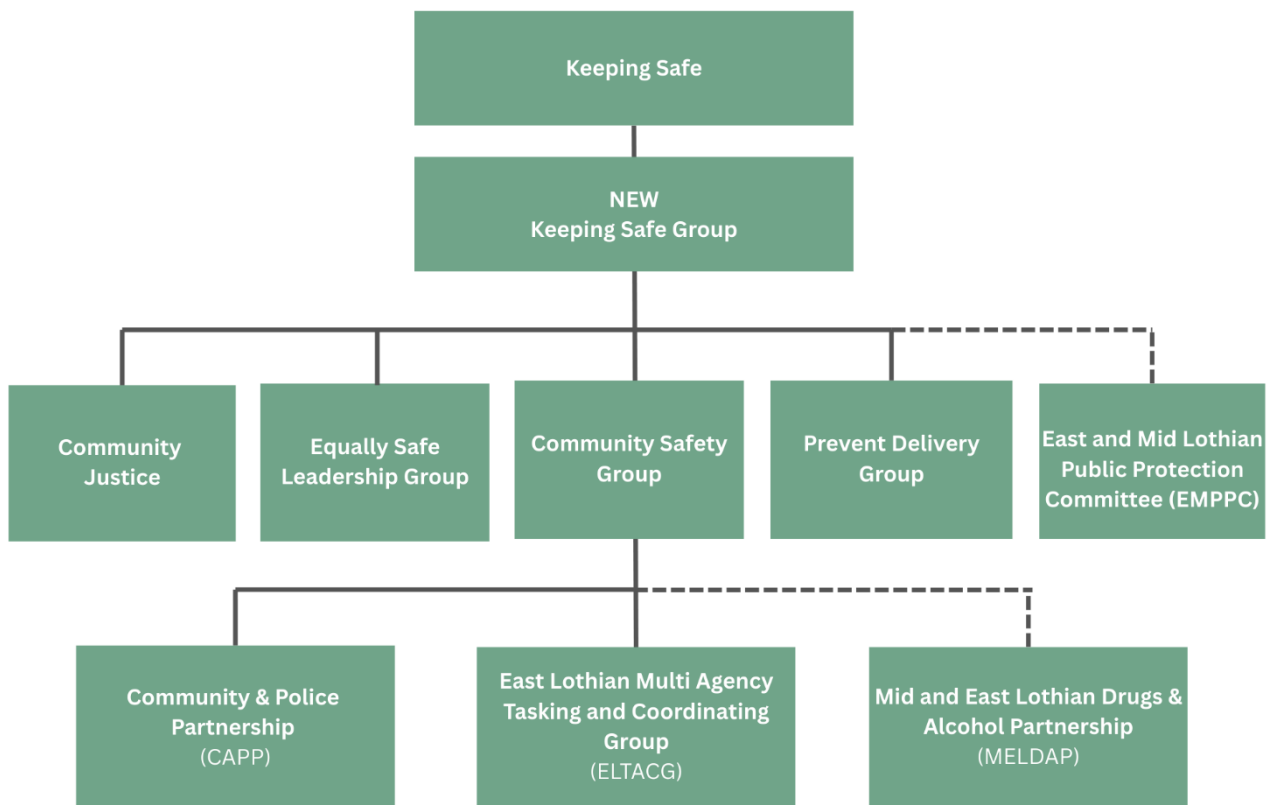
10 Year Impact

Together with communities we can co-create plans to build climate adaptation. Plans better equip communities by raising awareness and making communities feeling included and safe.

Keeping Safe: Governance

Strategic Group:	Keeping Safe Group
Lead Partners:	TBC
Key Strategies:	Appendix 6.4Error! Reference source not found. Pg 17

Governance Structure and Subgroups



--- indicates where groups feed in and connect, but Keeping Safe does not have governance responsibility

Money Matters



We believe everyone in East Lothian deserves to live a life free from poverty.

East Lothian CPP's poverty plan focuses on five priorities; **good quality jobs that pay fairly** by promoting fairly paid jobs, strengthening our local economy and helping people gain the skills that employers need, **enough money from benefits** through reducing barriers to financial support, **a good life with access to the essentials** by improving information and support around cost of living, **climate change ready** by considering climate and poverty as connected challenges and **stigma-aware and trauma-informed** services informed by lived experience.

Strategic Group: Poverty Working Group

Lead Partners: East Lothian Council
NHS Lothian



Key Data/Trends:

22.1% of children (aged 0-15) are living in poverty after housing costs (compared to 23% nationally).

East Lothian Poverty Profile

9.1% of children live in absolute poverty (compared to 13.3% nationally).

East Lothian Poverty Profile

11,767 adults in East Lothian are claiming Universal Credit. 6,537 have no work requirements and 1,331 are seeking work.

Stat-Xplore (DWP)

There has been a 101% increase since March 2020 in number of people on Universal Credit in East Lothian (additional 5,929 people). This indicates that the level of in-work poverty has increased.

DWP 2026

70% of UK food bank users are on Universal Credit **Community Conversations EL Foodbank**

In 2024-25, East Lothian Foodbank supported 5,687 households made up of 13,385 people. This includes 4,639 children. **ELCPAR 2024-2025**

As of September 2025, there were 4,238 households on ELC's housing list-highlighting a high demand for affordable homes. **ELC, 2025** The Employment Rate in East Lothian is 82.2% (compared to 74.4%

in Scotland). **Annual Population Survey Oct 24- Sept 25**

Between January and September 2025 there were 428 households assessed as homeless. **Scottish Government, 2025**

In 2025 (September) the average time spent in temporary accommodation in East Lothian was 331 days (for cases closed). This is significantly above the Scottish average of 237 days. **Scottish Government, 2025**

Over half of respondents said cheaper bus or train fares (61%) and more recycling facilities (53%) would definitely encourage them to address their own impact on climate change. Only 25% said that more electric vehicle charging points would definitely encourage them to address their own impact on climate change. **Residents Survey 2024**

750 households receive the Child Winter Heating Assistance payments aimed at children with a disability in 2024-25. **East Lothian Poverty Profile**

7220 households received the Winter Heating Payment in 2024-25 (equivalent to £424,000). **Social Security Scotland**

545 households received the Scottish Child Payment in 2024-25. **East Lothian Poverty Profile**

Community voices

Constantly feeling cold, don't feed myself, prioritise kids, depressed and hungry and lonely. No one cares, nowhere to go, panicking, going to be excluded.

EL Foodbank Community Conversations

Affordable food stores, minimum wage, doesn't match increase in prices. Cost of baby basics, milk and nappies.

Olivebank

Not to be labelled or pigeonholed, to be seen as a person.

CAPPS Advocacy

Prevention is key – a lot of work could also be done with families not just with schools. Making sure the whole household is aware of different options.

Local Housing Strategy Engagement

Limited availability and high costs of childcare were barriers to work and wellbeing.

Thrive CIC

Partner with training providers to address skill gaps.

Dunbar Area Plan

Stressful as I became homeless in September 2024, didn't have a place to go until October. Now 2025 is here I am in supported accommodation receiving government funding ([Local Housing Allowance](#)) to pay the £350/week cost; however, I am going onto an HNC course which will strip me of my funding, and I won't have adequate money to pay for the accommodation.

Better insulation in houses, cheaper heating costs.

Police Young Volunteers

More access to fresh food shops not supermarkets which are affordable would be good.

**Place Standard Tool
HomeStart Family**

Some areas of East Lothian can be quite isolated, e.g. Macmerry has had significant cuts to buses, which are impacting people being able to easily and affordably travel.

Place Standard Tool Home Start East Lothian

Money Matters: Good Quality Jobs which Pay Fairly

Everyone deserves fair treatment at work and access to training and support to develop their skills and job prospects. As workforce needs evolve, we will support people through lifelong learning, developing core employability skills alongside technical expertise. Traditional skills remain the foundation for innovation; by connecting these with emerging industries, we can create opportunities for people to learn and adapt within their communities.

1 Year Actions

- Promote Real Living Wage accreditations to employers.
- Continue working with colleges and training providers to develop skills and understand future workforce needs, helping local industries find talent and connect with the East Lothian Partnership.
- The LEP will work with our CLD Partnership to plan for future workforce needs and create learning pathways that support new and changing job opportunities.

3 Year Actions

- Work with partners to create East Lothian actions and indicators that match the national ones set out in the upcoming CWB Bill (expected by April 2026).
- Review best practice pathway models in Social Care, Construction and Childcare, and identify where there is employment demand in key sectors, using the City Deal and IRES to support future growth and planning.

10 Year Impact

People will gain new skills, become more independent, and have access to a wider range of learning and training opportunities across different sectors. Targeted employability support will help reduce the number of households without paid work, support young people at risk of negative outcomes, and assist families with children living in poverty.

Money Matters: Enough Money from Benefits

By joining up services, partners can give households better advice and easier referrals, helping them understand the benefits system. We will focus support on communities with higher costs, such as parents and people with disabilities. How we communicate also matters, so we will use language that is consistent, accurate, and both stigma- and trauma-informed.

1 Year Actions

- Strengthen the Financial Inclusion subgroup of the Poverty Working Group (across statutory and third-sector partners) so we can share recruitment, align referrals, and agree a shared protocol.
- Create a mentoring or buddy system where established providers support new, short-term funded start-ups.
- Develop a 'Tell Us Once' model within council services to reduce barriers to financial support.

3 Year Actions

- Increase income-maximisation support for priority groups now and in the future, including people with disabilities, carers, families with children under 5, and lone parents.
- Develop a 'Tell Us Once' approach across the partnership, exploring consent-based information sharing.

10 Year Impact

By joining up services and raising awareness, support will be better tailored and delivered in places where communities already are. We will also use our data more effectively to help people move through services and access the benefits we can provide, supporting them with the cost of living.

Money Matters: A good life with access to Essentials

We believe that clearer housing, benefits, and financial systems will make it easier for people to get the support they need. We will also make sure young people - especially those with care experience - understand and know how to access housing and benefits support.

1 Year Actions

- Update Housing Education workshops around cost of running a household, skills, housing options available and leaving home transition with S4/5 in line with Local Housing Strategy 2024-29.
- Grow the East Lothian Food Friendly Network in line with member feedback at the East Lothian Food Summit, to support the charter and Fare Share distribution.

3 Year Actions

- Embed Housing Education workshops into the redesign of East Lothian Council and Partnership website and cost of living pages.
- Housing Education workshops are targeted to reach; care experienced, people with disabilities and low-income families.
- Co-develop with QMU a tool or app to reduce and redistribute food waste.

10 Year Impact

People will have good information about household costs, housing options and how to access support in East Lothian. Help will be available for those who need support with essential costs, especially care-experienced people, people with disabilities, and low-income families. This support will be delivered in a joined-up, stigma-free way.

Money Matters: Climate Change Ready

Taking action on climate change can also tackle poverty; so our climate work should focus on reducing inequality.

1 Year Actions

- East Lothian Partnerships will include climate alongside poverty considerations, supported by new impact assessments that increases capacity.

3 Year Actions

- Partners will commit to creating a climate risk register that considers future service delivery, the links between climate, poverty and social care, and the co-benefits of climate action.
- Establish a working group to assist in the development of an East Lothian-wide Climate Plan.

10 Year Impact

Taking a joint approach tackling climate change and poverty will create a fairer local economy and new opportunities for communities.

Money Matters: Stigma-aware and trauma-informed with lived experience

The way we run our services can make them harder to access. We will use your experiences to shape better services and train staff across the partnership.

1 Year Actions

- Create an easy-to-use language guide for all partners. This guide will support the Engagement and Participation Strategy and will be based on the Each and Every Child research and the National Trauma Transformation Programme.
- Partners include, review, and use Trauma-Informed training and practice - including culture and housing - in their workforce and volunteer development plans.

3 Year Actions

- Collect and keep a library of composite stories and case studies to show impact and help challenge stigma.
- Partners will create safe, reflective spaces where staff and volunteers can talk openly about the challenges they face when supporting people.

10 Year Impact

Support is easy to access, welcoming, and designed to meet people's needs. People feel able to influence how services are designed and delivered. Staff will receive the training and support they need to work in a trauma-informed and responsive way.

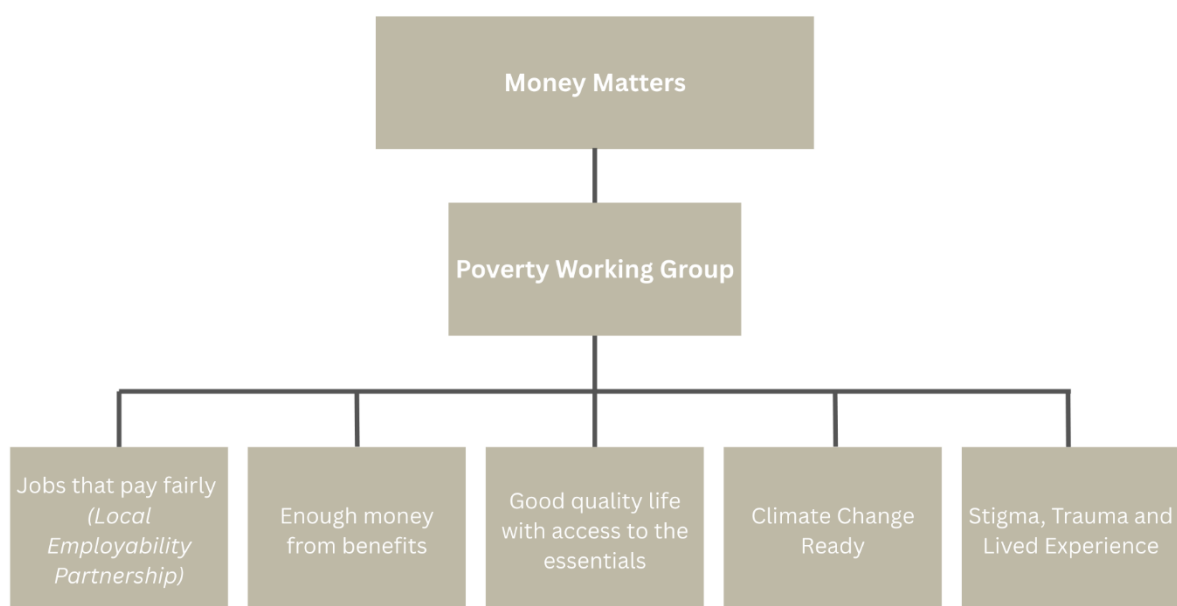
Money Matters: Governance

Strategic Group: *Poverty Working Group*

Lead Partners: *East Lothian Council*
NHS Lothian

Key Strategies: *Appendix 6.5,*
Pg 18

Governance Structure and Subgroups



Next Steps

The Local Outcome Improvement Plan is a living document that the Board will review annually and update every 3 years. Action is underway by strategic groups leading on our 3 key themes and we set out below our next steps.

Our strategic groups

- A new Living Well group has been established to support our activities around health, mental health and wellbeing.
- Actions under Money Matters will be developed by our existing Community Planning Partnership Poverty Working Group.
- Actions under Keeping Safe will be developed by our strategic groups, with a new Keeping Safe implementation group being established.

Logic Frameworks

Logic frameworks are being developed that set out:

- Our planned **inputs**,
- Key **partners** who will be involved,
- Year 1 and Year 3 **actions**,
- How we will **evaluate and monitor** these actions, and
- What the **long-term outcome** will be.

These will be handed over to strategic group leads to further develop monitoring and evaluation. This will be presented to the Board by the end of 2026.

Monitoring Dashboard and Reporting

- We are developing a new digital monitoring and reporting dashboard which will use baseline measures to track progress annually.
- The first Annual Review of the LOIP 2026-36 will be produced in September 2027.

Working Groups

- A short life working group of Board members will continue to work on improvements identified through the self-assessment process and report to the Board by the end of 2026.
- The existing Officers' Group will be redesigned to better reflect themes and sub-group Chairs. The Officers' Group which will be chaired by a Partner agency and will report directly into the Board.

Glossary

ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour
CEG	Connected Economy Group
CLD	Community Learning and Development
CPP	Community Planning Partnership
CSP	Children's Strategic Partnership
CRWIA	Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment
CWB	Community Wealth Building
ELC	East Lothian Council
ELTACG	East Lothian Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-Ordinating Group
EMPPC	East and Midlothian Public Protection Committee
HSCP	Health and Social Care Partnership
IIA	Integrated Impact Assessment
IJB	Integrated Joint Board
LDP	Local Development Plan
LEP	Local Employability Partnership
LOIP	Local Outcome Improvement Plan
MELDAP	Mid and East Lothian Drug and Alcohol Partnership
NHS	National Health Service
NPF	Scottish National Performance Framework
SDS	Skills Development Scotland
SG	Scottish Government
SNA	Strategic Needs Assessment
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
VCEL	Volunteer Centre East Lothian

East Lothian Community Planning Partnership



East Lothian Community Planning Partnership



Appendices

Local Outcome Improvement Plan
2026-36



Working together to promote
healthy, safe communities
and reduce poverty

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Appendix 1 – Strategic Needs Assessment 2024

[East Lothian by Numbers](#) provided the evidence base for the overarching priority and outcomes set out in the 2017-2027 East Lothian Local Outcome Improvement Plan. The Strategic Needs Assessment provided an analysis of the key trends, challenges and opportunities faced by East Lothian in 2017.

The Strategic Needs Assessment was structured around the three key objectives of the East Lothian LOIP 2017-2027 – Sustainable Economy; Resilient People; Safe & Vibrant Communities.

The Assessment was to be updated and expanded periodically as the evidence base developed and more data became available. The Assessment was due to be updated in 2020 and then 2021 but the work was put on hold due to the prioritisation given to supporting the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and then delivery of the Recovery and Renewal Plan. It was also acknowledged that the long-term impact of the pandemic on society, the economy and public health would not be evident for some years.

Therefore, detailed work on revising the 2017 Strategic Needs Assessment and producing a revised Assessment began in early 2023. The revised Strategic Needs Assessment has been used to inform the new East Lothian LOIP 2026-2036.

East Lothian CPP gathered data through a wide range of data sources including, but not exclusive to;

- 2024 Poverty Profile
- Economic Strategy 2024-34
- Local Housing Strategy 2024-29
- Health and Social Care Partnership Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Public Protection Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Police Scotland Performance Reports
- Fire Scotland Performance Reports
- East Lothian Council's Top 50 Indicators

Two multi-agency Partnership workshops took place in 2023 to begin the work of revising and updating the Strategic Needs Assessment. These workshops reviewed the key trends, challenges and opportunities identified in the 2017 Strategic Needs Assessment, identified the up-to-date data that is available and where there might be gaps, and identified post pandemic issues and challenges facing East Lothian.

The conclusion was that although Covid-19, Brexit and the ongoing cost of living crisis have had/ are having substantial impacts on East Lothian's economy, communities and people the key issues continue or are more serious than found in 2017 SNA.

- population growth is projected at a rate of approximately 1,000 per year for the next 20 years
- all partners are facing extreme budget pressures
- climate change is a bigger issue than at the time of the previous plan and needs to be reflected in the new plan
- lack of affordable housing and the high cost of private housing
- persistent poverty related attainment gap

Appendix 2 - Local Outcome Improvement Plan End Report 2017-2027

A review of the 2017-2027 plan was undertaken in October 2025 with two reports published; East Lothian CPP LOIP Annual Review 2024-2025¹ and East Lothian CPP October 2025 End of Plan Update².

The end of plan report highlighted the progress on indicators.

Key	↑	Met/better than target	-	Improvement but not met target	↓	Getting worse/ below target
	13		6		8	
	Not measured		4	Data no longer produced	2	

Eight indicators were getting worse or performed under target;

Indicator	Source	Baseline 2017/18	Target	Latest 2024/5 *2023	How are we working to address?
Percentage earning less than the Real Living Wage	ONS Annual survey of hours & earnings	19.1% (2017) (Scottish av = 18.4%)	17%	2024 (provisional) E.L 19.0%, Scot 11.4%	The Community Wealth Building subgroup of the Connected Economy Group are working to increase the number of businesses who are Real Living Wage Employers. Fair Work is a pillar on the Community Wealth Building Charter.

¹ https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/35553/east_lothian_partnership_loip_annual_review_2024-2025

² https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/35552/east_lothian_partnership_october_2025_end_of_plan_update_-_accessible_version

Town centre vacancy rate	Economic Development Strategy	6.1%	5%	12%	In the Local Economy Strategy under Communities and Place, regeneration of town centres is an action to support vibrant town and rural settings.
Indicator	Source	Baseline 2017/18	Target	Latest 2024/5 *2023	How are we working to address?
Percentage of citizens who say their neighbourhood is a good place to live	East Lothian Residents Survey / Citizens' Panel	98% Very Good = 74.3%; Good = 23.6% (Feb 2017)	Maintain Levels	93% Very Good = 46% Fairly good = 47%	Work around the new East Lothian ASB Strategy has also suggested a separate "What makes a good neighbourhood" plan.
Percentage of citizens who 'Strongly Agree' or 'Tend to Agree' they can rely on a friend / neighbour to help # question changed in 2024 survey to ask to what extent, with options agree, neither/nor	East Lothian Residents Survey	91% (Feb 2017)	Maintain Levels	78%	Staying connected and wellbeing are key themes of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan plan to ensure people do not feel isolated
Percentage of citizens who feel safe	East Lothian Residents Survey	85% Very Safe = 51%;	Maintain Levels	72% A great deal = 23%	Community Safety and perceptions of neighbourhood has been highlighted as a

walking alone in their local area after dark # Question changed in 2024 survey – To what extent do you feel safe walking along after dark in your local area?		Safe = 34% (Feb 2017)		A fair amount = 49%	priority for the new Local Outcome Improvement Plan
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Indicator	Source	Baseline 2017/18	Target	Latest 2024/5 *2023	How are we working to address?
Percentage of children living in households with less than 60% of median net household income after housing costs	Scottish Government indicator	18.9% (Sept 2017)	National targets: Less than 18% by 2023. Less than 10% by 2030	22.1%	We are working across the partnership on reducing cost of the school day measures, developing support for children transitioning into adulthood to prevent them entering poverty, targeted work around income maximisation, employment for parents and employability skills.
Falls per 1,000 population aged over 65	Information Services Division (ISD)	19	Reduce	21 (figure for calendar year 2024)	Falls and Frailty is a priority in the new IJB/HSCP Strategic Plan.
Suicides registered in East Lothian 2014-2018 – this is a 5-year	ScotPHO	27.8 (2014-18 rolling average)	Reduce	32.1	Wellbeing has been identified as a key priority in the new Local Outcome Improvement Plan with a recognition of

standardised rolling average rate per 100,000 pop (5 year rolling averages include registered suicides from 2014-18, and is in line with National strategy for monitoring any future trends.)				(2020-2024 rolling average)	increased suicide rates and the need to work in preventative approaches to embed support and places to feel safe.
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Appendix 3 - Improvement Plan

In December 2024, the East Lothian CPP, agreed to work with the Improvement Service on a National Review of Community Planning Partnership Boards.

This process involved a self-assessment process with governance group members and an improvement plan session following the results.

The Partnership also agreed to a further self-assessment with community representatives and a follow up session due to be held in October 2025, which has been rearranged for January 2026.

The Improvement Plan, produced in March 2025, focussed on two areas; community engagement and elected member and community representation in leadership.

Improvement Area: Further develop the CPP's approaches to community engagement to ensure the views of the wider community influence the work of the partnership.	
Action	Progress
Learn from the participation and engagement strategy work that is currently taking place.	New Community Engagement Strategy scheduled for March 2026
Engage with communities to clarify what they would like to see in terms of engagement.	Work through the Engagement Report for Local Outcome Improvement Plan which detailed over 25,000 voices
Establish clear mechanisms for supporting communities to engage with the work/ decision making of the partnership.	Session with Community Partners in January 2026. Chairs from Area Partnership , Association of East Lothian Community Council and East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel invited to Board.
Establish reporting processes to share outputs from engagement with communities - Ensure these are easy to read such as bulletin.	Monthly update bulletins from East Lothian CPP Easy to read and accessible format reporting. Use of videos and graphics during co-production of new plan.

Improvement Area: Review how Elected Members and community representatives engage with the leadership of the partnership.	
Action	Progress
Consult with Council Administration on how they would like to see Elected Members engage with the partnership.	Leaders of three political partners now attend governance group
Follow up with community partnerships in relation to the community self-assessment checklist	Session with Community Partners in January 2026.
Consider which local community groups/ organisations could feed into the work of the partnership; this could be based on updated LOIP	Community Representatives added to Board Review to be undertaken by strategic groups of their membership

Appendix 4 – Prevention and Early Intervention

Establishing a shared language of East Lothian CPPs' approach to Prevention and Early Intervention is essential to reducing inequalities across community planning partners. This is a point which has been highlighted in Scotland's Population Health Framework ³;

“When people and organisations talk about prevention, they often use the same language to talk about different things. This is a barrier to investing in the full range of prevention needed to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Scotland.” (pg13)

The Public Sector Reform Strategy⁴ sets out a broad definition of prevention;

Prevention and Early Intervention approaches seek to identify and tackle the root and underlying causes that result in some communities having negative outcomes in their lives and health.

“means stopping (preventing) the establishment, or escalation, of problems that lead to negative outcomes for people.”

A joint statement on Prevention⁵ was recently released by a partnership of national and local third and community sector intermediary organisations including; [Edinburgh Community Health Forum](#), [Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland \(the ALLIANCE\)](#), [Scottish Community Development Centre](#) (including [CHEX](#)), and [Voluntary Health Scotland](#). They were in agreement that the language of the Public Health Framework, Public Health Scotland's 'public health approach to prevention' which provides a common language.

NHS Lothian Public Health has produced 'A Strengthened approach to prevention across the Lothian health and care system'⁶, which sets the benefits of preventative and defines 3 levels of approaches.

“Prevention is one of the most cost-effective interventions the NHS and wider health and care system can make in relation to improving population health and reducing inequalities. Maintaining a focus on prevention, early intervention and mitigation is critical in delivering long-term sustainability and reducing the future burden on the health and care system”.

³ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-population-health-framework/>

⁴ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-public-service-reform-strategy-delivering-scotland/>

⁵ <https://www.chex.org.uk/prevention-statement>

⁶ <https://services.nhslothian.scot/publichealth/wp-content/uploads/sites/105/2024/08/NHS-Lothian-Public-Health-and-Health-Policy-A-strengthened-approach-to-prevention-across-the-Lothian-health-and-care-system.pdf>

Appendix 5 - Wider Engagement Responses

It has been recognised that there were responses collated in the engagement activity which will not be addressed directly through the Local Outcome Improvement Plan. These responses will however, feed into other pieces of work through partnership agencies and plans.

Poverty	
What you raised	Where will take this be taken forward?
Parking	Parking Strategy
Work opportunities in Rural Settings	Local Economy Strategy
Growth required in Tourism	Local Economy Strategy
Identify local employer skills needs for staff	Local Economy Strategy
Investing in Small Businesses	Local Economy Strategy
Broadband and Wi-Fi Coverage	Scottish Government Objective and Local Economy Strategy/Economic Development (Billy Agnew)
Low cost and affordable Homes – 1 bed properties	Local Development Plan 2
Traveller and Gypsy Families requiring a stable site	Housing Strategy (informed by lived experience)
Adaptions to houses	Housing Strategy
Kinship Carers and house overcrowding	Children's Strategic Partnership /Housing Strategy
Community Learning/Adult Learning in community settings	CLD Partnership/East Lothian Works/LOIP
Recognising achievements outside of the school	School Improvement Plans
Health	
What you raised	Where will take this be taken forward?
Transition between children and adult services for mental health	HSCP Strategic Plan Children's Services Plan
Access to GPs/Acute Services	HSCP Strategic Plan
Transport to health appts	HSCP Strategic Plan

Community Care v Acute Care	HSCP Strategic Plan
Waiting times for appointments	HSCP Strategic Plan
Frailty and Falls	HSCP Strategic Plan
Parents need holistic, wrap around services - = emotional, financial, and social needs	Children's Strategic Partnership
Improved Beach and Green Space Access	Open Space Strategy, ELC Community Wellbeing Service and partners
Accessible active travel/pavements appropriate for wheelchairs/buggies	ELC Active Travel Team and Open Space Strategy
One stop shop for services	Asset review
Safety	
What you raised	Where will take this be taken forward?
Domestic Abuse/VAWG	East and Midlothian Public Protection Committee
Expansion of mediation and restorative justice work	Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan
Transport and moving around El – connections, road upkeep, signage, and traffic calming	Road Safety Advisory Group/ Local Development Plan/ Roads Team
Youth Homelessness	Youth Homelessness Team
Substance Misuse crossover	Children's Strategic Partnership
Waste Water/Sewage discharge issues	Scottish Water, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Environmental Health

Appendix 6 – Key Policies and Plans

6.1 Strategic Priorities of Community Planning Partners

In reviewing the strategic priorities of partners in line with the Section 15 of Community Empowerment Act ⁷ of Local Outcome Improvement Plan it highlights links with **Living Well, Keeping Safe and Money Matters**;

Agency	Strategic Priorities				
East Lothian Council	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.		
Edinburgh College	People	Place	Performance		
HSCP	Transformation and Change	Early intervention, prevention and self-management	Reducing Health Inequalities		
NHS	Citizens live longer, healthier lives, with better outcomes from the care and treatment we provide	We connect health and social care services seamlessly, wrapping around the citizen in their home	We improve performance across our system, with better experiences for citizens and those who work for and with us		
Police Scotland	Protecting Vulnerable People	Tackling Crime in a Digital Age	Working with Communities	Support for Operational Policing	

⁷ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2015/6/schedule/1>

Agency	Strategic Priorities				
Population Health Framework	Prevention	Access	Person-Led	Quality	
Queen Margaret University	Health and Rehabilitation	Sustainable Business (including hospitality, food and drink)	Culture and Creativity		
Scottish Enterprise	To create internationally competitive renewable energy industry in Scotland	To scale the impact of Scotland's innovation strengths in high growth industries for the future	To drive capital investment to deliver a step-change in Scotland's productivity		
Scottish Fire and Rescue	Safer communities through prevention	Safe and effective response	Investing in people	Improving Performance	Innovation and Investment
NatureScot	Secure the conservation and enhancement of nature and landscapes	Foster understanding and facilitate the enjoyment of nature and landscape	Advise on sustainable use and management of nature and landscape		
Scottish Sports Council (Sport Scotland)	Making an impact together	Making sport more accessible	Progressing to your level of sport	Contributing to an active Scotland	Celebrating the benefits of sport
Skills Development Scotland	Industry Focused Skills	Inclusive Talent Pool	Invested Employers	Intelligence-led skills system	Impactful Organisation
The Scottish Environment Protection Agency	Rigorous Stock Selection	Trend following and breakout	Risk Management	Technical Analysis Tools	
The Scottish Programme for Government	Growing the Economy	Eradicating Child Poverty	Tackling the Climate Emergency	High Quality and Sustainable Public Services	

Transport for Scotland	Reduces Inequalities	Takes Climate Action	Helps deliver inclusive economic growth	Improves our health and wellbeing	
VCEL	Strengthened local voluntary sector	Volunteering	Cross-sector working		
<i>Although Scottish Ambulance Service isn't mentioned in the legislation their strategic priorities are also key;</i>					
Scottish Ambulance Service	Saving more lives	Reduce inequalities	Improving Health and Wellbeing		
<i>'National Park Authority' is mentioned in the legislation: although it is not specifically relevant to East Lothian, their strategic priorities are also key;</i>					
National Park Authority	Working to protect and enhance their natural and cultural heritage	Promoting responsible access to nature	Supporting local economies and communities	Managing Millions of visitors annually	

6.2 Scotland's National Performance Framework

Scotland's National Performance Framework ⁸ (NPF) is Scotland's wellbeing framework and sets the vision for the kind of Scotland we all want to live in. Following the latest Statutory review of the National Outcomes, and the subsequent Scottish Parliament inquiry, the Scottish Government has committed to a period of reform to support the development and implementation of a more strategic and impactful framework for Scotland. Whilst work on NPF framework has commenced, it is expected to be launched in 2026 at the start of the new parliamentary session and new government.

The NPF highlights links with **Living Well, Keeping Safe and Money Matters**;

- Children and Young People - We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential.
- Communities – we live in communities which are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe
- Culture – We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely
- Economy - We have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy
- Education - We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society

⁸ <https://www.gov.scot/collections/national-performance-framework/?via=https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/>

Appendix 6 – Key Policies and Plans

- Environment - We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment
- Fair work and Business - We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone
- Health - We are healthy and active
- Human Rights - We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination
- International - We are open, connected and make a positive contribution internationally
- Poverty - We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally

6.3 Living Well Key Strategies

- [East Lothian Allotments and Local Food Growing Strategy](#) (in preparation)
- [East Lothian CPP Area Plans](#)
- [East Lothian CLD Partnership Plan](#)
- [East Lothian IJB Strategic Plan](#)
- East Lothian Physical Activity and Sport Strategy (to be published August 2026)
- [East Lothian Transport and Active Travel Strategy](#)
- [ELC East Lothian Open Space Strategy 2026](#)
- [HSCP Carers Strategy](#)
- [HSCP Dementia Strategy](#)
- [NHS Lothian A Strengthened Approach to Prevention](#)
- [Population Health Framework](#)
- [Public Health, Together We Can](#)
- [SG, National Performance Framework](#)

6.4 Keeping Safe Key Strategies

- [Curriculum for Excellence, Cyber Resilience, and Internet Safety Curriculum](#)
- East Lothian CPP ASB Policy (to be published Spring 2026)
- [East Lothian CPP Youth Vision](#)
- [East Lothian CLD Partnership Plan](#)
- [East Lothian Equally Safe Strategy](#)
- [East Lothian Children's Services Plan](#)
- [ELC Climate Change Strategy 2025-2030](#)
- ELC Coastal Change Adaptation Plan (to be published 2027)
- [ELC East Lothian Open Space Strategy 2026](#)
- ELC Education Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy (DRAFT)
- ELC Flood Risk Management Plan (to be refreshed 2027)
- [ELC Prevent Strategy](#)
- [ELC Resilience and Event Planning](#)
- [EMPPC Financial Harm Protocol](#)

Appendix 6 – Key Policies and Plans

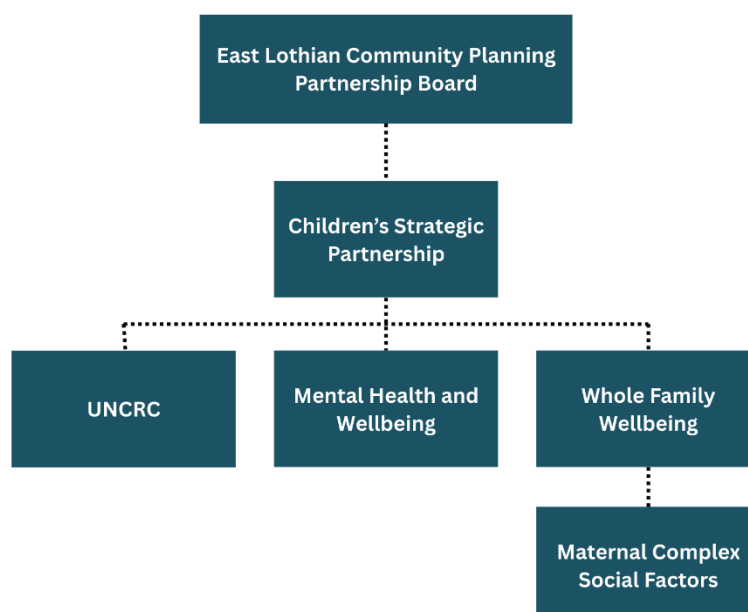
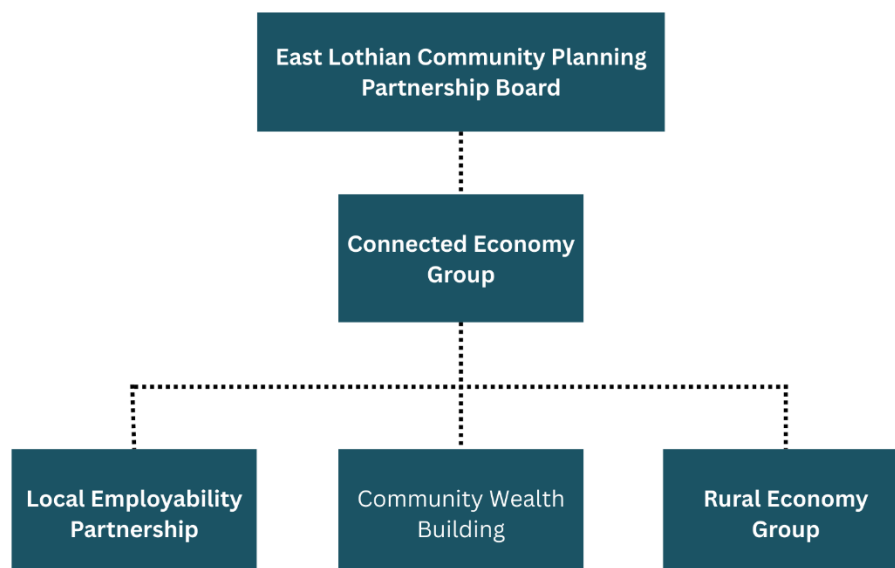
- [EMPCC Guidance on Financial Harm](#)
- [EMPPC Human Trafficking and Exploitation Guidance](#)
- [EMPPC Honor Based Abuse Guidance](#)
- [EMPCC Vulnerable Young Person's Protocol](#)
- [MELDAP Delivery Plan 2024-2027](#)
- [National Trauma Transformation Programme \(NTP\)](#)
- [Police Scotland Strategy](#)
- [SG, Equally Safe Education Priorities](#)
- [SG, Getting it Right for Every Child \(GIRFEC\)](#)
- [SG, Joint Drugs and Alcohol Strategy \(under review 2026\)](#)
- [SG, National Performance Framework](#)
- [SG, Race Equality Framework](#)
- [Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Strategy](#)
- [The Terrorism \(Prevention of Premises\) Act 2025, Martyn's Law](#)

6.5 Money Matters Key Strategies

- [Climate Change \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#)
- [Community Wealth Building Bill](#)
- [Construction Accord Transformation Plan](#)
- [Curriculum for Excellence, Financial Literacy](#)
- [SG, Tackling Child Poverty](#)
- [SG, Adult Learning Strategy](#)
- [ELC Local Housing Strategy 2024-2029](#)
- [East Lothian CLD Partnership Plan](#)
- [East Lothian Community Wealth Building Charter](#)
- [East Lothian CPP Youth Vision](#)
- [East Lothian Local Economy Strategy 2024 - 2034](#)
- [ELC Climate Change Strategy 2025-2030](#)
- [ELC Poverty Plan](#)
- [Housing \(Scotland\) Act 2025](#)
- [Local Development Plan 2](#)
- [National Tourism Strategy, Scotland Outlook 2030](#)
- [National Trauma Transformation Programme \(NTP\)](#)
- [No One Left Behind: Employability Strategic Plan 2024 to 2027](#)
- [SDS Inside Scotland's Tourism & Hospitality Sector](#)
- [SDS Regional Skills Assessment](#)
- [SDS Interactive Data Matrix](#)
- [SG, Climate Change: Scottish National Adaptation Plan 3 \(SNAP3\)](#)
- [SG, Fit for the Future – Developing a post sector learning system to fuel economic transformation](#)
- [SG, Getting it Right for Every Child \(GIRFEC\)](#)
- [SG, National Strategy for Economic Transformation](#)

- [SG, Reducing the cost of the school day](#)
- [SG, Strategic Early Learning and School Age Childcare Plan 22-26](#)
- [SG, Our commitment to Childminding: report, SG 2021](#)
- [The Housing Emergency Action Plan](#)
- [The Promise Scotland](#)

7.0 Governance Structures for Oversight and Reporting Groups



COMMITTEE:	East Lothian Council
MEETING DATE:	28 April 2026
BY:	Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy
REPORT TITLE:	Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme – Update on Delivery Strategy & Next Steps
REPORT STATUS:	Public

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the Delivery Strategy for the Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme (“the Scheme”), on the next steps and seek Council approval to progress.
- 1.2 To update Council on the implications of the recently confirmed cost-cap from COSLA and the Scottish Government for cycle 1 flood risk management schemes, including the Scheme; and
- 1.3 To provide an update on the Public Local Inquiry (“PLI”) being conducted by a Reporter under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Council:

- 2.1 Approves the Scheme’s Delivery Strategy and acknowledges that there continues to be a pathway to deliver the Scheme.
- 2.2 Notes that the project team will return to Council for approval prior to commencing any procurement of construction works.
- 2.3 Approves commencement of Stage 6 (Detailed Design) of the project, which will be advanced concurrently with Stage 5 (Statutory Approvals).
- 2.4 Notes the continuing uncertainty over the Scottish Government’s funding of the national flood risk management programme, and the proposed approach to mitigating this risk.
- 2.5 Notes the progress with the PLI.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The proposed Scheme has been in development since 2016 and remains in Stage 5 (which is known as “Statutory Approvals”).

A report was presented to Council in February 2026 to provide an update on progress with the PLI and the next steps for the advancement of the Scheme. Work has continued since then to consider emerging risks to the delivery of the Scheme and how best to mitigate those.

Overview of delivery constraints

- 3.2 The Scottish Government and COSLA have been reviewing cycle 1 of the national flood protection scheme programme since 2022. This has resulted in a number of constraints being applied to schemes on the programme. The constraints, as they apply to the Scheme, are summarised as follows:

- (a) The requirements of recommendation 2 were met when the proposed Scheme was notified before the deadline of 31 March 2024;
- (b) The requirements of recommendation 3 (to have a signed construction contract in place by 31 March 2026) no longer apply to the Scheme because it is now subject to a PLI. Consequently, the requirements of recommendations 8 apply instead;
- (c) Recommendation 8 states that *“There is justification for an exemption to recommendation 3 under the limited circumstances of a need for a public local inquiry or local hearing”*. The extension to the 31 March 2026 deadline is equivalent to the time from the point the Council notified the Scottish Ministers of the preliminary decision, until the date that a final decision is taken by the Scottish Ministers; and
- (d) A cap on how much funding will be provided to some schemes on the cycle 1 programme has now been confirmed.

Update on recommendation 8 delivery constraint

- 3.3 In February 2026 it was reported to Council that the deadline associated with recommendation 8 will depend upon the duration of the PLI. Whilst this is unknown, it was originally estimated that, based on experience of similar projects, the Scheme’s PLI could last approximately 24 months. On that basis, the requirements of recommendation 8 would require the Council to have a signed construction contract in place by October 2029. To obtain the signed contract, the Detailed Design (which is undertaken during Project Stage 6 – “Detailed Design”) and the construction procurement exercise (which is undertaken during Project Stage 7 – “Construction Procurement”) would have to be completed first.

- 3.4 In section 3.6 of this report it is highlighted that it is now understood that the PLI may be around 14 months with an expected outcome in December 2026. This is a substantially shorter period than the previously assumed 24 months. The logic of this change in estimated date is detailed later in this report.
- 3.5 Irrespective of the duration of the PLI, the impact of recommendation 8 means that it is essential to commence the Detailed Design earlier than previously programmed and as soon as reasonably possible. If the requirements of recommendation 8 are not met, then the Scheme will be removed from cycle 1 of the national flood protection scheme programme and funding will be withdrawn.
- 3.6 Following an update by the Planning and Environmental Appeals Division (DPEA) to East Lothian Council on 13 February 2026 the project team have revised the expected duration of the PLI from 24 months to 14 months, notwithstanding the actual duration remains unknown and difficult to estimate. The project team will monitor the programme as the PLI progresses and continue to review the impact of this revised estimate. The project team will continue to mitigate these risks to ensure that the Scheme can continue to meet recommendation 8, and all other external constraints. Updates will continue to be provided and as appropriate further authority will be sought from Council.

Update on funding cap delivery constraint

- 3.7 In February 2026 it was reported to Council that, as part of the Scottish Government and COSLA's review of the national flood protection scheme programme, a cap on total grant funding was being proposed. The project team committed to provide further updates to Council on this constraint once clarity emerged. The following is therefore a summary of what is known:
- (a) A new financial cap is introduced to those projects within cycle 1 of the national flood protection scheme programme;
 - (b) The cap is only to be applied to flood protection schemes that do not have their construction works contracts signed as of the 31 March 2026. Such flood protection schemes would have to be exempt from recommendation 3 due to recommendation 8 applying and thus be involved in either a Local Hearing or a Public Local Inquiry. Only three flood protection schemes fall into this category: Musselburgh, Newton Stewart and South Kinross;
 - (c) The cap for Musselburgh will be £35.6M, with the Scottish Government providing 80% grant funding and the Council funding the remaining 20%;
 - (d) This capped amount is far below the estimated cost of the notified Scheme, which was £106M;

- (e) The proposal included an option to submit a business case to seek further funding; however, no details of this process have yet been provided. The project team would seek guidance and clarity from Council on the content and approval of the final business case before submission to the Scottish Government.
- (f) It is our intent to address this risk by setting out three scenarios:
1. Plan A would be to achieve full scheme delivery at circa £106M through a business case. The team though believe that this is unlikely given funding pressure.
 2. Plan B (the likely approach) would be to submit a business case (subject to review and approval from Council) to deliver the areas of greatest and immediate risk. This would cover the upper catchment interventions including the reservoir modifications on the South Esk, the debris management by Whitecraig, and the new physical defences along the river corridor at a total cost of circa £70M. The construction would be undertaken in phases, within the constraints of available funding.
 3. Plan C would be to deliver the scheme in smaller packages relative to the cap affordability and future grant funding opportunity. This generates significant risk though in that it would not cover immediate and present risk.
- (g) It is understood that if a flood protection scheme is not completed within cycle 1 (where the capped grant funding applies), and takes a phased construction approach, then those future construction phases may be eligible for future national grant funding flood protection scheme programmes.

Update on Scheme Programme

- 3.8 The Scheme's programme sets out the activities required to develop the Scheme, the duration of those activities, and the interdependence between them. The programme is a live document which is subject to legal processes and external factors which may impose constraints on how the Scheme is delivered.
- 3.9 The programme is updated regularly by the project team to reflect the latest available information. Critical changes to programme are regularly reported to Project Board. An updated programme on the next steps has been provided in Appendix A to present the likely activities between now and the recommendation 8 deadline.
- 3.10 The approach to constructing the Scheme has yet to be finalised and is subject to the numerous constraints discussed earlier in this report. A Scheme Delivery Strategy has been developed to provide a framework for planning the next stages of the project. Further work is still required to fully identify and assess different options for phased construction if

that becomes necessary to comply with funding constraints. As a minimum, this work is expected to continue through the rest of 2026.

Development of the Scheme Delivery Strategy

- 3.11 The Scheme's Delivery Strategy is provided as Appendix B. This is a live document that is subject to change as new information becomes available. It was programmed to be developed during Stage 6 but has been accelerated so that it can inform the decision to commence Stage 6 early.
- 3.12 The purpose of the Delivery Strategy is to consider programme, resources, and risks, and to develop an approach that gives the project the best chance of being delivered successfully.
- 3.13 At the outset of the project in 2017, it was anticipated that the Delivery Strategy would comprise several individual plans or strategies, as follows:
 - (a) The approach to final estimation of cost and time;
 - (b) The approach to construction delivery (including phased construction);
 - (c) The approach to construction procurement;
 - (d) The approach to land access and compensation;
 - (e) The approach to risk management (and definition of the contingency pot as part of the overall budget); and
 - (f) The approach to operation and maintenance of the Scheme once constructed.

Commencement of the Detailed Design

- 3.14 The Scheme is being advanced through the PRINCE2 Project Management System in nine discrete stages. Whilst each stage has been programmed to be delivered sequentially, PRINCE2 does not preclude the advancement of stages concurrently.
- 3.15 Stage 6 is the next stage for the project and consists of the following major activities:
 - (a) Development of the detailed design;
 - (b) Additional Surveys to support the detailed design, which may include further ground investigations, structural surveys, topographic surveys, archaeological surveys and public utilities surveys;
 - (c) Assessment of the need for diversion of public utilities affected by the Scheme;

- (d) Acquisition of consents and licences required to construct the Scheme;
 - (e) Consultation with relevant regulatory organisations, stakeholders and landowners on the detailed design;
 - (f) Development of the strategy for procuring the construction of the Scheme;
 - (g) Development of the Operational and Control Processes and Systems for the Scheme;
 - (h) Update to the Scheme Cost Estimates based on the emerging detailed design; and
 - (i) Preparation of the Stage 7 plan.
- 3.16 Under the Scheme's project governance, the Project Board is responsible for instructing the project team to commence a new stage of the project. Prior to issuing such an instruction, the Project Board sought approval from Cabinet in January 2020 to commence Stage 4, and from full Council in January 2024 to commence Stage 5.
- 3.17 The Project Board is, therefore, now seeking approval from Council to instruct the commencement of Stage 6. Whilst Stage 5 of the project is not yet complete, it is necessary to commence the detailed design early to mitigate the risk posed by the requirements of recommendation 8 as set out section 3.5 of this report. If approval is given by Council to commence Stage 6, the detailed design would begin around August 2026, which is the date provided by the Design Consultant in their programme and which allows for pulling together the necessary resources.
- 3.18 While the Stage 6 plan has yet to be finalised, it is summarised as follows:
- (a) The estimated duration of Stage 6 is approximately 24 months;
 - (b) The estimate cost of Stage 6 is approximately £6 million (which is for more than just the design work and includes all of the activities noted in Section 3.15 above);
 - (c) Within about 6 months of the start of the Detailed Design, the Delivery Strategy's approach to construction procurement and construction phasing will need to be finalised. This is necessary to avoid abortive work and ensure that construction procurement can commence in sufficient time to achieve the requirements of recommendation 8;
 - (d) Starting the detailed design early has minimal impact on the number of resources required to carry it out. Notwithstanding this, there will be less resiliency within the project team because key Council officers will be involved in both the PLI and the detailed design at the

same time. This resource implication is detailed in section 5.2 of this report.

- (e) The project team will prepare a Consultation Plan for the Detailed Design for review and approval by Project Board. The approach to consultation for the Detailed Design will be different from that undertaken for the Outline Design. The consultation will be tailored to provide information to Regulatory Organisations, Key Stakeholders and relevant Landowners / Occupiers. The consultation will not be seeking feedback on design decisions as the Detailed Design must be consistent with the proposed Scheme as notified in March 2024, as well as with the requirement of other consents and licences that are required to deliver the Scheme.
- (f) The project team will continue to seek to deliver the 54 proposed changes to the proposed Scheme as instructed by Council in September 2025.

Preparation for the PLI

- 3.19 It has been confirmed that Paul Cackette CBE, LL.B (Hons), Dip LP, NP has been appointed to conduct the PLI and, thereafter, to report to the Scottish Ministers. A copy of the letter of appointment is provided in Appendix C.
- 3.20 The letter of appointment states that: *“The completed report to the Scottish Ministers should be submitted to the Head of Delivery [of the Scottish Government’s Department for Planning and Environmental Appeals (the “DPEA”)], in final form and ready for issue by 1 December 2026 to allow the target date of 4 December 2026 to be met.”* This presents the first indication of timescales for the PLI and may suggest a shorter duration than the project team had previously assumed.
- 3.21 Officers will continue to support and engage through the PLI, but if the final PLI report is submitted to the Scottish Ministers in December 2026, then the final decision may be taken as early as January 2027, some 9 months sooner than assumed. Council will continue to be kept fully updated on the outcome of this statutory process.
- 3.22 The Scottish Government’s funding eligibility criteria is directly linked to the date on which the Scottish Ministers take a final decision on the Scheme. To remain eligible for funding, the Council must have a signed construction contract in place by a specific date, equivalent to 31 March 2026 plus an extension equal to the time lost as a result of the PLI. If a final decision on the Scheme is taken in December 2026, the deadline for a signed construction contract will be February 2028. The implications of this are discussed later in this report.

- 3.23 Anderson Strathern, who are now leading the PLI process on behalf of East Lothian Council, have engaged the services of James Findlay King's Counsel to represent the Council.
- 3.24 The Reporter issued a Letter of Notice of the PLI which is dated 13 March 2026, and which is provided in Appendix D.
- 3.25 The Letter of Notice invites both Relevant Objectors and those who submitted a Representation on the EIA to Opt-In to the formal PLI processes. The deadline for responding to the Reporter is 22 May 2026.

Publication of Objections by DPEA

- 3.26 In October 2025, the council notified the Scottish Ministers of the preliminary decision on the Scheme and, in accordance with the Act, provided copies of the Scheme documents and all valid objections to the Scottish Government.
- 3.27 In February 2026, the DPEA published all objections to the Scheme on their website at the following location:
<https://www.dpea.scotland.gov.uk/CaseDetails.aspx?ID=128111>.
- 3.28 Following the DPEA's publication of these documents, a number of individual objectors complained to Council and a review was undertaken. The review determined that responsibility for the publication did not sit with council. Complaints were also made to the Scottish Government, and all relevant material was subsequently taken offline pending an urgent internal review. A copy of an email from the DPEA to 'DPEA Contacts' on this matter is provided in Appendix E.
- 3.29 Whilst the outcome of the review is not yet known, the letter indicates that it is appropriate for the names and addresses of relevant objectors to be published, but that some non-permissible personal data was also inadvertently released.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Scheme is an important element of the Council's approach to resilience and a means of adapting Musselburgh to the effects of climate change. The Scheme represents one of the largest flood protection schemes in Scotland, with in the order of 3,200 properties (which includes 2,600 residential properties, 350 businesses, and significant key infrastructure) being protected, and would be a major contributor to adapting to the effects of climate change including communities potentially affected in the event of a flood and the local and national economies including key strategic infrastructure: e.g. Scottish Water Assets; other public utility assets; the A1 Trunk Road; the Scottish Power Ash Lagoons etc.

- 4.2 The Scheme supports the East Lothian Council Plan 2022-2027 and the Council's Climate Change Strategy 2025-2030.
- 4.3 Aligning with the principle of Safeguarding our Future and Strategic Outcomes, under the Travel, Connectivity and Infrastructure section, the Scheme clearly delivers on the need to ensure that communities are protected from the impact of floods.

5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial:

- 5.1.1 The financial implications of the project / Scheme will be finalised in the future. This will be after approval of proposed Scheme design, and after the procurement exercise for the main works contract (or phased contracts – to be confirmed), in accordance with the processes associated with flood protection schemes advanced under the Scottish Government's cycle 1 flood protection scheme programme and its funding eligibility criteria. Costs associated with the scheme will be brought back to Council for approval.
- 5.1.2 Officers have been progressing with the design of the Scheme aligned to national legislation and national funding criteria. It is anticipated that the cost of this Scheme, if approved, will be met from a combination of:
 - a) The Scheme remains a project identified within cycle 1 of the national flood protection scheme programme, and as such aligned to the national funding criteria which define that the Scottish Government will provide 80% of the eligible cost of the Scheme (within the recently revised COSLA recommendations).
 - b) The balance of funding will be met from a combination of capital funding provided by the council and maximising external funding streams to support the delivery of multiple benefits identified within the Scheme.
 - c) It is highlighted that, in accordance with the Scheme's PRINCE2 Project Management System, that at any point in the delivery of the project the Council is only liable for the costs authorised within the project stage that is open.
- 5.1.3 Further to the report to Council in February outlining the emerging cost cap, and now the confirmation that the cap is in place this scheme now

has a capped cost of £35.6M in cycle 1. At this point in time, it is too early to confirm the specific impact on the Scheme. The development of the detailed design and the delivery strategy are critical activities to feed into reporting back in full to Council on what parts of the Scheme may be delivered within this available budget of £35.6M.

The Stage 6 Detailed Design works costs will be covered 80% by Scottish Government funding and the remaining 20% being covered by the Council.

- 5.1.4 It is expected that there will be additional costs associated with the extension to the Scheme's Project Programme due to the assumed 14 additional months to complete the PLI: in particular, this references the cost of inflation to the overall Scheme costs over those 14 months. This cost has not yet been determined, and it is intended that this matter will be reviewed in full when the Scheme Costs are next revised in full. Equally, given the agreed cost cap, it is anticipated that any phased approach is likely to uplift the overall cost of the scheme and impact upon the capital planning used thus far to cover the Council's 20%.

5.2 Human Resources:

- 5.2.1 The PLI is likely to have implications for the number of Council personnel and its consultants required to engage with the process, and the duration over which this activity would take place. The personnel that may be involved in the PLI are:

- (a) The Council's Service Manager – Governance;
- (b) The King's Counsel;
- (c) Representation from Anderson Strathern;
- (d) The Council's Head of Infrastructure;
- (e) The Scheme's Project Executive;
- (f) The Council Team Manager – Structures & Flooding;
- (g) The Scheme's project management team Senior Project Manager from Turner & Townsend / CPE Consultancy;
- (f) The Scheme's Project Delivery Manager from Jacobs;
- (g) Various subject matter experts from Jacobs;
- (h) Potentially, various council officers to support subject matter;

- (i) Potentially, representation from external independent witnesses engaged to support the council's positions.

5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT):

- 5.3.1 The PLI will extend the duration of the Scheme's approval under the Act. This process is legal in nature and being led by the Council's Legal Services. Until these processes are concluded it is considered that the Scheme will continue to require significant commitment from legal services and also remain exposed to significant legal risks.

5.4 Risks:

- 5.4.1 A funding review of Cycle 1 of the National Flood Protection Scheme Programme has been undertaken jointly by COSLA and the Scottish Government. Following this review, additional constraints for funding eligibility have been imposed. The next deadline that is relevant to this proposed Scheme is that it must have its construction works contract in place, as defined by Recommendation 8. Through the report to Council in February 2026 we identified that this must happen by around October 2029. As detailed elsewhere in this report, it is now understood that the PLI may conclude at an earlier date therefore this requirement may now have to be complete by February 2028. This risk and the actions being taken to mitigate it are currently being explored – the new logic associated with dates only emerged in March 2026 as detailed elsewhere in this report.
- 5.4.2 National discussions remain ongoing given the challenging fiscal landscape, and in particular the level of national funding to support the growing costs of progressing wider flood protection schemes within national legislation. These discussions include the available funding, and established criteria to support Cycle 1 of the National Flood Protection Scheme Programme. Officers have been proactively engaged in these national discussions through both COSLA and the Scottish Government, and clearly these recent changes to national funding criteria will have a significant impact on the affordability of the overall proposed Scheme and how it is delivered. This risk and the actions being taken to mitigate it are detailed in full elsewhere in this report.
- 5.4.3 More widely, the current complex legislative process to progress flood protection schemes may place further costs and delays on the proposed Scheme and will impact on availability of both national and council funding, including funding to support the delivery of multiple benefits. As the PLI and detailed design progress, it will be important that Members

are updated on the associated funding and affordability of the proposed Scheme.

The length of the PLI is unknown and as such it is necessary to accelerate the detailed design in order to meet the COSLA requirements.

5.4.4 The early commencement of the detailed design, and thereby the commencement of Stage 6 within the newly imposed financial cap of £35.6M in cycle 1, presents new risks to the council which are detailed in full elsewhere in this report. This approach is, however, being taken to mitigate and avoid even bigger risks to the Council as noted below:

- (a) That if the detailed design is not started early that the Scheme will not be able to meet the requirements of Recommendation 8 and thus will be removed as a flood protection scheme on the national cycle 1 flood protection scheme programme.

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 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:

☐

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

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Storage/collection of personal data	N/A
Other	N/A

The project team is of the opinion that the IAA published in September 2025 remains valid as the council reports in the interim have been produced only with updates and no changes to the outline designs presented previously. It is anticipated that a refreshed IAA will be provided following the detailed design works commencing in Q3 of 2026.

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

7 APPENDICES

- 7.1 Appendix A – Programme
- 7.2 Appendix B – Delivery Strategy
- 7.3 Appendix C – Letter of appointment of Reporter
- 7.4 Appendix D – Letter re Notice of PLI
- 7.5 Appendix E – DPEA email

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Report to Cabinet in May 2016 – approval of the Local Flood Risk Management Plan (Forth Estuary) which included a proposed flood protection scheme for Musselburgh.
- 8.2 Report to Cabinet in January 2020 – approval of the 'Preferred Scheme' concept to be advanced to an Outline Design.
- 8.3 Report to Council in August 2022 – approval of inclusion of the Ash Lagoons Seawall within the Scheme, and update to hydraulic model C.
- 8.4 Report to Council in October 2022 – approval of the project's assessment of Musselburgh's flood risk, and timeline for advancing the outline design.
- 8.5 Motion to Council in August 2023 – Note of Progress and Request for Information.

- 8.6 Report to Council in October 2023 – approval to advance Natural Flood Management (NFM) in the River Esk catchment independently of the Scheme and as part of the future Local Flood Risk Management Plan (LFRMP).
- 8.7 Appendices A-F, available in the Members' Library, January 2024 Bulletin, Ref: 08/24 - Agendas, reports and minutes | East Lothian Council.
- 8.8 Report to Council January 2024 – approval of Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme – Presentation of the Outline Design.
- 8.9 Members Library Report in September 2025 – Update on the Coastal Change Adaptation Process (CCAP).
- 8.10 Members Library Report in September 2025 – Update on the Esk Lothian Catchment Partnership (LECP).
- 8.11 Report to Council September 2025 – Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme – Preliminary Decision on Proposed Scheme.
- 8.12 Report to Council February 2026 – Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme – Update on PLI & Next Steps

9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

Report Author(s)

Name	Alan Stubbs
Designation	Project Executive – Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme
Tel/Email	musselburghfps@eastlothian.gov.uk
Date	

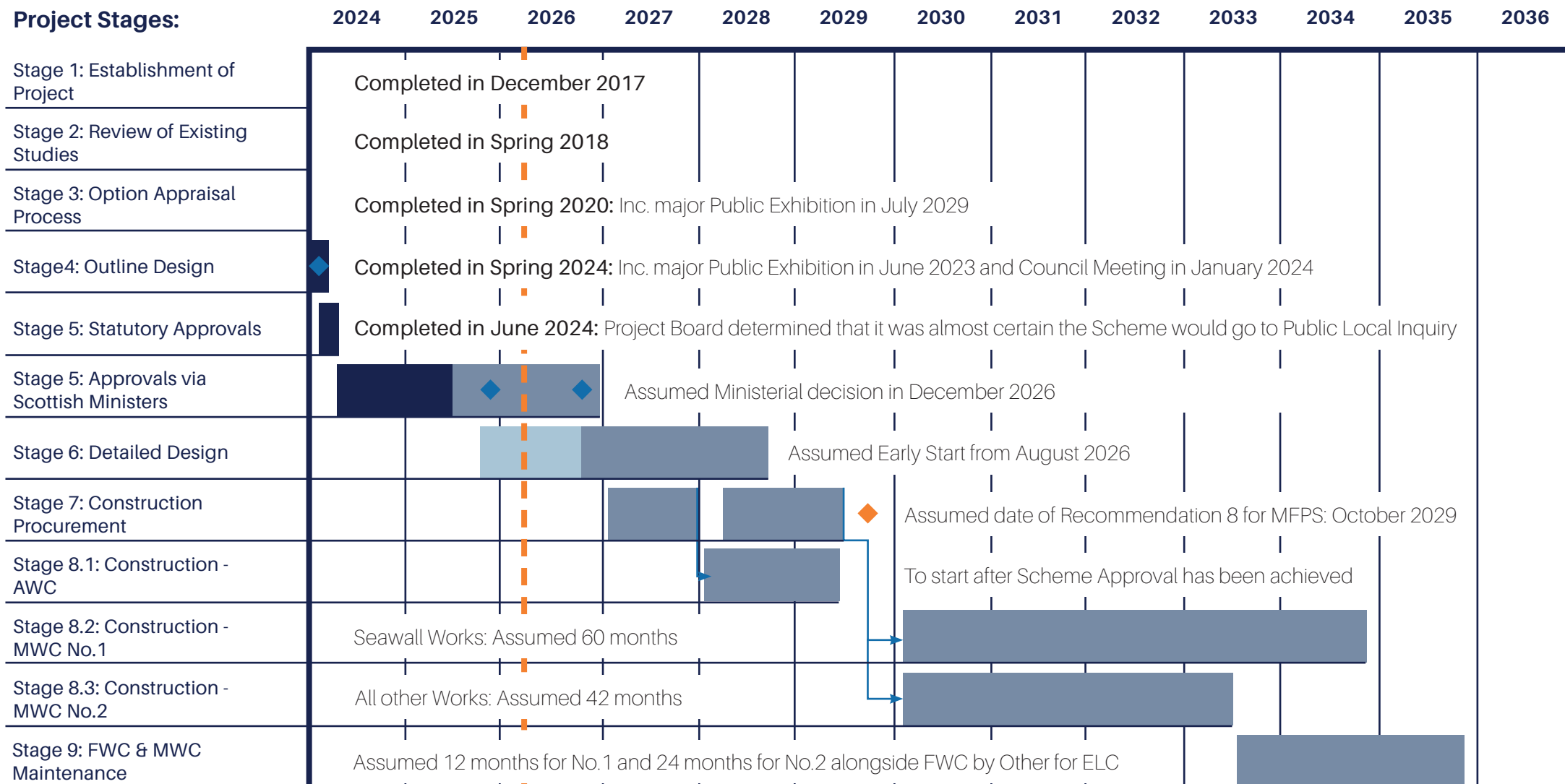
Head of Service Approval

Name	Tom Reid
Designation	Head of Infrastructure
Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed	Confirmed
Approval Date	15 April 2026

Schematic Programme by Project Stage

Revisions Date: 13/03/2026

Schematic Scheme Programme - By PRINCE2 Stage



Revisions Date: 09/04/2026

Constraints deriving from the review of Cycle 1 of the National Flood Protection Programme

Recommendation 8	Funding Cap	Business Case	Phased Construction
This imposes a deadline on when the construction contract must be signed. The deadline depends upon the duration of the PLI, which is not known yet, but may be as early as February 2028.	This imposes a limit on how much funding the Scottish Government will provide for the Scheme. The Scheme's cap is £35.6M based on 80% from the Scottish Government and 20% from East Lothian Council.	The COSLA report indicates that, in exceptional circumstances, it may be possible to submit a Business Case for additional funding from the Scottish Government in excess of the funding cap.	The COSLA report indicates that phases of construction in excess of the funding cap could be put forward for consideration in subsequent funding cycles.

Project Delivery Strategy

	Plan A	Plan B	Plan C
Cycle 1	Submit a Business Case to the Scottish Government for funding the entire Scheme (estimated at £106M) within Cycle 1.	Submit a Business Case to the Scottish Government for funding the parts of the Scheme on the River Esk corridor (estimated at £70M) within Cycle 1.	Deliver Phase 1 of the Scheme within the funding cap of £35.6M. Further work is required to determine which parts of the Scheme can be delivered within this cap.
Beyond Cycle 1 (e.g. 2, 3)	Funding to be sought through future funding cycles to deliver the remaining phases of the Scheme		

Detailed Design

Detailed Design must be carried out before a construction contract can be procured. Designing the whole of the Scheme within Cycle 1 funding gives East Lothian Council greatest flexibility if the Scheme is to be constructed in phases and puts the council in a strong position when seeking funding for future construction phases as part of subsequent funding cycles.

Appendix C

MUSSELBURGH FLOOD PROTECTION SCHEME at MUSSELBURGH FLOOD PROTECTION SCHEME MUSSELBURGH EH21 7BL

Our ref: FPS-210-1

Planning Authority ref: CG/MFPS/251024

LETTER OF APPOINTMENT

Paul Cackette CBE, LL.B (Hons), Dip LP, NP you are appointed to report to the Scottish Ministers, in accordance with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management (S) Act 2009 and the Regulations made under that Act (or having the same effect). You are not being engaged as an employee and your appointment does not attract any statutory protection available to employees.

The completed report to the Scottish Ministers should be submitted to the Head of Delivery, in final form and ready for issue by 1 December 2026 to allow the target date of 4 December 2026 to be met. Any other date must be agreed with them. You will be paid for your work on the case according to the schedule of fees. You will also be reimbursed for appropriate travel and subsistence expenses providing these are supported by receipts as necessary. The Schedule which forms part of this letter of appointment details terms and conditions relevant to your appointment and should be read prior to accepting this appointment

This appointment is subject to any recall of jurisdiction or the appointment of another person to determine the appeal. In either case you will be notified.

Please retain a copy of this appointment for your records. If you are not able to accept this appointment, it would be helpful to us if you could explain why at your earliest opportunity.

Martyn Connolly MCMI

Head of Delivery

Enc : Schedule to Letter of Appointment

Telephone: 0131 244 6927
E-mail: hazel.bailey@gov.scot

East Lothian Council
Sent By E-mail

Our ref: FPS-210-1
Planning Authority ref: CG/MFPS/251024

13 March 2026

Dear To whom it may concern

FLOOD PREVENTION SCHEME: MUSSELBURGH FLOOD PROTECTION SCHEME MUSSELBURGH EH21 7BL

I am writing to you with reference to the proposed Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme promoted by East Lothian Council. This letter is addressed to the Council and to the objectors to the Scheme as notified to me.

The Scheme proceeds under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 and the Flood Risk Management (Flood Protection Schemes, Potentially Vulnerable Areas and Local Plan Districts) (Scotland) Regulations 2010. Under paragraphs 5(5) and 6(2) of schedule 2 to that Act, Scottish Ministers have decided themselves (rather than the Council) to determine the matter of whether the Scheme should be confirmed or refused (including, if confirmed, whether or not with modifications).

A Reporter, Mr Paul Cackette CBE, LLB (Hons) Dip LP NP, has been appointed to carry out the examination and hold a Public Local Inquiry (or other form of oral procedure, on the basis as set out below) with respect to the objections to the Scheme. He will then report his findings and recommendations to Scottish Ministers to inform that determination by them.

I am assisting the Reporter with the necessary administrative arrangements in relation to the Scheme. All communications relating to the examination of the Scheme should be sent to me, using my email (or postal) address.

Contact details

For any recipient who is receiving this letter by post, I would be grateful if you could advise me of an email address for communication with you, if possible. This will speed up communication on relevant matters relating to your interest.

Any changes in email addresses (or changes in contact details or arrangements/preferences for contact) by any party in the course of the examination should be advised to me.

If you have, or intend to seek, legal or other advice in this process, please let me know and pass this letter to those advisors without delay.

If you are an objector but no longer wish to maintain your objection (or at any time in this examination wish to withdraw that objection), please let me know as soon as you are able. I can then update my records to ensure that your position (as no longer maintaining an outstanding objection, to be considered by the Reporter) is accurately recorded. Unless I hear to that effect, the Reporter will proceed on the basis that you wish to maintain your objection.

Scottish Government Guidance on examinations into Flood Prevention Schemes

The intention of the Reporter is that the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 Local Authority Functions under Part 4 – Guidance will apply, along with the above Act and Regulations. A link to that [guidance](#) is attached. Your attention is drawn to the terms of that Guidance, to assist your understanding of the process in the examination to be held. See in particular paragraph 2.22 in respect of the examination and the procedure to follow after this examination. See also the flow chart at Appendix A of that Guidance on the legal process.

The Guidance explains the position in respect of compensation in consequence of the Scheme. But matters of compensation are not in themselves within the remit of the Reporter in this examination of objections. Assessment of entitlement to (and amounts of) compensation are considered in a separate type of process, as explained in the Guidance.

Public Local Inquiry

As you may be aware, the decision of Scottish Ministers as above to determine the matters arising means that the formal process to be applied by the Reporter in this examination is that of a Public Local Inquiry (known as a PLI).

However, the position of the Reporter on the procedure to adopt to ensure a full, detailed and rigorous examination is for him to decide (provided it meets the requirement at paragraph 7(2) of Schedule 2 to the 2009 Act). He wishes me to stress to all participants that the intention is to make the process as informal and relaxed as possible with no undue formality of process. Full opportunities for participation will be given (where desired) with no obligation to instruct legal or other representatives. All parties will be treated equally and the Reporter will use best endeavours to treat all parties fairly and to proceed as efficiently as possible.

Moreover, the Reporter is **not** at this stage minded to proceed with full formal PLI arrangements but that his intention is to hold matters on the basis of a more informal hearing, where appropriate. That process would apply if the examination were being done by East Lothian Council themselves. He is aware that certain matters in dispute are factual in nature and may need a more formal (PLI style) process to make findings where factual matters remain disputed. But he wishes to restrict the use of the more formal PLI process (as is explained in the Guidance) as far as possible.

Accordingly, Annex G of the Guidance referred to above should be considered by participants. This sets out procedures to be observed if the applicable process is to be a hearing and in pre-hearing preparation. These procedures are proposed to be applied. If you disagree to the use of the procedures at Annex G (where doing so is possible), please let me know within 14 days, explaining why. Due to the complexity of the matters and the likely partial need for a full PLI, the 12 week target in Annex G will not apply (see below for more on timescales).

Practicalities of a Hearing/PLI (including timings)

Arrangements in more detail for the Hearing/PLI will follow, including as to location, duration and dates.

Due to the likely numbers of opted-in objectors (see below on opting in), this Hearing/PLI is likely to be held In Person (rather than virtually) and, for reasons of cost and efficiency, the Reporter hopes this to be at an East Lothian Council building (in or around Musselburgh if possible). If you have any objection to such a location (as a council building), please let me know within 4 weeks, explaining why. Doing so is though envisaged in the Guidance. The Reporter would be grateful if the Council could consider options for the location (as suitable for this purpose) and advise me.

While the Reporter would wish to avoid holding the Hearing/PLI over the Summer months of July to mid-August or other holiday periods (and will endeavour to hold this on dates convenient to most), he cannot guarantee that the Hearing/PLI will be on dates convenient to you.

At present, he aims to hold the Hearing/PLI between mid September and end October 2026. The duration is to be decided. The scheduling or timetabling of the Hearing/PLI will be decided once the topics (as below) are determined, in accordance with an Agenda to be provided in due course and once the balance between a Hearing and a full PLI can be more clearly anticipated. The aim is to minimise inconvenience for objectors so that they only need attend at times when specific issues of interest to them arise.

The Hearing/PLI may be webcast (if that can be facilitated) and participation will be treated as consent for data protection and GDPR purposes (on which see more below). Generally the public seating areas will not be directly filmed. However by entering the meeting venue and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the use and storage of those images and sound recordings and any information pertaining to you contained in them for webcasting and training purposes, for the purpose of keeping historical records and making those records available to the public.

It should be noted that this is a public Hearing/PLI at which anyone can attend but is not a public meeting and so there will be not necessarily be a right or opportunity to address the Hearing/PLI for non-participants (subject to the discretion of the Reporter). I am though exploring with the Community Council whether (and how) a separate, and wider, community engagement meeting before the Reporter can be arranged.

Pre Inquiry meeting

On the basis of a preliminary consideration, the Reporter at this stage is not intending to hold a pre-inquiry meeting in relation to the matters before him. I will let you know if this changes.

Topics for examination and Statements of Case

The Reporter has noted the [summary of the topics or headings of objection](#) (along with frequency of occurrence) as is lodged with him. A copy of that is attached to this letter as addressed in more detail in the attached [Report](#). Decisions on clustering topics to maximise efficiency of examination will be made later. Meantime, the objectors are asked to consider that summary and let me know, within 14 days, if their objection(s) are not covered by any of the general headings in that summary.

Based on that summary, the Council are requested, within 4 weeks of today's date, to submit to the Reporter a Statement of Case, setting out the justification being made by them for the Scheme, confirming the compliance with all notification and notice requirements under the 2009 Act and the above Regulations and their responses to the objections (and other representations) received. If more time is needed, please let me know.

That Statement should include (a) confirmation that the Scheme to be examined now contains the 54 amendments stated as made in response to consultation (b) a note of whether the Council seek confirmation with any further modifications and (c) confirmation that all received objections were validly made on time or, where late, are nevertheless accepted as valid objections (as appears, from the Committee report of 30 September 2025, to be the case).

Separately the Reporter requests that the Council provide a note that confirms which objectors (if any) are proceeding under regulation 12(2) of the above Regulations (objectors with an interest in any land on which the scheme operations are to be carried out or which may be affected by them or by any alteration in the flow of water caused by them) and whether the requirements of that provision are met.

The Reporter would in general be content if objectors wish to rely on their letters or emails of objection as lodged as being their statement of reasons for objecting (in terms of regulation 12(1) of the above Regulations) but equally would be happy to receive a further statement of case from any objector, in response to the Statement of the Council. Objectors will be advised as and when the Council Statement is submitted and will have 4 weeks from being so advised to submit a statement in response (if desired).

Opt in to participation in the examination

Due to the large number of objections across a range of themes, the Reporter is proceeding by way of arrangements for objectors to opt in to participation in the oral examination. I would stress though that full consideration will be given to objections regardless of whether objectors opt in or not. This is an arrangement to simplify the examination and reduce risks of duplication.

You should opt in to the examination if you wish to attend the public Hearing/PLI as a participant (see above) or if you wish to make further written representations in support of your objections or submit any documents in support (or any or all of these).

To opt in to the procedure, please reply to me **within 10 weeks of the date of this letter**, confirming to that effect. It is important that you do so, if you wish to continue to participate in this matter.

If you do not opt in, the Reporter will treat you as relying on your existing objection alone and I will not be in touch further in relation to the examination (nor will you be advised in detail of arrangements for the public Hearing/PLI). You would of course still be entitled to attend the Hearing/PLI, as a public hearing, though not participate.

Topics for consideration at the Hearing/PLI

As above, decisions on the content and scheduling of the Hearing/PLI will be made later in the process. The Reporter will invite views of parties to ensure the efficient use of time (in particular for objectors). He intends to prepare a clear Agenda of issues for discussion,

informed by the views of participants. Once the opt in timings are passed, the shape of the oral procedure should become clearer.

He would wish though to indicate, primarily to the Council, that he is likely to wish to hear evidence (through witnesses in attendance) and representations on the scheme justification (including financial), the process of options appraisal and design (including flood prevention alternatives to having a scheme and alternatives to the adopted scheme), the time scales for implementation (if confirmed), the responses to all objections, the Council position in relation to statutory consultation responses, the process and outcomes of public consultation on the development of the scheme, the Environmental Impact Assessment (and related matters concerning the Habitats Regulation Appraisal and the related appropriate assessment) and an assessment of the planning context under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. The last of these is relevant as confirmation of the Scheme will comprise a deemed planning permission, also granted by Scottish Ministers, in exercise of planning functions.

Documents

If you intend to refer to any documents at the Hearing/PLI, these should be sent to me ahead of the final deadline for documents which will be no later than 4 weeks in advance of the start date of the Hearing/PLI, once set.

However, it would be preferable if any documents to be relied on were submitted as soon as available rather than being left to that period.

This is anticipated as applying more to the Council than objectors but is relevant to both. The Council are requested to review the documents considered relevant and in particular are requested to lodge with me (a) all relevant documents establishing compliance with the notification and notice requirements under the 2009 Act and the above Regulations and (b) the EQIA in relation to the Scheme.

Please note that DPEA cannot accept links to documents that are stored on external websites as these can change. All documents should therefore be provided in pdf or word format.

More generally, the responsibility for ensuring that papers in relation to the Scheme are made available for public inspection remains with the Council (meeting the requirements of paragraph 2(1) and 2(2) of Schedule 2 to the 2009 Act). I would be grateful if they could advise me of the address at which copies of statements, documents and precognitions (virtual and hard copy) will be made available for inspection, as appropriate and so far as required.

Precognitions (witness statements)

In aiming at proceeding broadly in the Hearing format, the Reporter will not expect any objector to lodge a witness statement in respect of their own evidence. These objectors can simply attend and speak to their objection at the appropriate stage in the Agenda. Council officials and witnesses will address matters raised so far as relating to such topics, in discussion led by the Reporter.

However, where topics are being addressed more formally in a PLI session or where objectors want to call their own witness (expert in technical areas or otherwise), different procedures will apply. In that case, such a person attending in order to give evidence at the

oral proceedings will be required to provide a prepared statement (known as a precognition).

This will apply to all witnesses or attendees on behalf of the Council, setting out their professional qualifications and a summary of the evidence to be given.

Further guidance on precognitions will follow.

Site visit

The Reporter will wish to carry out an unaccompanied site visit, to see the proposed Scheme area from a public road or public place. For reasons of practicality, holding a general site visit accompanied by parties will not be feasible or practicable.

However, if any objector considers that there is merit in a location specific site visit to understand their individual objection (attended only by them and a Council representative), please let me know. Equally, if the Council wish the Reporter to see part of the site requiring access over private land, please let me know. This can be arranged at or around the time of the Hearing/PLI.

Other parties

As there are a number of other bodies or parties who have engaged with the Council or otherwise may be (or wish to be) considered as interested parties in this examination, this letter is being sent to them separately. These bodies may choose to opt in to participate in the examination in the same way as objectors, within the same time scales as set out above. If they do so, their representations will be placed on the DPEA website as below. Decisions on the nature of their engagement in the examination (where they have not lodged objections) will be made by the Reporter later in the process. This may include updates from these bodies as to their views.

Appeals Website

Documentation relating to this case has been published on the DPEA website and can be searched under the reference FPS-210-1. Further documents will be added as they become available. This will include responses by the Council to various requests to them as set out in this letter.

In order to comply with the Data Protection legislation and GDPR, we remove all signatures, personal telephone numbers and personal e-mail addresses from documents we publish. More information on our publication rules and the DPEA can be found at [Planning and Environmental Appeals: privacy notice - gov.scot](#)

Other matters

As above, I will contact you regarding the dates planned for the oral procedure and other relevant matters in due course.

If any participants or attendees have mobility or other special requirements, please let me know immediately the nature of your needs. We will endeavour to accommodate you.

For information regarding expenses please refer to [Planning Circular 6/1990: awards and expenses - gov.scot](#) and the introduction to SODD Circular 17/1998. Regardless of which

form of oral procedure is adopted, that procedure is to be treated as a public local inquiry for the purposes of that Circular of 1990. Please see also page 70 of the Guidance.

If you wish to discuss this case or are unhappy with any aspect of our service, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you remain unhappy, or wish to complain, then please write to the Head of Performance and Administration, Planning and Environmental Appeals, Scottish Government, Hadrian House, Callendar Business Park, Callendar Road, Falkirk, FK1 1XR.

A guidance note about making complaints is available on our website at www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/Appeals/ourperformance/commentsandcomplaints.

I trust this information is clear. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries or require a paper copy of any of the guidance or documents referred to in this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Hazel Bailey

HAZEL BAILEY
Case Officer
Planning And Environmental Appeals Division



Appendix E

From: [Planning and Environmental Appeals Division - Scottish Government](#)
To: [Hazel Bailey](#)
Subject: Musselburgh Flood Prevention Scheme – Allegations of a data breach
Date: 24 February 2026 12:00:34



Our Ref: FPS-210-1

Dear DPEA Contact,

We are aware of a complaint involving documents published on our web portal in connection with the Musselburgh Flood Prevention Scheme and are writing to update you on this matter.

As soon as a member of the public brought this issue to our attention on Friday, all relevant material was proactively taken offline and an urgent internal review was launched.

We recognise that reports circulating online and in the media may have caused some concern, and we want to provide clarity and reassurance.

As part of the statutory process for schemes of this kind, it is routine and lawful for names and postal addresses of those who have provided a representation to be published. This supports transparency and public participation.

However, during our initial review, we identified that alongside information that is routinely published, some non-permissible personal data was inadvertently released.

We want to reassure you that we are treating this matter with the highest priority, and we are taking careful and proportionate steps to understand what has occurred.

Once the review is complete, we will re-list the materials available for public viewing, which will include information such as the names and addresses of those who have made a representation.

If any information about you was inadvertently released, we will contact you directly.

If you have any questions or concerns in the meantime, please feel free to contact us.

Regards,

Martyn Connolly MCMI

Head of Delivery

Planning and Environmental Appeals Division (DPEA)
Scottish Government
Ground Floor, Hadrian House
Callendar Business Park
Falkirk, FK1 1XR

COMMITTEE: East Lothian Council

MEETING DATE: 28 April 2026

BY: Depute Chief Executive – Resources & Economy

REPORT TITLE: Common Good Budget 2026/27

REPORT STATUS: Public

6

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update on Common Good Funds and agree the proposed budgets for 2026/27.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the ongoing financial challenges relating to the current economic climate and the risks that this presents to the Common Good Funds.
- 2.2 Approve the 2026/27 grants budget for Dunbar, Haddington, Musselburgh and North Berwick as set out in Appendices 2a–2d, noting the context for future budget development.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council's approved Standing Orders and Scheme of Administration states the following:
- The Council will approve an annual budget for each Common Good areas (Dunbar, Haddington, Musselburgh, North Berwick) that will include provision for the maintenance of assets and any committed items of expenditure.
- 3.2 The Common Good Committee has authority to:

- Award a grant of up to £50,000, provided there are sufficient funds within the budget for that area.
- 3.3 Common Good investment income and funds should be used to maintain the Common Good asset base with any surplus funds being used to benefit the inhabitants of the area covered by the funds.

Budget Development

- 3.4 Council approved the Common Good budget for 2025/26 in April 2025. The budgets are updated annually, and take into consideration the following key components:
- Previous year review and updated fund balances.
 - Roll forward of indicative budgets, taking into consideration any updated assumptions relating to:
 - Projected expenditure commitments in particularly relating to ongoing repairs and maintenance of Common Good assets.
 - Projected income to the funds relating to rental income and investment income.
- 3.5 The funds have traditionally forecast to deliver a surplus, with levels of grants available to support the community set at a reasonable level to ensure the fund values could continue to meet current obligations and sustain a value of investment for future benefit.

2024/25 Financial Position

- 3.6 The accounts for 2024/25 were approved on 25 November 2025. The fund balances as at 31 March 2025 of all Common Good Funds including Cockenzie, Port Seton & Tranent remain aligned to the draft position reported to Council on 25 June 2024 and totals £9.427 million. Further detail is set out at Appendix 1 of this report.
- 3.7 The fund balances also reflect the historic cost of Common Good property assets amounting to £3.891 million. This represents the proportion of the value of property assets which the Common Good funds may direct to achieve their objectives. As previously reported to Members, some properties are inalienable and therefore their values cannot be realised through sale of assets.

Current Position and Risks

- 3.8 Council is aware that there remains a number of key risks within each of the Common Good funds and these are highlighted below:
- Place-based asset project work is ongoing and this will include the Common Good assets.
 - The fund is supported by significant levels of investment which remains subject to market conditions and subject to ongoing

discussion with treasury investment advisers. The need to ensure the ongoing viability of the investment funds remains essential to ensure the long-term benefits of the Common Good investments.

- 3.9 The draft financial position for 2025/26 for both Council and Common Good funds is currently being consolidated and the draft accounts will be issued in June 2026. The budgets have been developed based on projections for the 2025/26 financial year, and any wider commitments. Any material changes emerging from the consolidation of the draft accounts will be presented to Council.

2026/27 Budget

- 3.10 Notwithstanding the wide range of financial and ongoing risks and variables which may impact on future budgets, this must be balanced alongside the requirement for Common Good Committees to have some certainty in approved budgets, including any available budgets to consider any grant applications during 2026/27.

- 3.11 Much of these risks remain variable and the impact may not be fully understood in the immediate months ahead. Given this, it is recommended that Council approve a 2026/27 Common Good budget, which has been rolled forward from the previous approved budget, and updated with the assumptions set out in the section below:

- Based on commentary from the appointed investment managers, and current forecast market conditions, there has been no assumption to reflect an investment return during 2026/27. This position will remain under close review during the financial year and remains a key area of risk.
- Future capital investment requirements will be taken into consideration once updated asset management information is available. Each Common Good fund holds several assets, many of which require on-going investment and maintenance.

- 3.12 The draft 2026/27 budgets reflect the following elements:

- Dunbar Common Good (Appendix 2a)
 - Winterfield Golf Club have signed a lease with ELC and are now responsible for the course and clubhouse. This is offset by the reduction in rent income of £5,000 due to a 10-year rent-free period, which began in financial year 2025/26.
 - The proposed budget reflects an estimated net deficit for the year of £35,000 against an estimated fund balance of £838,000. While the deficit can be met from the overall fund balance in 2026/27, this will be kept under review to ensure that future obligations can be met and that investment levels can be sustained for future benefit.
- Haddington Common Good (Appendix 2b)

- Repairs conducted at River Tyne walkway and Tyne House parking area have now been completed, and the budget for repairs has returned to normal levels.
- Richardson Bequest monies have been transferred into the Haddington Common Good, and this funding will be utilised for the development of housing at Herdmanflat. This is in accordance with approved use at Council in August 2025. A rental income from these properties is expected to flow to the Haddington Common Good from October 2026.
- The proposed budget reflects an estimated net surplus for the year of £82,000 against an estimated fund balance of £3.279 million.
- Musselburgh Common Good (Appendix 2c)
 - Repairs to the marquee at Musselburgh Racecourse have been completed, so the repairs budget has returned to normal levels.
 - Specific grants related to the Musselburgh Festival and Silver Arrow have been approved and will total around £30,000.
 - An increase of £56,000 in rents has been factored in due to increased income expected from Musselburgh Racecourse.
 - The proposed budget reflects an estimated net deficit for the year of £154,000 against an estimated fund balance of £9.34 million. While the deficit can be met from the overall fund balance in 2026/27, this will be kept under review to ensure that future obligations can be met and that investment levels can be sustained for future benefit.
- North Berwick Common Good (Appendix 2d)
 - Increase in rental income budget of £8,000 to reflect actual income received.
 - Any surplus income from the implementation of town centre parking charges due to the North Berwick Common Good will be transferred in line with the Council's decision to implement the scheme. Future budgets will reflect any estimated net income in relation to this. The proposed budget reflects an estimated net surplus for the year of £12,000 against an estimated fund balance of £1.778 million.

3.13 Noting the points set out above, the draft budgets for 2026/2027 for each of the Common Good Funds are set out in Appendix 2a–d of this report for consideration and approval.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Finance: As described above
- 5.2 Human Resources: None
- 5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): None
- 5.4 Risk: As described above

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

X

or

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

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

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Other	

[Enter information on impacts that have been identified]

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

7 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix 1 – Common Good Fund Balances 2024/25

7.2 Appendix 2 – Common Good Budget Proposals

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 Council 29 April 2025 – Item 04 Common Good Budget 2025/26

8.2 Council 09 December 2025 – Item 09a Annual Audit Report

8.3 Council 26 August 2025 – Item 09 Richardson Bequest Funding, Common Good and Herdmanflat

9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

Report Author(s)

Name	Ellie Dunnet
Designation	Head of Finance
Tel/Email	edunnet@eastlothian.gov.uk
Date	

Head of Service Approval

Name	Sarah Fortune
Designation	Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy
Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed	Confirmed
Approval Date	15 April 2026

Appendix 1 - Common Good Fund Balances 2024/25

Actual balances as per last audited accounts for 2024/25

Fund	23/24 Fund Balance	Balance Related to Unrealised Fair Value Gains on Investments	24/45 Fund balances (Excluding Investments fair value movements)	Historic Cost of Property Assets (PPE)	24/25 Fund Balance (excluding FV Investments and Historic Cost of PPE)
Balances at 31/03/2024	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Dunbar	896	6	890	659	231
Haddington	890	17	873	208	665
Musselburgh	10,006	693	9,313	1,408	7,905
North Berwick	1,787	40	1,747	1,120	627
TOTAL	13,579	756	12,823	3,395	9,428
Cockenzie, Port Seton & Tranent	423		423	424	-1
TOTAL COMMON GOOD FUND BALANCE	14,002	756	13,246	3,819	9,427

Appendix 2 - Common Good Budget Proposals

Consolidated Common Good Income & expenditure Budget

	Approved	Draft budgets
	Budget 2025/26 £000	Indicative Budgets 2026/27 £000
Expenditure		
Premises - Repairs & Maintenance	97	59
Premises - Rates	46	46
Supplies & Services	307	309
Grants	136	159
	0	30
Depreciation	86	95
Total Expenditure	672	698
Income		
Rents & Other Income	-298	-412
Herdmannflat Rental Income	0	-19
Investment Income (inc realised gains and losses on sale of investments) *	-2	-2
Interest/Dividend income *	-83	-172
Total Income	-383	-605
Cost of Services	289	93
Net Deficit for the year	289	93
Common Good Balance *	-13,385	-15,422
Accumulated Fund	-13,096	-15,329

Appendix 2a

Dunbar Common Good Income & expenditure Budget

	Approved	Draft budgets
	Budget 2025/26 £000	Indicative Budgets 2026/27 £000
Expenditure		
Premises - Repairs & Maintenance	5	6
Premises - Rates	0	0
Supplies & Services	4	6
Grants	4	4
Depreciation	30	35
Total Expenditure	43	51
Income		
Rents & Other Income	-14	-14
Investment Income (inc realised gains and losses on sale of investments) *	0	0
Interest/Dividend income *	-1	-2
Total Income	-15	-16
Cost of Services	28	35
Net Deficit for the year	28	35
Common Good Balance *	-901	-873
Accumulated Fund	-873	-838

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

Appendix 2b

Haddington Common Good Income & expenditure Budget

	Approved	Draft budgets
	Budget 2025/26 £000	Indicative Budgets 2026/27 £000
Expenditure		
Premises - Repairs & Maintenance	12	3
Premises - Rates	0	0
Supplies & Services	1	1
Grants	10	20
Depreciation	0	0
Total Expenditure	23	24
Income		
Rents & Other Income	-27	-77
Herdmannflat Income	0	-19
Investment Income (inc realised gains and losses on sale of investments) *	0	0
Interest/Dividend income *	-2	-10
Total Income	-29	-106
Cost of Services	-6	-82
Net Surplus for the year	-6	-82
Common Good Balance *	-865	-3,197
Accumulated Fund	-871	-3,279

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

Appendix 2c

Musselburgh Common Good Income & expenditure Budget

Expenditure

Premises - Repairs & Maintenance
Premises - Rates
Supplies & Services
Grants
Specific Grants
Depreciation

Total Expenditure

Income

Rents & Other Income
Investment Income (inc realised gains and losses on sale of investments) *
Interest/Dividend income *

Total Income

Cost of Services

Net Deficit for the year

Common Good Balance *

Accumulated Fund

Approved

**Budget
2025/26
£000**

70
40
298
112
0
51

571

-219
-2
-76

-297

274

274

-9,860

-9,586

Draft budgets

**Indicative Budgets
2026/27
£000**

40
40
298
120
30
51

579

-275
-2
-150

-427

152

152

-9,586

-9,434

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

Appendix 2d

North Berwick Common Good Income & expenditure Budget

	Approved	Draft budgets
	Budget 2025/26 £000	Indicative Budgets 2026/27 £000
Expenditure		
Premises - Repairs & Maintenance	10	10
Premises - Rates	6	6
Supplies & Services	4	4
Grants	10	15
Depreciation	5	9
Total Expenditure	35	44
Income		
Rents & Other Income	-38	-46
Interest / Investment Income (inc realised gains and losses on sale of investments) *	0	0
Interest/Dividend income *	-4	-10
Total Income	-42	-56
Cost of Services	-7	-12
Net Surplus for the year	-7	-12
Common Good Balance *	-1,759	-1,766
Accumulated Fund	-1,766	-1,778

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

COMMITTEE:	East Lothian Council
MEETING DATE:	28 April 2026
BY:	Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy
REPORT TITLE:	Infrastructure Strategy – Consultation Response
REPORT STATUS:	Public

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval of East Lothian’s response to the Scottish Government consultation on the Infrastructure Strategy 2027-2037.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the draft response set out in Appendix 1.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Scottish Government published a draft Infrastructure Strategy and 10-year framework (2027 to 2037) to guide infrastructure planning, investment and delivery across Scotland on 13 January 2026.
- 3.2 Alongside this, the Scottish Government has published a consultation seeking views on a range of questions on the scope, priorities and governance principles set out within the strategy which will be used to shape the final version which is anticipated to be published in late 2026.
- 3.3 The Council owns, operates and enables a wide range of public infrastructure which supports our communities to access a wide range of services and systems that shape the foundations of our daily lives. Public infrastructure underpins many of the foundations we all rely on such as transport, housing, schools and wider community-based services, and ensures we have appropriate infrastructure assets which are aligned to longer-term vision, are vital to support economic growth,

communities to thrive, and underpin the delivery of national and local outcomes, and are also important to support the transition to net zero.

- 3.4 The draft strategy is set in the context of a 10-year focus and is informed by a 30-year national needs assessment focussed on three key enablers:

1. Public asset
2. Place-making
3. Private investment.

The ability to align strategic long-term planning with the scale and significance of public investment which is needed to support and underpin local infrastructure requirements both now and, in the future, will be an important determination of the deliverability and outcomes achieved through the national plan.

- 3.5 This Council has over recent years continued to receive updates setting out the scale of investment required to support current and future local infrastructure requirements. How we are using public infrastructure to support the way in which services and infrastructure assets are used within our communities continues to evolve and change particularly in the context of changing demographics and rapid population growth.
- 3.6 The Council is well placed to support and enable the delivery of public infrastructure and economic growth and key outcomes set out within the draft strategy. We support the principle of Infrastructure First and are already developing significant and critical plans that can and will unlock long-term strategic local, regional and national economic growth. Nevertheless, the Council is currently estimating that required infrastructure investment of over £2.6bn is needed to meet ongoing asset requirements. Given the fiscal challenges across the public sector and within this Council, balancing the realism and scale of the investment that is required to support existing public assets, alongside progressing with infrastructure opportunities that will support economic growth remains a significant challenge.
- 3.7 Furthermore, East Lothian's future public infrastructure needs must be planned and aligned with population growth and changing demographics. This requires consideration not only of capital investment in infrastructure, but also of the ongoing revenue costs associated with operating and maintaining these public assets.
- 3.8 The consultation seeks views on a wide range of questions and closes on 5 May 2026, and a proposed response from East Lothian Council is set out in **Appendix 1**. The consultation response reflects the challenges and opportunities faced by East Lothian Council and draws on practical experience of delivering, managing and planning public infrastructure within a constrained financial environment.
- 3.9 Alongside the consultation, officers are continuing to engage through professional networks and wider stakeholder forums to shape the development of the final Infrastructure Strategy.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The National Infrastructure Strategy will align national policy and infrastructure investment decisions over the next 10 years. Once approved, the Council will need to consider this alongside our local and regional strategic plans.

5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Finance: None
- 5.2 Human Resources: None
- 5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): None
- 5.4 Risk: None

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

X

or

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

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

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Storage/collection of personal data	
Other	

[Enter information on impacts that have been identified]

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

7 APPENDICES

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – draft East Lothian Council Response to Infrastructure Strategy Consultation

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-infrastructure-strategy-2027-2037/>

9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

Report Author(s)

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Date	13 April 2026

Head of Service Approval

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Designation	Depute Chief Executive Resources and Economy (Chief Financial Officer)
Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed	Confirmed
Approval Date	13 April 2026

Scottish Government Consultation – Draft Infrastructure Strategy 2027 – 2037

East Lothian Council response

Role of Infrastructure Strategy

1. Do you agree with the scope and role of the Infrastructure Strategy?
 - a. *Yes. The strategy recognises the interdependencies across sectors and provides an appropriate framework for long-term planning and investment decisions.*
2. Do you think the proposed framework, linking the 30-year Needs Assessment, 10-year Infrastructure Strategy, Spending Reviews and annual Budgets will support improved strategic planning and delivery? Are there any further improvements you want to suggest?
 - a. *The overall framework is a positive step toward aligning long-term infrastructure needs with medium-term planning and short-term financial decision-making. The 10 year strategy needs to be fully underpinned by the 30-year Needs Assessment in particular is vital for understanding the scale of the challenge across national, regional, and local levels.*
 - b. *Whilst noting the intent to looking beyond political cycles, there is a need to align the strategy with longer term funding investment which support strategic long term joined up infrastructure investment plans and allows flexibility to support and deliver national, regional, and local infrastructure requirements.*

Infrastructure Governance Principles

3. Do any elements of the infrastructure lifecycle need to be strengthened to promote more effective infrastructure planning and delivery?
 - a. ***Investment Certainty and Long-Term Funding***

While the lifecycle model is robust, investment remains the critical enabler and the primary constraint on effective delivery. Local authorities are facing prolonged financial pressure, and infrastructure budgets have not kept pace with the scale of renewal, adaptation, and net-zero demands.

Long-term, multi-year funding commitments which allow for flexibility and creativity would significantly strengthen the early stages of the lifecycle—particularly options appraisal, prioritisation, and strategic design.

In addition, infrastructure investment cannot be looked at in isolation of the associated revenue budgets which are needed to support the wider running costs and on-going maintenance. There is a need to ensure that the infrastructure investment strategy remains aligned with revenue budget allocations.

b. Consistency of Asset Data and Condition Assessment

Local authorities vary significantly in capability, resources, and maturity of asset management systems. Strengthening lifecycle stages would require consistent national data standards; shared digital asset platforms and improved condition and performance data.

c. Capacity and Skills Across Local Authorities

Many local authorities lack specialised capacity in areas such as digital design, carbon modelling, and commercial contract management. Areas such as shared specialist resource pools, central support from SFT and the Scottish Government and common training pathways could be explored.

4. In what areas could changes to governance or planning processes across the public sector improve the impact of the investment hierarchy?

a. Stronger National–Regional–Local Alignment

Current governance arrangements often result in mismatched priorities between national strategy, regional frameworks, and local delivery. Introducing more structured alignment mechanisms particularly through Regional Economic Partnerships could support wider regional alignment.

b. Streamlined and More Predictable Approval Processes

Local authority projects often face delays due to complex or sequential approvals between councils, Scottish Government, and funding bodies. Governance reforms need to accelerate decision-making and better align with investment hierarchy principles.

c. Governance for Place-Based and Cross-Boundary Infrastructure

Infrastructure challenges particularly transport, digital, climate resilience, growth, housing and energy are not confined to local boundaries. Improving cross-boundary governance and planning will be required.

Infrastructure Themes and Enablers

5. Do you agree that enabling net zero and environmental sustainability, driving economic growth, and building resilient places continue to be the right outcomes to guide infrastructure investment over the next decade?
 - a. *Yes. However, these can only be achieved by consistent and long-term financial and regulatory support.*
6. Are the three proposed enablers, public assets, place-making and private investment, sufficient to deliver the Strategy's outcomes? Are there other enablers we should consider instead/additionally?
 - a. *The proposed enablers are important but need to be widened to include:*
 - *Long-term capital and revenue certainty to support multi-year planning for public infrastructure assets*
 - *Skills, technical capability and commercial capacity across local authorities.*
 - *Consistent digital infrastructure and data standards for asset management.*
 - *Regulatory alignment across planning, energy networks and procurement.*
7. What mechanisms or approaches should the Infrastructure Strategy adopt to ensure that critical cross-cutting priorities, such as housing delivery, regional economic development, and natural infrastructure are systematically embedded in investment planning and decision making?
 - a. *The Strategy should:*
 - *Require regional place-based joint investment plans that takes a holistic approach across all sectors (housing, transport, energy, etc)*
 - *Mandate early engagement with utilities and national agencies.*
 - *Align decisions with NPF4 and Regional Spatial Strategies.*
 - *Allow enhanced local / regional direction in the setting of future housing allocation targets which take cognisance of the on-going infrastructure and revenue requirements.*
 - *Housing and Economic development needs to be clearly mapped out geographically to ensure infrastructure plans at a regional level integrate with housing pipeline*
8. Are there any findings from the Scottish Future's Trust Needs Assessment (perhaps from drivers of change, cross-cutting themes or enablers) that we should more fully integrate into this 10-year Infrastructure Strategy?

- *There needs to a clearer focus on the scale and financial cost of asset renewal needed across local authorities, especially for roads, schools, health assets and flood infrastructure. There also needs to be clear understanding as to the opportunity cost and impact on outcomes of not investing in the essential public infrastructure.*
- *The interdependencies between sectors, particularly energy grid constraints affecting development.*
- *The urgency of climate adaptation, nature restoration and resilience.*
- *The impact of long-term revenue pressure on local authorities' ability to operate new or refurbished assets.*

Place Based Approach

9. Do you support the proposal that infrastructure investment is more directly driven by the priorities of places across Scotland?

a. Yes. Scotland's geographies—rural, island, urban and remote require differentiated approaches, and there is a need to ensure a place-based approach is adopted to address local needs and opportunities.

10. Are the proposed principles, national spatial priorities and place partnerships, the right ones to guide a place-based approach? Are there other principles we should consider?

a. Additional improvements include:

- i. Stronger regional coordination, particularly for cross-boundary assets.*
- ii. Clearer governance and accountability for place partnerships.*
- iii. Explicit alignment with NPF4, RSSs, and Regional Economic Strategies.*
- iv. A stronger emphasis on economic infrastructure, including transport and digital connectivity.*

11. Do you agree with the Scottish Government's proposal to empower communities to play a more active role in infrastructure decision making? What mechanisms would best support meaningful community involvement and help to maximise local social benefits?

a. Yes – community engagement is essential to support place-based infrastructure. This engagement must be supported and aligned to local communities, which may differ across the regions in Scotland. This could include:

- *Community design workshops and citizen panels.*
- *Clear, accessible digital engagement tools.*
- *Support for community anchor groups to participate effectively.*

12. Do you believe the current landscape of local and regional partnerships (e.g. Community Planning Partnerships, Regional Economic Partnerships, HubCos, Regional Adaptation Partnerships) provides an effective framework for delivering place-based infrastructure investment? Please explain your answer, including any suggestions for improvement of existing structures.

- a. *In theory yes, but there is a need to develop this further to effectively support and maximise the opportunities for supporting place-based infrastructure investment.*

Challenges

- *Overlapping roles and unclear accountability.*
- *Availability and flexibility of resources, and national direction of funding which impact on flexibility to support fiscal investment priorities.*
- *Capacity and resources within public bodies to support and develop integrated investment plans*
- *Lack of co-ordination across public agencies.*
- *Lack of integration across housing, transport, health, energy and digital.*

Improvements

- *Simplify regional governance and clarification of roles.*
- *Develop integrated regional investment plans.*
- *Develop an investment appraisal that prioritises multiple outcomes such as the impact of housing supply, where regional growth reduces inequalities to ensure infrastructure priorities actively enable development to produce better outcomes (workforce skills should also align with this assessment)*
- *Alignment with national agencies and flexibility in funding streams deliver holistic and strategic plans.*
- *Expand shared services and expertise.*
- *Strengthen alignment with national spatial and economic priorities.*

Enabling Private Infrastructure

13. Are there additional sectors or opportunities that should be considered for strategic investment to support economic growth and maximise opportunities for longer-term growth?

- a. *Yes. East Lothian and the wider South East of Scotland region has the opportunity to deliver significant economic growth with wide reaching local, regional and national opportunities. This includes:*

- i. *Development of a new town at Blindwells with the opportunity to deliver up to 10,000 new homes.*

- ii. Development of a new innovation park aligned to the Edinburgh Innovation Centre at QMU.*
- iii. Development of a new cultural and arts hub in Musselburgh, with the opportunity to explore commercial alignment.*
- iv. The delivery of a new skills and innovation centre aligned to support green skills, technology and innovation in energy.*

b. More wider, investment in the following sectors must be prioritised to unlock and support longer term growth;

- i. Strategic energy-including grid infrastructure and connectivity, as well as wider net zero energy opportunities to support local heat and energy production including regional heat networks.*
- ii. Regional transport infrastructure in road and rail to enable model shift and connectivity and inward investment.*
- iii. Natural infrastructure including flood, coastal and nature restoration to support well-being, net zero, place and sustainability*

14. To make the most of the strategic opportunities in renewables, housing, and natural capital, what will the economy need from our infrastructure to grow and thrive up to 2037?

- i. A modernised, high-capacity energy network*
- ii. An Infrastructure first approach that unlocks housing, including; schools, transport, health, digital connectivity, utilities and community services, and on-going supported revenue running costs to support the running and on-going maintenance of these public infrastructure assets.*
- iii. Investment in natural infrastructure—coastal protection, flood management, peatland restoration, woodland expansion.*
- iv. High-quality digital and transport connectivity supporting innovation, skills mobility and economic growth.*
- v. Maximise and accelerate the delivery of affordable housing*

COMMITTEE:	East Lothian Council
MEETING DATE:	28 April 2026
BY:	Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy
REPORT TITLE:	East Lothian Council Climate Change Strategy 2025-30 Update
REPORT STATUS:	Public

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the first annual update to Council on the progress of delivering the actions and commitments in East Lothian Council (ELC) Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2025–30.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve changes to the ELC Climate Change Action Plan outlined in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Note the key progress made delivering actions in the ELC Climate Change Strategy Action Plan 2025-30 and the achievements and developments set out in this report.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The ELC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2025-30 was approved by Council in April 2025. Council also approved the commitments to review and update the Strategy annually as further national legislative and policy changes occur, to review and update the Action Plan annually, and to seek approval from Council for any revisions and updates on an annual basis.

- 3.2 In addition to the commitments set out in the Climate Change Strategy, the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 puts statutory duties on the Council to: contribute to the delivery of emissions reduction targets, help deliver climate change adaptation, and act sustainably. East Lothian Council reports on these duties annually to the Scottish Government through a 'Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report'. The most recent report can be found in the East Lothian Council Members' Library Service.¹

Key National and International Climate Reports

- 3.3 The Scottish Government published draft Statutory Guidance for Public Bodies in fulfilling their climate change duties. The draft Statutory Guidance proposed introducing new requirements for local authorities, including having a plan to reduce emissions in their local authority boundary and developing a climate change risk register for their local authority boundary. East Lothian Council responded to consultation on this draft Statutory Guidance, explaining that meeting the new requirements will be extremely challenging without additional resource. Our response can be found in the June 2025 entry into the Members' Library Service.² The final Statutory Guidance, which includes these new requirements, was published on 6 March 2026. Officers are still reviewing all implications, and have already laid the groundwork for key activities after the consultation phase.
- 3.4 The Scottish Government published a Draft Climate Change Plan on 6 November, 2025, which aims to meet carbon budgets in 8 main sectors of emissions that gradually reduce to net zero by 2045. East Lothian Council responded to consultation on this draft Plan, explaining that there needs to be clarity about local authorities' role in meeting the carbon budgets, and links between specific funded policies and their emissions reductions. The Council's response to the draft Plan can be found in the February 2026 entry into the Members' Library Service.³
- 3.5 The Heat in Buildings Bill, intended to set new energy-efficiency and low-carbon heating standards for homes and commercial buildings, was delayed in March 2025 until after the 2026 Scottish Parliament elections.
- 3.6 The UK Climate Change Committee's 2026 report *Progress in reducing emissions in Scotland*⁴ was published on 25 February 2026. The report

¹ East Lothian Council – Public Sector Climate Change Reporting 2024/25

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/17561/members_library_service]

² East Lothian Council Response to Consultation on Statutory Guidance for Climate Change Duties

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/25895/5725_east_lothian_council_response_to_consultation_on_statutory_guidance_for_climate_change_duties]

³ Scotland's Climate Change Plan 2026-2040: East Lothian Council's Response

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/26492/1226_scotlands_climate_change_plan_2026-2040_east_lothian_councils_response]

⁴ Climate Change Committee, *Progress in reducing emissions in Scotland – 2025 report to Parliament*

[https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/progress-in-reducing-emissions-in-scotland-2025/?utm_campaign=3512958_February%20Newsletter%202026&utm_medium=email&utm_source=

finds that emissions and are now less than half of 1990 levels. However, while the proposed five-year carbon budgets to 2045 are feasible, the Committee warns that policy delivery must accelerate, with significant risks to meeting the second and third carbon budgets without clearer, faster action across transport, buildings, agriculture and land use. Reliance on negative emissions technologies also remains a risk.

ELC Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan

- 3.7 East Lothian Council's emissions in 2024/25 were estimated at 14,999 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent. This is a reported decrease of 11% compared to 2023/24.⁵ We have met the interim annual target for our 'Transformational' carbon budget, which indicates we are well-placed to work towards our most ambitious decarbonisation pathway in which we are more likely to reach net zero by 2045.

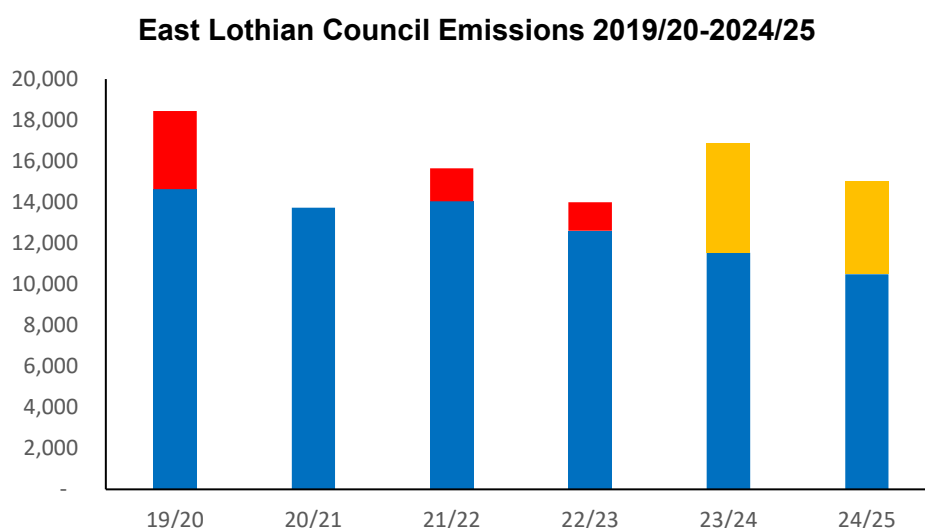


Figure 1: ELC annual greenhouse gas emissions, expressed in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e). Y-axis = tCO₂e, x-axis = financial year (20xx/xx). Blue = ELC emissions not including staff commuting & homeworking; red = ELC staff commuting & homeworking emissions measured by Zero Waste Scotland tool; orange = staff commuting & homeworking emissions measured by CalCommuter.

- 3.8 Our largest source of emissions remains natural gas at 5,115 tonnes - almost exactly one third of the Council's emissions. This is followed by staff commuting at 3,836 tonnes and electricity at 3,600 tonnes.
- 3.9 The greatest fall in emissions was from staff commuting. Officers continue to refine the methodology for calculating these emissions. Emissions from transport fell 20%, led by HGVs (-318 tonnes) which drove 53% fewer kilometres. This is variable and we cannot guarantee

e=College%20of%20Science%20%26%20Engineering%2C%20The%20University%20of%20Edinburgh&dm_i=2MP0,23AM6,BIM0VR,7PBMW,1,0,0,0]

⁵ East Lothian Council – Public Sector Climate Change Reporting 2023/24

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/25389/15324_east_lothian_council_-_public_sector_climate_change_reporting]

these reductions in future years. Emissions from natural gas and electricity were also reduced by 3% and 7%, respectively.

- 3.10 Across all emissions categories, 7 increased. The Council processed 11% more food & garden waste for anaerobic digestion, but tonnage from landfill fell by 56%, so we can assume this is a net positive as residents recycle more food waste and send less to landfill. Emissions from hybrid and diesel fleet cars increased, as did business emissions from business travel in most vehicle types. Increases in emissions from these sources were outweighed by decreases elsewhere, but it should be noted that staff mileage in their own vehicles (grey fleet mileage) increased by 20%, which indicates it may be a challenging source of emissions in the future.

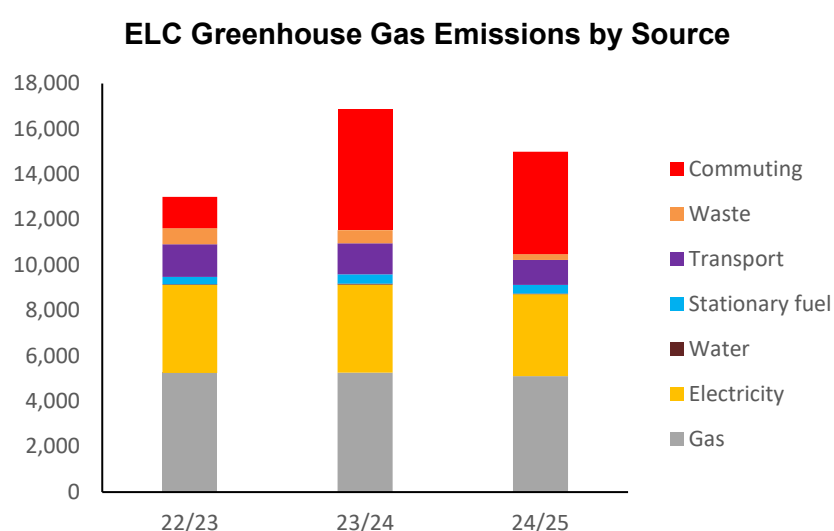


Figure 2: East Lothian Council (ELC) annual greenhouse gas emissions, expressed in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) divided by emissions source. Y-axis = tCO₂e, x-axis = financial year (20xx). Grey = gas; gold = electricity, including upstream losses; brown = water; blue = other stationary fuels; purple = business travel; green = waste; red = staff commuting & homeworking

- 3.11 Emissions from all other sources went down year-on-year from 2023/24. The emissions factor for electricity fell by 15% to 177gCO₂e/kWh, which is lower than natural gas. The emissions factor for both dry recyclates and combusted waste fell 27%. Compounded with the drop in landfill tonnage and an increase in recycling tonnage, emissions from waste fell by 314 tonnes or 55%.
- 3.12 This is the first year of reporting on the Climate Change Action Plan 2025-30, so the action updates are effectively a baseline. Despite this, 42% of actions were identified as already making good progress and given a green rating. A further 50% actions were given an amber rating because they are still progressing, but not yet fully underway. Six actions have made no progress and designated with a red rating. And 20 actions have been requested to be changed by the actions' owners.

- 3.13 Across the four Themes of the Climate Change Strategy, Services had the highest proportion of green-rated actions, followed by Assets, Place, then Governance. Performance in the Services Theme is led by the Waste Focus Area, which had 100% of actions rated green. The Focus Areas which have the most amber rated actions are Adaptation, Planning, Carbon Literacy, and Buildings.

Key Projects & Achievements of the East Lothian Council Climate Change Action Plan 2025-30

- 3.14 Our museums have thoroughly and meaningfully taken steps to eliminate single-use plastics. No plastic bags are sold in shops, glasses and china are used in place of disposable cups, and museums encourage green crafts which avoid purchasing plastic packs.
- 3.15 We have the third highest recycling rate in Scotland: 55.3% of waste was recycled last year, which is 2% higher than the previous year. This indicates success of our approach to waste collection, which aligns with the Scottish Waste Charter.
- 3.16 We are approaching completion of Climate Ready South East Scotland Phase 2. This phase built on the risk and opportunity assessment produced at the end of Phase 1 and identifies key actions which can add value by working with neighbouring local authorities and partners. Our priority actions will be: community resilience, climate resilient economic development, nature networks, and cascading risks to infrastructure.
- 3.17 We have over 400 vehicle chargers in East Lothian, including journey chargers in all our large towns, to support the shift to electric vehicles. We also have a network of Journey Hubs and are constantly improving our active travel network to support the modal shift away from private car journeys.

Key Risks Delivering the Climate Change Strategy Actions

- 3.18 East Lothian's population is rapidly growing, and new infrastructure, developments, and services will be required to meet demand. It makes the Council's journey towards net zero challenging, as decarbonisation needs to match and exceed the pace of growth. However, this also presents opportunities to redesign and improve the sustainability of existing services.
- 3.19 Delivery of climate change mitigation and adaptation is dependent on funding, which can be intermittent. Low-emissions travel schemes, nature restoration, and energy efficiency upgrades are among the projects which are dependent on external funding. This makes it challenging to plan our activities and set reliable targets. Decarbonising buildings and transport are vital for the Council to achieve its net zero target and contribute to Scotland's wider net zero targets, but current financial constraints place these targets at risk. Despite this, the cost of

inaction will be far greater because every fraction of a degree of global warming that is avoided will save lives and cost.

Conclusion

- 3.20 East Lothian Council met the interim annual target for our most ambitious carbon budget, which indicates we are making good progress reducing our emissions and are on track to reach net zero by 2045 if we continue this trajectory. We also met expectations for the first report year of our 5-year Climate Change Action Plan and expect to see continued improvements.
- 3.21 However, several risks and challenges remain. The Adaptation Focus Area of our Climate Change Action Plan, which represents half of the challenge posed by climate change, has several amber-rated actions. This reflects in our Adaptation Capability Framework score, which is adjusted down. Additionally, progress on key challenging sources of emissions, such as natural gas, is not keeping pace with wider emissions reductions. Remaining within our transformational carbon budget is feasible but will require continuing levels of demand reduction and decarbonisation.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are a number of policy implications arising from this report that will be considered and incorporated in future local and regional policy development work in due course.

5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Finance: The Council has so far addressed climate change adaptation and mitigation within service budgets. However, it will be a financial challenge to achieve net zero by 2045 and meet interim targets relating to our fleet and estate. The Council will continue to work closely with national and regional partners to influence and align to national ambitions to ensure that the necessary measures, powers, and resources are in place to deliver a just transition to net zero and a climate-ready place.
- 5.2 Human Resources:
- 5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT):
- 5.4 Risk:

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

X

or

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

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

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

7 APPENDICES

- 7.1 Appendix 1: Summary of changes to ELC Climate Change Action Plan 2025-30
- 7.2 Appendix 2: Gantt Chart summary of ELC Climate Change Action Plan Update 2024/25

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 East Lothian Council Climate Change Strategy 2025-30 - https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/34732/climate_change_strategy_2025-2030
- 8.2 East Lothian Council Climate Change Action Plan 2025-30 - https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/34733/climate_change_strategy_2025-2030_action_plan
- 8.3 Members' Library Service report 153/24 East Lothian Council – Public Sector Climate Change Reporting 2024/25 - https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/26421/13725_east_lothian_council_public_bodies_climate_change_duties_report_2024_25

9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

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Head of Service Approval

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Designation	Head of Development
Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed	Done
Approval Date	15 April 2026

Appendix 1: Summary of changes to ELC Climate Change Action Plan 2025-30

Change the Owner of action G1.4 from Infrastructure to Corporate Support.	Change the performance indicator for Action G1.11 to ‘% of services represented.’	Change Action G2.7 from ‘Update Roads Extreme Weather Plan to account for climate change’ to ‘Update Winter Maintenance Plan to account for climate change.’
Add an Action in the Procurement Focus Area. The proposed action will be coded G4.7, with the existing Action G4.7 changed to G4.8 and so on. The proposed action is ‘Move from 4-year to 6-year refresh cycle for secondary school Chromebooks in line with the 1:1 initiative.’ The proposed Performance Indicator is ‘Y/N’ and proposed owner is ICT. This is a Scope 3 emission.	Change Action G4.1 to ‘Consider adaptation to deluges, coastal erosion, and extreme heat at an early stage as part of commodity strategy development of a construction project’ and change the owner to Procurement.	Change Action G4.2 to ‘Consider reducing emissions through the whole life-cycle of a construction project at an early stage as part of commodity strategy development’ and change the owner to Procurement.
Change Action G4.8 to ‘Consider reducing waste from construction projects by following the waste hierarchy at an early stage as part of commodity strategy development’ and change the owner to Procurement.	Change the performance indicator for Action G5.10 from ‘£ of intervention’ to ‘# of interventions.’	Change Action G5.11 to ‘Where appropriate, support for business will consider business progress/ambition toward being climate resilient and reducing emissions’ with a performance indicator of ‘# of support programmes that include evaluation of climate-positive endeavours in decision making.’
Change the performance indicator for Action A1.17 to ‘tonnes CO2e direct emissions from our buildings.’	Stop tracking Action A2.1 because it is not a project the Council is able to progress at this stage.	Change the performance indicator for Action A2.8 to ‘tonnes CO2e from fleet vehicles per annum.’
Change Action A2.15 to ‘Provide 100 tonnes of road planings (reclaimed asphalt) to the public to be reused for hard standings, haul roads, building sub bases, and farm tracks’ with a	Change Action P1.1 to ‘Support community groups to improve their preparation for climate change.’	Change Action P1.4 to ‘Applications criteria to the Community Intervention Fund include evidence of climate positive endeavours from applicants in their applications’ with a

Performance Indicator of 'Tonnes of plantings per annum.'		performance indicator of 'Y/N.'
Change Action P1.5 to 'Applications criteria to One Council Partnership Fund include evidence of climate positive endeavours from applicants in their applications' with a performance indicator of 'Y/N.'	Change Action P2.4 to 'Continue to implement biodiversity enhancements and nature networks in parks, green spaces, and open space' with a performance indicator of 'Y/N.'	Change Action P4.1 to 'Support projects that further climate adaptation' with a performance indicator of '# of projects that include an element of climate adaptation.'
Correct the document referenced in Actions P4.3 and P4.4 to the 'East Lothian Local Economy Strategy Delivery Plan.'	Change Action P5.6 to 'Maximise insulation measures & renewables for Council housing' with a performance indicator of 'Number of insulation measures and renewables installed per annum.'	Remove Action P5.9 because it is effectively a duplicate of Action P3.22, and instead update Action 3.22 to 'Set lower minimum parking standards for areas that are well-connected by public transport.'

Appendix 2: Gantt Chart summary of ELC Climate Change Action Plan Update 2024/25

Key:

	No return possible
	No progress
	Limited progress
	Good progress

Actions are listed under 'Reference.' For full action descriptions and Performance Indicators, see the full ELC Climate Change Action Plan 2025-30:

https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/34733/climate_change_strategy_2025-2030_action_plan.pdf

East Lothian Council Climate Change Action Plan 2025- 2030	2024/25		2024/25
Reference		Reference	
Theme: Governance			
G1.1		G2.10	
G1.2		G2.11	
G1.3		G2.12	
G1.4		G2.13	
G1.5		G2.14	
G1.6		G3.1	
G1.7		G3.2	
G1.8		G3.3	
G1.9		G3.4	
G1.10		G3.5	
G1.11		G4.1	
G1.12		G4.2	
G2.1		G4.3	
G2.2		G4.4	

G2.3		G4.5	
G2.4		G4.6	
G2.5		G4.7	
G2.6		G4.8	
G2.7		G4.9	
G2.8		G5.1	
G2.9		G5.2	
G5.3		G5.8	
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G5.5		G5.10	
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G5.7			
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A1.3		A1.23	
A1.4		A2.1	
A1.5		A2.2	
A1.6		A2.3	
A1.7		A2.4	
A1.8		A2.5	
A1.9		A2.6	
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A1.20		A2.17	
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S1.3		S3.1	
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S1.5		S3.3	
S1.6		S3.4	
S1.7		S3.5	
S1.8		S3.6	
S1.9		S3.7	
S1.10		S3.8	
S1.11		S3.9	
S1.12		S3.10	
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COMMITTEE:	East Lothian Council
MEETING DATE:	28 April 2026
BY:	Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy
REPORT TITLE:	Review of East Lothian Council's Financial Regulations
REPORT STATUS:	Public

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval of revisions to East Lothian Council's Financial Regulations.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the proposed revised East Lothian Council Financial Regulations.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council's Financial Regulations are designed to guide the development of effective financial administration throughout the Council. The Financial Regulations, which form Supporting Document A to Standing Orders, have not been subject to review since 2011.
- 3.2 Officers have now undertaken a thorough review of the Financial Regulations, and the revised document is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.4 If approved, the revised Financial Regulations will come into effect on 29 April 2026, and the updated document will be incorporated into the wider suite of Standing Orders documents and published on the Council's website.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Financial Regulations guide all aspects of the Council's financial administration, including financial management and planning, risk management and controls, and systems and processes.

5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Finance: None
- 5.2 Human Resources: None
- 5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): None
- 5.4 Risk: None

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

X

or

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

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

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Other	

[Enter information on impacts that have been identified]

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

7 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix 1 – proposed revised Financial Regulations

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 East Lothian Council Standing Orders

9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

Report Author(s)

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Date	25 March 2026

Head of Service Approval

Name	Sarah Fortune
Designation	Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy, and Chief Financial Officer
Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed	Confirmed
Approval Date	15 April 2026



FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

~~10 February 2011~~ 23 March 2026

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 “Every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that the proper officer of the authority has responsibility for the administration of those affairs” (Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 Section 95)
- 1.2 The Council has adopted Standing Orders to govern its business. ~~Standing Order 50 Appendix 2 – Scheme of Delegation of the Standing Orders specifies~~ identifies the ~~Head of Finance~~ Depute Chief Executive – Resources & Economy as the proper officer with the responsibility for the administration of its financial affairs (Chief Finance Officer).
- 1.3 These Financial Regulations have been designed to guide the development of good financial administration throughout the Council and any partnership in which the Council participates.
- 1.4 To conduct its business efficiently, the Council needs to ensure that it has sound financial management processes in place and that they are rigorously followed by everyone. The Council is also committed to innovation provided that risk assessment is undertaken and necessary safeguards are in place.
- 1.5 The financial regulations provide clarity about the financial accountabilities of individuals – Councillors, the Chief Executive, the Head of ~~Law & Licensing~~ Corporate Support, the ~~Head of Finance~~ Chief Finance Officer and other senior officers.
- 1.6 Beyond the scope of this document, the financial regulations link with other internal regulatory documents forming part of the Council’s governance framework. For example procurement policies and procedures, ~~the schemes of delegation and codes of conduct, which may include specific issues such as use of the Internet.~~ There are also more detailed Statements of Current Working Method which supplement the Regulations and carry the status and authority of these Regulations.
- 1.7 The financial regulations take effect through financial processes that regularly change. The ~~Head of Finance~~ Chief Finance Officer will maintain and update Statements of Current Working Method for each of the main financial processes. ~~Senior Officers~~ Senior officers are responsible for ensuring that their teams follow current working methods and for proposing amended and alternative methods to the ~~Head of Finance~~ Chief Finance Officer should new opportunities for improved efficiency and effectiveness arise.

2. Status of Financial Regulations

- 2.1 Financial regulations provide the framework for managing the Council's financial affairs. They apply to every elected member and officer of the Council and anyone acting on its behalf. They cover all of the financial activities of the Council including Common Good, Trust and Schools Funds.
- 2.2 The regulations identify the financial responsibilities of the ~~full~~ Council and Cabinet, statutory officers and other senior officers. ~~Senior officers~~ Heads of Service should maintain a record where decision making has been delegated to their staff, including seconded staff. Where decisions have been delegated or devolved to other responsible officers, such as Head Teachers, references to the senior officer in the regulations should be read as referring to them.
- 2.3 All elected members and staff have a general responsibility for taking reasonable action to ensure the security of the assets under their control, and for ensuring that the use of these resources is legal and achieves best value.
- 2.4 The ~~Head of Finance~~ Chief Finance Officer is responsible for reviewing the financial regulations and submitting any additions or changes necessary to ~~the full~~ Council for approval. The ~~Head of Finance~~ Chief Finance Officer is also responsible for reporting significant breaches of the financial regulations to the Council's Audit & Governance Committee.
- 2.5 Heads of Service ~~Senior officers~~ are responsible for ensuring that all relevant staff in their departments are aware of the existence and content of the Council's financial regulations and other internal regulatory documents and that they comply with them. For the purpose of this paragraph "relevant staff" comprise those staff whose work activities are directly governed by the terms of the financial regulations and those other internal regulatory documents and as such require to have knowledge of, and in their work comply with, said financial regulations and documents.
- 2.6 Senior officers include the chief executive, directors, heads of service, ~~business group~~ service managers and ~~business unit~~ team managers. Also included are any staff that have financial responsibilities delegated to them by a senior officer.
- 2.7 The ~~Head of Finance~~ Chief Finance Officer is responsible for issuing advice and guidance to underpin the financial regulations that elected members, officers and others acting on behalf of the Council are required to follow.

3. Financial Regulations

A: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

- A.1** Financial management covers all financial accountabilities in relation to the running of the Council, including the policy framework and budget.

~~THE FULL COUNCIL~~

- A.2** ~~The full~~ Council is responsible for adopting the Council's governance framework ~~and elected members' code of conduct~~ and for approving the budget. It is also responsible for approving and monitoring compliance with the Council's overall framework of accountability and control. The framework is set out in the Standing Orders. ~~The full~~ Council is also responsible for monitoring compliance with the agreed policy.
- A.3** ~~The full~~ Council is responsible for approving procedures for recording and reporting decisions taken. This includes those key decisions delegated by and decisions taken by the Council, the Cabinet and other committees. These delegations and details of who has responsibility for which decisions are set out in the Standing Orders.

CABINET AND OTHER COMMITTEES

- A.4** These committees are responsible for approving the policy framework for the responsibilities that are delegated to them by the Council.
- ~~**A.5** These committees are also responsible for establishing protocols to ensure that councillors and senior officers consult with relevant councillors and officers before taking a decision within their delegated authority. In making a delegated decision, the individual must take account of legal and financial liabilities and risk management issues that may arise from the decision.~~

THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Head of Paid Service

- A.6A.5** The Head of Paid Service is responsible for the corporate and overall strategic management of the Council as a whole, including establishing a framework for management direction, style and standards and for monitoring the performance of the organisation.

A.7A.6 The Head of Paid Service is responsible for advising the Cabinet or ~~full~~ Council about whether a decision is likely to be considered contrary or not wholly in accordance with the policy framework.

A.8A.7 The Head of Paid Service is responsible for maintaining an up-to-date governance framework.

Monitoring Officer

A.9A.8 The Monitoring Officer, together with the Chief Finance Officer, is responsible for advising ~~the full~~ Council about whether a decision or the absence of a decision is likely to be considered contrary or not wholly in accordance with the budget. Actions that may be 'contrary to the budget' include:

- initiating a new policy
- committing expenditure in future years to above the budget level
- causing the total expenditure financed from council tax, grants and corporately held reserves to increase, or to increase by more than a specified amount.

Chief Social Work Officer

A.10A.9 The Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) is responsible for "the provision of effective, professional advice to local authorities – elected members and officers - in the authorities' provision of social work services" (Section 5(1) of the Social Work Act (Scotland) 1968). The financial management of the Council may have a significant impact on the provision of social work services and the CSWO will be consulted as part of making significant changes to financial arrangements e.g. in budget setting.

Chief Finance Officer

A.11A.10 The Chief Finance Officer has statutory duties in relation to the financial administration and stewardship of the Council. This statutory responsibility cannot be overridden. The statutory duties arise from:

- Section 95 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973
- Sections 12-14 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003

A.12A.11 The Chief Finance Officer is responsible for:

- promoting and maintaining high standards of financial conduct.
- the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs
- setting and monitoring compliance with financial management standards
- advising on the corporate financial position and on the key financial controls necessary to secure sound financial management
- providing financial information
- preparing the revenue budget and capital investment plan

- treasury management.

OTHER OFFICERS

A.13A.12 Senior officers are responsible for:

- ensuring that elected members are advised of the financial implications of all proposals and that the financial implications have been agreed with the ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer.
- signing contracts on behalf of the Council.

A.14A.13 It is the responsibility of ~~senior officers~~Heads of Service to consult with the ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer and with the ~~Head of Law and Licensing~~Corporate Support to seek approval on any matter liable to significantly affect the Council's finances or legal obligations before any commitments are incurred.

OTHER FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

Virement

A.15A.14 Senior officers are responsible for notifying the ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer of any in-year virements required.

Treatment of year-end balances

A.16A.15 The ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer is responsible for carrying forward under- and over-spending in accordance with any policies approved by ~~full~~ Council.

Accounting policies

A.17A.16 The ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer is responsible for selecting accounting policies and ensuring that they are applied consistently.

Accounting records and returns

A.18A.17 The ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer is responsible for determining the accounting procedures and records for the Council.

The annual statement of accounts

A.19A.18 The ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer is responsible for ensuring that the annual statement of accounts is prepared in accordance with all accounting standards applicable at that time. The ~~full~~Council Audit & Governance Committee is responsible for approving the annual statement of accounts following external audit.

B: FINANCIAL PLANNING

INTRODUCTION

- B.1** ~~The full~~ Council is responsible for agreeing the Council's policy framework and budget. In terms of financial planning, the key elements are:
- the setting of the Council Tax and the associated budgets on an annual cycle in accordance with legislation
 - the setting of council house rents and the associated budgets on a cycle determined by the Council
 - the capital investment plan
 - treasury management strategy

POLICY FRAMEWORK

- B.2** ~~The full~~ Council is responsible for approving the policy framework and budget. The council policy framework includes the following key plans:
- ~~corporate plan~~ Council plan
 - ~~single outcome agreement~~ Financial & Capital Strategies
 - ~~asset management plan~~ Treasury Management & Investment Strategy
 - Asset management plan
~~capital investment plan~~
- B.3** ~~The full~~ Council is also responsible for approving changes to budgets, plans and strategies that form the budget or policy framework.
- B.4** The Cabinet is responsible for taking in-year decisions on resources and priorities in order to deliver the policy framework within the financial limits set by ~~the full~~ Council.

Preparation of the corporate plan and single outcome agreement

- B.5** The Chief Executive is responsible for submitting the ~~corporate~~ Council ~~Plan~~ and single outcome agreement to ~~the full~~ Council for approval.

Preparation of the asset management plan

- B.6** The ~~Executive Director of Community Services~~ Depute Chief Executive – Resources & Economy is responsible for preparing and submitting the asset management plan (AMP) to ~~the full Council~~ Cabinet for approval.

Preparation of the capital investment plan

- B.7** The Head ~~of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer is responsible for ensuring a capital investment plan is prepared for approval by ~~the full~~ Council and that any consequent revenue costs are incorporated into the budget.

BUDGETING

Budget format

- B.8** The format of the budget will be approved by ~~the full~~ Council following receipt of the advice of the ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer.

Budget preparation

- B.9** The ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer is responsible for ensuring that a detailed revenue budget for the forthcoming year is prepared on an annual basis and presented to Council and a general revenue plan on a three-yearly basis along with high level medium term plans consistent with the financial strategy. ~~is submitted to the full Council.~~
- B.10** The ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer is responsible for issuing annual guidance on the content of the budget and the timetable for its preparation.

Budget monitoring and control

- B.11** The ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer is responsible for providing appropriate financial information to enable budgets to be monitored effectively. The ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer must monitor expenditure and income against budget and report on the overall position on a regular basis.
- B.12** It is the responsibility of senior officers to control income and expenditure within their area and to monitor performance, taking account of financial information provided by the ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer. They should act on variances within their own areas, taking any action necessary to avoid exceeding their budget allocation and alert the ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer to any significant problems.

Guidelines

- B.13** Guidelines on budget preparation are ~~issued~~provided to elected members and ~~senior officers~~Heads of Service by the ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer. The guidelines will take account of:
- legal requirements
 - medium-term planning prospects
 - available resources
 - spending pressures
 - relevant government guidelines

- relevant internal policy documents.

MAINTENANCE OF RESERVES

B.14 It is the responsibility of the ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer to advise ~~the~~
~~full~~ Council on prudent levels of reserves for the Council.

C: RISK MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OF RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

- C.1** It is essential that robust, integrated systems are developed and maintained for identifying and evaluating all significant strategic and operational risks to the Council. This should include the participation of all those associated with planning and delivering services.

RISK MANAGEMENT

- C.2** ~~The full Council~~ The Cabinet is responsible for approving the Council's risk management strategy and the Audit & Governance Committee is responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of risk management.
- C.3** The Head of ~~Governance & Performance Management~~Communities is responsible for preparing the Council's risk management strategy and policies and for promoting them throughout the Council. ~~The Head of Finance is responsible and for~~ advising the Cabinet on proper insurance cover where appropriate.

INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROL

- C.4** Internal financial control refers to the systems of control devised by management to help ensure the Council's objectives are achieved in a manner that promotes economical, efficient and effective use of resources and that the Council's assets and interests are safeguarded.
- C.5** The ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer is responsible for advising on effective systems of internal financial control. These will aim to ensure that public funds are properly safeguarded and used economically, efficiently, and in accordance with the statutory and other authorities that govern their use.
- C.6** It is the responsibility of senior officers to establish sound arrangements for planning, appraising and controlling their operations in order to achieve continuous improvement, economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

AUDIT REQUIREMENTS

- C.7** The statutory requirement placed upon the Council to ensure proper administration of financial affairs encourages the ~~maintenance~~maintenance of an effective internal audit function.

- C.8** The Accounts Commission is responsible for appointing external auditors to each local authority. The basic duties of the external auditor are governed by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000.
- C.9** The Council may, from time to time, be subject to audit, inspection or investigation by external bodies such as HM Revenues & Customs, which have statutory rights of access.

PREVENTING FRAUD AND CORRUPTION

- C.10** The ~~Head of Governance & Performance Management~~Service Manager – Internal Audit is responsible for the development and maintenance of an anti-fraud and anti-corruption policy.
- C.11** Senior officers are responsible for promptly dealing with any financial irregularities, through normal disciplinary processes where employees are involved or through contractual processes where suppliers are involved. In cases of exceptional complexity, Internal Audit may be able to assist in the investigation. A financial irregularity is something a council officer or supplier has done in their work that either leads to a financial loss for the Council that should have been avoided and/or a gain for the employee or supplier that they should not have taken.

ASSETS

- C.12** Senior officers should ensure that records and assets are properly maintained and securely held. They should also ensure that contingency plans for the security of assets and continuity of service in the event of disaster or system failure are in place.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT

- C.13** The Council has adopted CIPFA's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice* ~~2009~~2021.
- C.14** ~~The full~~ Council is responsible for approving the treasury management policy statement setting out the matters detailed in the *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice* ~~2009~~2021.
- C.15** All decisions on borrowing, investment or financing shall be delegated to the ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer, who is required to act in accordance with CIPFA's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice* ~~2010~~2021 and the *The Local Government Investments (Scotland) Regulations* 2010.

Staffing

- C.16** The Chief Executive is responsible for determining how officer support within the Council will be organised.

- C.17** The Chief Executive is responsible for overall framework for the management of staff. The Chief Executive is also responsible for ensuring that there is proper use of the evaluation or other agreed systems for determining the remuneration of a job.
- C.18** Senior officers are responsible for controlling total staff numbers by:
- adjusting the staffing to a level that can be funded and sustained within approved budget provision, varying the level as necessary within that constraint in order to meet changing operational needs
 - the proper use of appointment procedures.

D: SYSTEMS & PROCESSES

INTRODUCTION

- D.1 Well designed and functional systems and processes are essential to an effective framework of financial accountability and control.

GENERAL

- D.2 The ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer is responsible for the operation of the Council's accounting systems, the form of accounts and the supporting financial records. Any significant changes made by senior officers to the existing financial systems or the establishment of new systems must be approved by the ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer. However, senior officers are responsible for the proper operation of financial systems and processes in their own departments.
- D.3 Any proposals from senior officers for changes to current working methods to meet specific service needs should be agreed with the ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer.
- D.4 Senior officers should ensure that their staff receive relevant financial training.
- D.5 Senior officers must ensure that, where appropriate, computer and other systems are registered in accordance with data protection legislation. Senior officers must ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities under both the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2003.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

- D.6 It is the responsibility of ~~senior officers~~Heads of Service to ensure that a proper scheme of delegation has been established within their area and is operating effectively. The scheme of delegation should identify staff authorised to act on the senior officer's behalf in respect of payments, income collection and placing orders, together with the limits of their authority.
- D7. The Cabinet is responsible for approving procedures for writing off debts.

PAYMENTS TO EMPLOYEES AND ELECTED MEMBERS

- D.8 The Head of ~~Finance~~Corporate Support is responsible for all payments of salaries and wages to all staff, including payments for overtime, car allowances, subsistence allowances, travelling and incidental expenses, and for payments to elected members.

TAXATION

- D.8** The ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer is responsible for advising senior officers, in the light of guidance issued by appropriate bodies and relevant legislation as it applies, on all taxation issues that affect the Council.
- D.9** The ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer is responsible for maintaining the Council's tax records, making all tax payments, receiving tax credits and submitting tax returns by their due date as appropriate.

TRADING ACCOUNTS

- D.10** It is the responsibility of the ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer to advise on the requirement for and operation of trading accounts.

E: EXTERNAL ARRANGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

- E.1** The Council provides a distinctive leadership role for the communities of East Lothian and brings together the contributions of various stakeholders. It must also act to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the county.

PARTNERSHIPS

- E.2** ~~The full~~ Council is responsible for approving delegations, including frameworks for partnerships. ~~The full~~ Council is responsible for forming partnerships with other public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations to address local needs.
- E.3** ~~The full~~ Council can delegate functions – including those relating to partnerships – to officers. These are set out in the scheme of delegation that forms part of the Council's standing orders.
- E.4** The Chief Executive (or nominee) represents the Council on partnership and external bodies, in accordance with the scheme of delegation.
- E.5** The ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer is responsible for promoting and maintaining the same high standards of conduct with regard to financial administration in partnerships that apply throughout the Council. The ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer must also ensure that the accounting arrangements to be adopted relating to partnerships and joint ventures are satisfactory.
- E.6** Senior officers are responsible for ensuring that appropriate approvals are obtained before any negotiations are concluded in relation to work with external bodies. They must ensure that the risks have been appraised before agreements are entered into with external bodies.

EXTERNAL FUNDING

- E.7** The ~~Head of Finance~~Chief Finance Officer is responsible for ensuring that all funding notified by external bodies is received and properly recorded in the Council's accounts.

WORK FOR THIRD PARTIES

E.8 — The Cabinet or other committee (when within the remit of that committee) is responsible for approving the contractual arrangements for any work for third parties or external bodies.

|

COMMITTEE:	East Lothian Council
MEETING DATE:	28 April 2026
BY:	Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy
REPORT TITLE:	Schedule of Meetings 2026/27
REPORT STATUS:	Public

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To set the Schedule of Meetings of the Council, committees and other forums for 2026/27.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 approve the proposed Schedule of Meetings for 2026/27, as set out in Appendix 1; and
- 2.2 authorise the Head of Corporate Support to make minor adjustments to the Schedule, as necessary, and to communicate any such adjustments to Members as soon as practicable.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The annual Schedule of Meetings for 2026/27 is presented to Members for approval. There are approximately 90 committee meetings scheduled for 2026/27, and the schedule largely follows the pattern set in recent years.
- 3.2 As 2027 is a Local Government Election year, the Council will go into election recess at the end of March 2027. In accordance with the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the first meeting of the newly elected Council must be held within 21 days of the date of the election. This meeting has been scheduled for 25 May 2027. A proposed schedule of

meetings for the remainder of May and June 2027 will be brought forward at a later date.

- 3.3 Members should note that the East Lothian Integration Joint Board (IJB) sets its own dates (including those for the IJB Audit & Risk Committee). The dates for these meetings have already been approved by the IJB.
- 3.4 Members should also note that there will be one meeting of the Council in February 2027 and two meetings in March 2027. The February 2027 meeting will be to set the Council's budget. The meeting on 9 March 2027 will deal with any business needed to be heard before the pre-election period begins and the meeting on 30 March will deal with regular business.
- 3.5 A number of dates have been included for Members' briefings. Members will be advised of the topics during the course of the session. Unless otherwise advised, Members' briefings will continue to take place via MS Teams.
- 3.6 Meetings taking place in the Council Chamber will be held via the Hybrid Link system, which allows for physical or remote participation. These meetings (with the exception of private business) will be webcast live, and the recordings will be available for five years following the meeting date. Any changes to meeting venues/format will be communicated to Members.
- 3.7 Members are asked to authorise the Head of Corporate Support to make any minor adjustments to the Schedule, as necessary, to ensure business is conducted in a timely manner, and any such adjustments will be communicated to Members as soon as practicable.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Finance: None
- 5.2 Human Resources: None
- 5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): None
- 5.4 Risk: None

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

X

or

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

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

[Enter information on impacts that have been identified]

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

7 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix 1 – Draft Schedule of Meetings 2026/27

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 East Lothian Council Standing Orders

9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

Report Author(s)

Name	Lel Gillingwater/Linda Gillie
Designation	Team Managers – Democratic & Licensing
Tel/Email	lgillingwater@eastlothian.gov.uk / lgillie2@eastlothian.gov.uk
Date	30 March 2026

Head of Service Approval

Name	Hayley Barnett
Designation	Head of Corporate Support
Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed	Confirmed
Approval Date	2 April 2026

East Lothian Council
Draft Schedule of Meetings 2026/27

Day	Date	Time	Committee/Meeting	Venue
Tues	18 August 2026	10.00	Planning Committee	CC
Thurs	20 August 2026	14.00	Local Review Body (Planning)	CC
Tues	25 August 2026	10.00	East Lothian Council	CC
Thurs	27 August 2026	10.00	East Lothian Licensing Board	CC
		14.00	East Lothian Integration Joint Board	Teams
Tues	1 September 2026	10.00	Planning Committee	CC
Thurs	3 September 2026	10.00	Employee Appeals Committee	CC
Tues	8 September 2026	10.00	Cabinet	CC
Wed	9 September 2026	14.00	Joint Consultative Committee	CC
Thurs	10 September 2026	10.00	Homelessness Appeals Sub-Committee	tbc
		14.00	Licensing Sub Committee	CC
Tues	15 September 2026	14.00	IJB Audit and Risk Committee	Teams
Thurs	17 September 2026	10.00	Policy and Performance Review Committee	CC
		14.00	Local Review Body (Planning)	CC
Tues	22 September 2026	10.00	Common Good Committee	CC
		14.00	Members' Briefing	Teams
Thurs	24 September 2026	10.00	East Lothian Licensing Board	CC
		14.00	East Lothian Integration Joint Board	Teams
Tues	29 September 2026	10.00	Audit and Governance Committee	CC
Thurs	1 October 2026	10.00	Employee Appeals Sub-Committee	CC
Tues	6 October 2026	10.00	Planning Committee	CC
Thurs	8 October 2026	14.00	Licensing Sub-Committee	CC
Autumn Recess: Friday 9 October – Monday 19 October 2026				
Tues	20 October 2026	14.00	Members' Briefing	Teams
Wed	21 October 2026	10.00	Petitions and Community Empowerment Review Committee	CC
Thurs	22 October 2026	14.00	Local Review Body (Planning)	CC
Tues	27 October 2026	10.00	East Lothian Council	CC
Thurs	29 October 2026	10.00	East Lothian Licensing Board	CC
		14.00	East Lothian Integration Joint Board	Teams
Tues	3 November 2026	10.00	Planning Committee	CC
Thurs	5 November 2026	10.00	Employee Appeals Sub Committee	CC
Tues	10 November 2026	10.00	Cabinet	CC
		14.00	Common Good Committee	CC
Thurs	12 November 2026	10.00	Homelessness Appeals Sub Committee	tbc
		14.00	Licensing Sub Committee	CC
Tues	17 November 2026	10.00	Audit and Governance Committee	CC
		14.00	Members' Briefing	Teams
Thurs	19 November 2026	14.00	Local Review Body (Planning)	CC

Tues	24 November 2026	10.00	Education and Children's Services Committee	CC
Thurs	26 November 2026	10.00	East Lothian Licensing Board	CC
Tues	1 December 2026	10.00 15.00	Planning Committee IJB Audit and Risk Committee	CC Teams
Wed	2 December 2026	14.00	Joint Consultative Committee	CC
Thurs	3 December 2026	10.00	Employee Appeals Sub-Committee	CC
Tues	8 December 2026	10.00	East Lothian Council	CC
Thurs	10 December 2026	14.00	Licensing Sub-Committee	CC
Thurs	17 December 2026	14.00	East Lothian Integration Joint Board	Teams
Winter Recess: Friday 18 December 2026 – Monday 4 January 2027				
Tues	12 January 2027	10.00 14.00	Planning Committee Common Good Committee	CC CC
Wed	13 January 2027	10.00	Police, Fire and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee	CC
Thurs	14 January 2027	10.00 14.00	Homelessness Appeals Sub Committee Licensing Sub Committee	tbc CC
Tues	19 January 2027	10.00 14.00	Cabinet Members briefing	CC Teams
Thurs	21 January 2027	10.00 14.00	Policy and Performance Review Committee Local Review Body (Planning)	CC CC
Thurs	28 January 2027	10.00	East Lothian Licensing Board	CC
Tues	2 February 2027	10.00	Planning Committee	CC
Thurs	4 February 2027	10.00	Employee Appeals Sub Committee	CC
Wed	10 February 2027	10.00	Petitions and Community Empowerment Review Committee	CC
Thurs	11 February 2027	14.00	Licensing Sub-Committee	CC
Tues	16 February 2027	14.00	East Lothian Council (Budget)	CC
Thurs	18 February 2027	14.00	Local Review Body (Planning)	CC
Tues	23 February 2027	10.00	Members' Briefing	Teams
Thurs	25 February 2027	10.00 14.00	East Lothian Licensing Board East Lothian Integration Joint Board	CC Teams
Tues	2 March 2027	10.00	Planning Committee	CC
Wed	3 March 2027	14.00	Joint Consultative Committee	CC
Thurs	4 March 2027	10.00 10.00	Audit and Governance Committee Employee Appeals Sub-Committee	CC CC
Tues	9 March 2027	10.00 14.00	East Lothian Council IJB Audit and Risk Committee	CC Teams
Thurs	11 March 2027	10.00 14.00	Homelessness Appeals Sub Committee Licensing Sub-Committee	 CC
Tues	16 March 2027	10.00 14.00	Education and Children's Services Committee Common Good Committee	CC CC
Thurs	18 March 2027	10.00	Policy and Performance Review Committee	CC

		14.00	Local Review Body (Planning)	CC
Tues	23 March 2027	10.00 14.00	Planning Committee Members Briefing	CC Teams
Thurs	25 March 2027	10.00 14.00	East Lothian Licensing Board East Lothian Integration Joint Board	CC Teams
Tues	30 March 2027	10.00	East Lothian Council	CC
Election Recess: Wednesday 31 March to Monday 24 May 2027				
Tues	25 May 2027	10.00	East Lothian Council	CC

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