



# Business Plan

Our Future Council, our Future City

•EDINBURGH•  
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

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# Introduction

I'm delighted to present our updated Council Business Plan. This Plan outlines the progress we have made against our priorities so far and how we will continue to deliver against these over the next two years.

As a reminder, our agreed strategic objectives are to:

- Create good places to live and work across Edinburgh
- End poverty in this city
- Deliver a net zero city by 2030

We know from residents' feedback that we must keep our essential public services running to the standard they expect, deliver support for those who need it most, while playing our part in tackling the climate and nature emergencies.

We've achieved a lot in the last two years. We've laid the ground for introducing the visitor levy, which will bring us a once in a lifetime opportunity to invest tens of millions of pounds towards enhancing and sustaining the things that make our city such a great place to visit and live in.

We've also reached two important milestones in our journey to become a healthier, greener, and more sustainable city. Passenger services on the new tram route to Newhaven started in June 2023, with the line now carrying one million people a month. We introduced the Low Emission Zone a year later.

However, for all the plaudits our city rightly receives, and the prosperity we generally enjoy, there remains another side to the story: 80,000 people live in poverty in Edinburgh – including a fifth of all children. That's why tackling poverty must remain a key priority for us.

Since first publishing this plan in 2023, we've helped thousands of people through the cost-of-living crisis by providing and investing in additional support to help those most in need. This work has already put £20 million back into the pockets of low-income families – but we know significantly more still goes unclaimed each year and are working hard to make sure we raise awareness of the support available – financial or otherwise.

Turning to the bigger picture, I don't think there's any doubt that the global outlook will remain volatile and that new challenges will arise. We know that Council finances will come under increasing pressure, and that an ambitious nationwide programme of Scottish Government legislation could bring changes to the way we work.

That's why we must continue to be ambitious and innovative, but also realistic, and why our actions must be affordable and deliverable. It's also why we must listen to the views of residents and work collaboratively across the political groups and with our partners, citizens, and communities across the city.

Only then will we be able to deliver a fairer and stronger city of which we can all be proud.



**Cllr Jane Meagher**

**Council Leader**

# EDINBURGH IN PROFILE

## A city of contradictions

Edinburgh is a city with huge strengths, but real and critical challenges.

We have one of the highest skilled, highest paid populations of any city in the UK, but even here 20% of children grow up in poverty, and inequalities in health are vivid – boys born in the poorest parts of the city can expect to live a life around 20 years shorter than those in the most affluent.

In 2025 we will see the ongoing impact of the cost of living crisis forcing more families into difficult daily choices as they struggle to get by. The coming years are expected to show the biggest drop in UK living standards since 1961.

## A growing city

Edinburgh is the fastest growing city in Scotland, with more than 60,000 new residents expected over the next 20 years. This is a true sign of the city's success, but it does bring real pressure on communities, on housing, support services of all kinds and on the city infrastructure on which we all rely. The pressure on our housing is clear for everyone to see and we declared a housing emergency in November 2023.

Managing the growth of the city also means managing a just transition to support the twin climate and nature emergencies. To meet our climate and nature targets, Edinburgh needs to move faster than we did in the past decade on reducing emissions and supporting nature enhancement every year to 2030.

## An economic capital

Edinburgh is Scotland's economic capital and, outside London, the strongest major city economy in the UK. But business conditions throughout the UK are challenging and will remain so for the next few years, with the economy as a whole expected to be growing slowly throughout 2025 and 2026.

Businesses across Edinburgh are struggling with high costs of trading – with inflation and interest rate increases that occurred during 2022 and 2023 still affecting the cost of supplies, wages, energy, and borrowing today.



<b>523,250</b> Edinburgh population in 2023	<b>392,000</b> Jobs in Edinburgh
<b>586,566</b> Projected population in 2043	<b>15,161</b> Universal credit claimants in employment in Edinburgh

# Our future council

We need to work differently if we are to deliver our priorities in a way that is financially sustainable.

We need to continue to innovate and provide services that reflect the growing and changing needs of the residents of Edinburgh while making it easier for members of the public to contact, engage and work with us.

And we need to make prevention of harm and reducing inequality core principles of the way we work.

## The financial challenges we face are growing fast

We have big ambitions for Edinburgh, but every year once growing demand and the effects inflation are factored in, we have less money available to deliver them with. In fact, despite having set out proposals for a balanced budget in 2025/26 over the next four years we think we need to remove £94m from our annual running costs just to break even.

Almost three quarters of the money we use to fund day to day services comes from Government grant funding. This has reduced by 15% in real terms since 2015 and is not expected to keep pace with demand going forward.

At the same time, the population of Edinburgh is growing and changing. Potentially meaning more children in schools, more people with complex support needs, and more demand for our services in general.

The cost of providing those services is increasing too. Inflation means the cost of goods and services is rising. High energy costs meaning our buildings are more expensive to heat and light. The cost of wages for our staff is increasing and higher interest rates mean we need to pay more to fund the capital investments we have planned.

To help us live within our means, we will continue to make the case to the Scottish and UK Governments for our fair share of funding. We will also maximise the opportunities we have to raise more local income in ways that are fair and appropriate for Edinburgh, like the Visitor Levy we are introducing.

Even with these commitments, however, we will need to reduce our costs, and make sure that all our resources are focused on delivering the things that matter most to the people of Edinburgh.

At the same time, we need to reflect that the world around us is changing. Citizens and employees delivering services are used to working in more flexible ways and we need to adapt and modernise our systems and service models to respond to that change.

This all means that the future council will need to take a more effective approach to preventing service demand and may need to work from fewer, but better local buildings. And it means continuing to improve our digital infrastructure, improving access to online services where that is the best way to improve outcomes for people, and improving the security and resilience of our council wide management systems.

We will also need to be more empowering of others and more connected to our citizens lives and communities, working with partners to ensure there is no wrong door for people to get support, tailoring services around people who need help and making sure those in our care are safe and protected.

This also requires a culture that is more inclusive, where people feel safe and able to raise concerns and potential risks knowing that they will be responded to fairly and effectively.

This updated Business Plan shows how we are responding positively to these opportunities and challenges.

**By delivering this plan we can make sure that our future council is:**

- **Clear about its priorities and focused on delivery**
- **More empowering of local communities, citizens, colleagues, and partners**
- **Focused on prevention and early intervention**
- **Determined there will be no 'wrong door' to find support**
- **Digitally enabled and accessible**
- **More diverse, inclusive, and welcoming**
- **A more efficient organisation with the right buildings in the right places to meet service needs**
- **Financially sustainable, delivering a balanced budget**
- **Open and transparent in its decision making**





# CHANGING THE SHAPE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SCOTLAND

Over the current Scottish Parliamentary term, the Scottish Government is expected to introduce new legislation that will transform the way local government works in Scotland.

These include new legislative duties that will change the way we deliver services with and for people. They include new requirements and increased expectations for councils relating to community wealth building, childcare, housing, transport, climate and nature and a range of other services.

As these requirements are implemented, we will advocate for the interests of Edinburgh and seek to use our influence to ensure they are appropriately funded by the Scottish Government and do not create additional pressures on our budget. Our Business Plan will be updated to reflect these national policy decisions as needed.

Taken together, these plans mean that the functions and the budgets of the Council will face a challenging transformation during the next few years, impacting directly on our structures, our workforce, and the people who depend on our services.

Throughout this period, we will continue to work with COSLA and other local authority partnership groups to make sure the voice of Edinburgh, and local government, is heard where decisions that affect us are being made. We will redouble our efforts to use our influence, as Scotland's capital city, to make sure the people of Edinburgh receive a fair funding deal from national governments and to make sure we have the powers and resources we need to deliver the outcomes set out in this plan.



# How we work with partners

## Shared outcomes and joint working

The ambitions we have for Edinburgh cannot be met by the Council, or any other organisation, working on its own. The ambitions set out in this plan will contribute directly to the overall **Edinburgh Partnership** vision for the city – a thriving, connected, inspired and fair city, where all forms of poverty and inequality are reduced.

Through the **Edinburgh Partnership** we are committed to working with our community planning partners – including community groups and community councils, public, private, and third sector organisations – across the city to deliver the outcomes and goals we all share, and which can only be achieved when we work together.

The **Edinburgh Partnership Community Plan 2022- 2028** describes the framework for that joint working and focuses on actions needed to end poverty in Edinburgh.

To do this, partners are committed to working together, seeking opportunities to share assets, services, and resources towards the three common outcomes set out in the Edinburgh Partnership Community Plan:

- **Enough money to live on.** All partners are committed to working together to deliver a more coordinated approach to income maximisation, support, and advice services. The plan aims to make sure all residents have access to income maximisation support where and when they need it and receive the same high-quality support wherever they are in the city.
- **Access to work, training and learning opportunities.** Partners are committed to working together to provide new and additional targeted support to help people into work, training, or learning. This includes

planning of intensive integrated family support programmes, support for people on release from prison, support for care experienced young people, and improved support for people from the BAME community.

- **A good place to live.** The places people live and work, their connections with others and the extent to which they can influence the decisions that affect them, all have a significant impact on their quality of life and wellbeing. Towards this, all partners are committed to working together to create good places to live in Edinburgh and accessible and open places, with good links to health, childcare, and other services.



## Edinburgh Partnership Community Plan 2022 - 2028





During 2024 the Partnership committed to a Transformation and Improvement Programme focusing on the way they work together to deliver their priorities. This programme will complete during 2025 with a refreshed community plan.

The Partnership has set out how all partners will work together to deliver our joint priorities which is shown in the diagram below.



# Listening to citizens and empowering communities

To meet the priorities set out in this plan, we need people and communities to have more say in the way the services they use are delivered. This is an important part of making sure Edinburgh has more empowered and resilient communities, driving accountability within services and encouraging democratic participation and engagement by citizens.

Over recent years we have taken significant steps as a Council to improve the way we consult and engage with citizens, and to ensure that consultations have a real impact on the way changes in this city are being delivered. During the past five years we have held almost 300 public consultations, receiving more than 140,000 responses.

We have seen throughout the challenges of the past few years that communities and citizens can achieve great progress together. We will seek to increase the control local communities have over the design of services and local resources.

We know that our communities engage with many different public and wider service providers and so we will work through our community planning partnership to increase the visibility and impact of joined up decision making and service delivery.

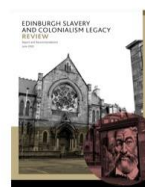
Over the next few years, we know that human rights legislation will extend rights thresholds and entitlements in Scotland, and we are embracing the changes that those new rights will demand as we ensure Edinburgh is a city that is fair for all.

## Working with our local partners - public, private and third sectors, we will...

- a work with our community planning partners (the Edinburgh Partnership) to deliver the 2050 City Vision, eliminating poverty from the city by 2030 and

responding to the threat posed by Climate Change to meet our 2030 emissions target

- b work with the Edinburgh Partnership on a new operating model for our services that is focused on preventing poverty and improving access by integrating key services.
- c work with other public bodies and the third sector to move away from a procured services model and into a place-based approach to commissioned services as advocated by the Edinburgh Poverty Commission.
- d make sure that people at risk from harm through poverty and deprivation, hate crime or discrimination, violence against women, children and young people, or of becoming involved in crime, are protected and supported
- e work with partners and stakeholders across the city to make sure we deliver fully the recommendations of the Edinburgh Slavery and Colonialism Legacy Review, ensuring that Edinburgh in the 21st century can be a fairer, more compassionate place whose history is more fully understood.
- f work together to support a nature positive city, protecting and enhancing biodiversity, greenspaces and public realm to support the health and wellbeing of our citizens



## Working to empower our communities and listen to citizens, we will...

- g work with citizens to understand the impact of our decisions and address inequality by delivering our new Equalities and Diversity Framework 2026-30 and Equality Outcomes 2025-26. This will ensure we make a tangible difference to the lives of citizens who have protected characteristics.
- h recognise that many of our communities are developing their own local networks and using their assets and resources to improve the lives of their residents. We will seek to be open and transparent about how we can support and enable these networks. The Edinburgh Partnership Community Empowerment strategy should promote this overall approach across all partner agencies while noting there will be local differences across the city.
- i in tandem with the above, we will work with communities to evolve Community Councils and Neighbourhood Networks to ensure they provide communities with direct input to community planning at a local and strategic level in the city
- j maintain new relationships and groups built up in recent years and support communities with Community Asset Transfers and using Participatory Budgeting where resources allow

- k continue to ensure our consultations and engagement activities follow best practice guidance and report on how citizens' views have shaped the policies and services we deliver
- l continue to benchmark our progress with an annual Edinburgh Survey developed with the Edinburgh Partnership.



# Our priorities for 2023-27

This Business Plan sets out three priorities for the next phase of the city's development and for the way we will reform our services. We will use this plan to guide our budget and investment decisions, ensuring that spending is focused on those activities with the biggest impact.

Our three core priorities are to:

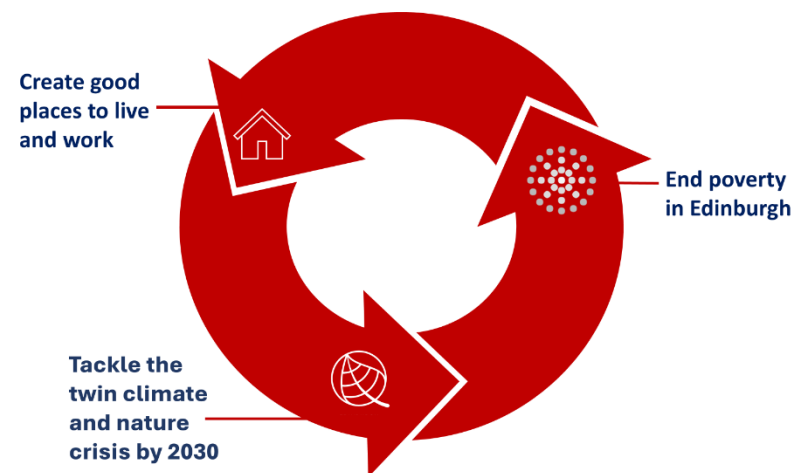
- **Create good places to live and work**
- **End poverty in Edinburgh**
- **Tackle the twin climate and nature crisis by 2030**

These three priorities are interlinked and interdependent. They connect the major strategies and our policies agreed in the past few years, through the shared goals and commitments of the **Edinburgh Partnership** and towards our long-term ambitions for Edinburgh to be a fair, welcoming, pioneering, and thriving city, as expressed by the **2050 Edinburgh City Vision**.

In order to be successful, these priorities must be delivered through the lens of climate and social justice. The actions set out here represent some of the infrastructure, cultural, and behavioural changes needed to become a net zero, climate ready and nature positive city by 2030; end poverty in Edinburgh; and create good places to live and work. However, we recognise that they require significant investment and commitment to make the change we know is needed.

These priorities will drive the 10 outcomes (set out below) that our services will aim to deliver over the next five years. This plan stands as one part of a golden thread linking and guiding all our operations.

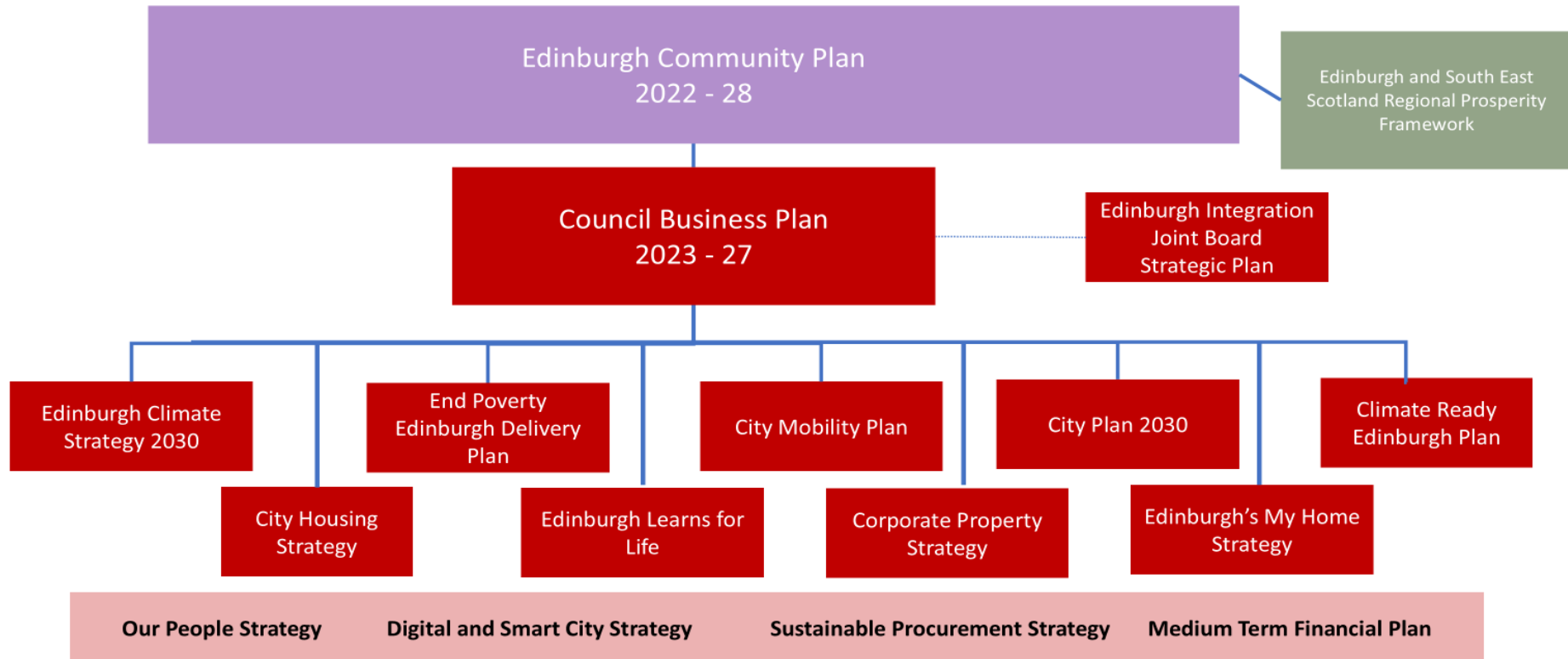
In delivering these outcomes we will implement a programme of service best value reviews targeted towards those services most in need of improvement.



Across all these priorities, we are committed to ensuring that the services we provide are inclusive and accessible to everyone. This means understanding how our decisions impact on the different communities across the city and taking steps to ensure that action for equalities and inclusion is mainstreamed throughout our planning and delivery. It also means making sure that the diverse people and communities of Edinburgh, including those protected by current and future legislation, feel their voice is heard and listened to in decision making processes.

Alongside these wider strategic objectives, there are a wide range of statutory duties that we are required to deliver. This statutory landscape includes significant duties relating to, for instance, education and caring for vulnerable citizens, but it extends well beyond these into almost every area of Council operations. Throughout the delivery of this business plan, we must continue to meet all our statutory duties, but the way these are met will continue to evolve in line with our financial framework and the budget and service we face. Any actions relating to the discharge of statutory duties not covered in this plan will be considered and approved by relevant Council committees.

# **2050 Edinburgh City Vision**





## A delivery plan to meet our priorities

To meet our three core priorities, this business plan identifies the outcomes, objectives, and actions that our services will deliver during 2023-27. A full detailed analysis of these actions, including timescales for delivery, is provided in [Appendix 1](#).

# Council Business Plan 2023-27



## 10 Outcomes for delivery

Core services for people in need of care and support are improved

People can access fair work and the support they need to prevent and stay out of poverty and homelessness

Edinburgh is a cleaner, better maintained city that we can all be proud of

People can access public services locally and digitally in ways that meet their needs and expectations and contribute to a greener net zero city

People have decent, energy efficient, climate proofed homes they can afford to live in

Attainment, achievement, and positive destinations are improved for all with a particular focus on those in poverty

People use decarbonised public transport and active travel as the first choice way to get round the city

Edinburgh is a climate adapted, nature positive city, with biodiverse green spaces, and cheaper cleaner networks for energy use

Edinburgh has a stronger, greener, fairer economy and remains a world leading cultural capital

The Council has the capacity, skills, and resources to deliver its priorities efficiently, effectively and at lower cost

**In summary, during 2023-27 we will ensure that:**

**1. Core services for people in need of care and support are improved - we will:**

- a. Act as good corporate parents so that children and young people feel safe, healthy, and nurtured
- b. Support all services in Edinburgh to support children's needs and deliver on 'the Promise'
- c. Work with partners to make sure that children and vulnerable adults are safe and protected through consistent city-wide approaches
- d. Ensure children have the best start to life through expanding the uptake of early years care and support
- e. Ensure that the care needs of vulnerable adults in Edinburgh are met consistently and safely

**2. People can access fair work and the support they need to prevent and stay out of poverty and homelessness – we will:**

- a. Reform Money and Welfare Advice services to prevent crisis escalation, increase the number of citizens fully accessing benefits entitlements, and reduce the number of families experiencing problem debt
- b. Design and roll out a new whole-family support model across the city, embedded in community settings to support early intervention and prevent poverty and homelessness.
- c. Deliver the Edinburgh Guarantee and our employability programmes, supporting more citizens into sustainable, fair work, and helping to tackle in-work poverty
- d. Develop and deliver a new poverty prevention programme

**3. Edinburgh is a cleaner, better maintained city that we can all be proud of – we will:**

- a. Deliver improvement in waste collection, recycling and cleansing service performance.
- b. Ensure our parks and green space are safe, well maintained, and accessible to all, whilst supporting nature, and
- c. Deliver long-term sustainable investment in the city's roads, paths, pavements, gullies, and street lighting

**4. People can access public services locally and digitally in ways that meet their needs and expectations and contribute to a greener climate ready city – we will:**

- a. Improve access to and co-location of services by embedding a place based approach in all council building and public realm projects
- b. Review our library model to improve access to library and community services
- c. Work with Edinburgh Leisure and other partners to ensure inclusive access is maintained to sport, fitness and leisure activity across the city
- d. Deliver Council led infrastructure investments, policies and strategies that enable Edinburgh's transition to a net zero, climate ready and nature positive city

**5. People have decent, energy efficient, climate proofed homes they can afford to live in – we will:**

- a. Increase supply of affordable housing with an ambition to reach 25,000 new affordable homes
- b. Deliver efficient regulation of short term lets to increase access to housing
- c. Deliver improvements to the council housing repairs service, increased tenant satisfaction, and improved operational efficiency.
- d. Continue to invest in ensuring that all Council owned homes will be brought up to climate-ready and modern standards so all our tenants have a warm, safe, and secure home

**6. Attainment, achievement, and positive destinations are improved for all with a particular focus on those in poverty – we will:**

- a. Deliver inclusive, high quality education that supports children to develop a love of learning, raises attainment, provides opportunities for achievement and leads to sustained positive destinations
- b. Deliver community based support by working with families to coordinate their support, build their resilience and improve their outcomes
- c. Take actions to improve equity and reduce the cost of the school day
- d. Develop a learning workforce that feel part of a team and are supported and challenged to continuously improve

- e. Ensure that investment in our learning estate is targeted to areas of deprivation and areas of new demand due to city growth
- 7. People use decarbonised public transport and active travel as the first choice way to get round the city – we will:**
- a. Deliver agreed investment increases in active travel, street design, road safety, and local mobility systems in alignment with City Mobility Plan commitments and related action plans
  - b. Work in partnership with local bus companies to agree plans for the decarbonisation of the bus infrastructure and improve Edinburgh's public transport offer in alignment with City Mobility Plan commitments and emerging Public Transport Action Plan
  - c. Complete the Trams to Newhaven project and develop plans for further expansion of the network in alignment with City Mobility Plan commitments
  - d. Deliver the approved Low Emission Zone scheme
  - e. Increase the number of publicly accessible electric vehicle chargers and continue to invest in the transition of the council fleet
- 8. Edinburgh is a climate adapted, nature positive city with biodiverse green spaces, and cheaper cleaner networks for energy use – we will:**
- a. Develop a new adaptation plan and Nature Vision to climate proof our infrastructure, communities, business and the natural and built environment, whilst supporting biodiversity and nature, protection and enhancement
  - b. Create new publicly accessible open space and biodiverse green space within the Granton development working towards a ground-breaking coastal park
  - c. Deliver final business cases for approval to begin construction of the first phase of climate ready regeneration in Granton, the BioQuarter and West Edinburgh
- d. Develop a city-wide heat and energy masterplan including plans to expand renewable energy generation in the city
- 9. Edinburgh has a stronger, greener, fairer economy and remains a world leading cultural capital – we will:**
- a. Ensure regulatory and planning services respond efficiently to business needs and support economic recovery
  - b. Provide targeted support to help new and growing businesses thrive in the city
  - c. Deliver a world class cultural and visitor destination offer and enable all Edinburgh residents to access cultural experiences in their local area
  - d. Ensure that Edinburgh is a welcoming and supportive city where creative and cultural practitioners can choose to develop their careers
  - e. Maximise opportunities to raise local income to provide additional resources to our strategic priorities
- 10. We have the capacity, skills, and resources to deliver our priorities efficiently, effectively and at lower cost – we will:**
- a. Modernise and streamline the Council's core business processes to deliver better outcomes for citizens, and a more secure and efficient organisation
  - b. Support and equip the Council workforce with the skills and enabling culture needed to deliver safely these Council Business Plan priorities and our wider statutory duties
  - c. Ensure that the priorities committed to in this business plan are affordable and achievable within the resources we have available

# Our finances

Every year we spend almost £1.4 billion in revenue and around £400 million of capital. While we have a strong track record of balancing our budget, the funding and income we receive is increasingly insufficient to meet the rising cost and demand for services, such as homelessness and social care costs.

In the last decade we have removed more than £400 million from its annual running costs. Over the next four years we expect to have to find at least a further £94 million in cost reductions or additional income if we are to balance our budget. Taken alongside rising service demands and the ongoing impact of the rising cost of living, this presents a serious and testing financial challenge.

The nature of this financial pressure is even greater than previous crises and complicated by the volatile economic and public finance context within which all organisations and businesses are now operating.

The cost of living crisis continues to increase the need for our services, while inflation adds to the cost of delivery of those services, through increased supply chain and workforce costs. At the same time, pressures on public finances across the UK are likely to increase pressure on core Council budgets, while higher interest rates impact on the cost of Council borrowing and its ability to invest in capital projects.

We are required by law to set a balanced budget every year and doing so will mean making increasingly difficult choices, including consideration of service reductions, staffing reductions and asset reductions across our work.

To help us live within our means, we will continue to make the case to the Scottish and UK Governments for our fair share of funding. We will also maximise the opportunities we have to raise more local income in ways that are fair and appropriate for Edinburgh – including introducing a Visitor Levy in Summer 2026.

In response to these opportunities, and other changes to the context within which we operate, we will conduct an annual review of this Business Plan to reflect changing budget settlements and any additional revenue raising powers that may impact on the plan and delivery.

## Our Budget Strategy

As far as is possible in an uncertain environment, we are determined to take a long term approach to financial planning. To do this, we are developing a Budget Strategy that charts a course towards sustainable finances by prioritising investment in preventative services and transforming operational and corporate services to sit alongside this Business Plan. By prioritising fiscal responsibility, preventative services, and effective targeted investment with our limited resource, we aim to create a resilient and inclusive city that thrives on the principles of long-term sustainability and shared prosperity.

The strategy focuses on short- and medium-term change and improvement. The short-term focus is on more effective co-ordination of change across our services and revised arrangements seeking to contain exponential growth in demand-led budgets through enhanced senior manager accountability.

Our Budget Strategy therefore prioritises the following key objectives:

- Achieving financial sustainability
- Securing Best Value
- Protecting statutory Council services
- Delivering the Council's strategic priorities
- Prioritising prevention and delivering transformation:

- **Achieving financial sustainability** - ensure the long-term financial health and stability of The City of Edinburgh Council. This means that the cost of services over the medium-term financial plan can be funded from the core spending power of the Council.
- **Securing Best Value** - ensure the Council achieves Best Value with its resource. This will facilitate effective transparency, accountability and continuous improvement.
- **Protecting statutory Council services** - ensure the Council's statutory services are protected, so the Council meets its minimum statutory requirements across all services.
- **Delivering the Council's strategic priorities** - Aligning financial resources with the Council's strategic goals.
- **Prioritising prevention and delivering transformation** - Plan the strategic investment required for the Council to shift towards a preventative operating model, and to make other strategic operational and corporate transformational changes.

This Plan will also be supported by our ten-year sustainable capital budget strategy. As with the revenue budget, the content and affordability of the capital programme will need to be reconsidered in light of significant expenditure pressures and our priority outcomes.

## Balance of controls and risk management

Through the continued support from our Governance and Internal Audit and Risk teams we will apply proportionate and balanced controls, effective risk management and assurance processes across the Council to support the management of our finances, delivery of services and the implementation of change. You can read more in our Annual Governance Statement and Internal Audit Annual Opinion.

## Delivering Best Value

In November 2020, Audit Scotland published our [most recent Best Value report](#). It concluded that over recent years many of our services have improved and our finances have been well-managed with ambitious strategies in place to improve the lives of local people and the economy. In some areas, the report felt that there was more we could do to fulfil our potential and further improve the lives of citizens.

In response to this audit, we agreed a programme of improvements to performance, and governance, delivery of which are embedded within this refreshed Council Business Plan. In Audit Scotland's [latest annual audit report 2023/24](#) they noted the progress we had made on implementing these recommendations.

Throughout the delivery of this plan, we will report to relevant committees on the implantation of best value improvements. We will also continue to collaborate with Audit Scotland and all its external inspection bodies to improve the culture of the organisation, and the quality, condition, coverage, and transparency of our services.



# Our People

We know that successful organisations have a clear purpose and a strong, positive culture. We aspire to be a progressive organisation that works flexibly and seeks to always do the right thing for our colleagues and the residents we serve. We employ more than 19,000 people delivering a diverse range of services essential for our residents or to support our colleagues to keep our city running at its best.

Our organisational culture is founded on Our Behaviours of Respect, Integrity and Flexibility and we're committed to driving positive change to create a workplace:

- that is open, positive, inclusive and safe for all;
- that supports everyone to be their best self and do their best work;
- that celebrates the benefits of our diversity;
- where everyone feels trusted, valued and recognised for their contribution;
- and where people feel safe and able to raise concerns and potential risks knowing that they will be responded to fairly and effectively.

Removing organisational and cultural barriers will enable our colleagues to feel a greater sense of trust, empowerment, and ownership of their roles. We want to build a culture across all services that focuses on the importance of strong relationships between colleagues, residents, businesses, and communities – helping us to be more resilient against any future public health, environmental or economic shocks.

The changes we are making are set out in our People Strategy, and the underpinning Strategic Workforce Plan. These include more detail on our 5 key themes where our objectives are to:

- Attract the best people
- Develop exceptional leaders
- Foster a culture of equalities, diversity and inclusion.
- Grow and retain our talent
- Nurture a healthy workplace where our people can thrive.

Our People Strategy outlines our vision for how we deliver our Business Plan through our people – attracting a talented and committed workforce who are passionate about what they do for our city, investing in their development and careers, aspiring to excellence in leadership and building a culture where everyone can thrive.



# Managing Performance

Progress towards delivery of this Business Plan will be reported to Council on an annual basis.

Appendix one to this document provides a delivery plan including objectives, and actions for delivery.

Progress in meeting this plan will be measured across three perspectives:

- progress towards long term overarching indicators aligned to the three strategic priorities outlined in this plan
- delivery of medium term key performance indicators which measure progress against the ten outcomes needed to meet these priorities, and
- progress towards short term milestones needed to deliver objectives and actions described in this plan.

Our Planning and Performance framework aligns to this Business Plan, setting out how we manage performance across the Council. This framework provides a clear link between our business plan, key strategies, annual service plans and includes how we use benchmarking. The framework is underpinned by a cycle of 'plan, do, check and review and act' at all levels of service and will drive a culture of continuous improvement.

The business plan outcomes will be aligned to SMART performance indicators and milestones, allowing for open discussion and scrutiny of performance at organisational and service team levels, as well as with Elected Members, on a regular basis. These performance indicators and milestones are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they remain the most appropriate for monitoring performance.

We will also publish performance reports on our website to make sure they are easy to access for residents.

# Appendix 1: Delivery Plan

1	Core services for people in need of care and support are improved
Objective	Actions
1a: Act as good corporate parents so that children and young people feel safe, healthy, and nurtured	<p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Progress delivery of our Edinburgh's My Home strategy through actions to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where it is the right thing to do, support young people to return to Edinburgh or the place they nominate as home from out of authority care.</li> <li>• Increase the number of children and young people who have access to an active advocate and ensure all children are actively encouraged to do so.</li> <li>• Reduce the number of children/young people who have need for alternative care, outwith their family and local community.</li> <li>• Shift the balance of care to support more children and young people at home and less in external provision.</li> <li>• Review the residential estate to meet changing need and to include provision for children and young people with life limiting illness and complex disability and those with complex and risk-taking behaviours.</li> <li>• Develop permanence plans and trackers to ensure children and young people have stable and permanent homes.</li> <li>• Strengthen the independence of the reviewing officer role to ensure care plans have challenge and review.</li> </ul>
1b: Support all services in Edinburgh to support children's needs and deliver on the Promise	<p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Deliver on the Edinburgh's My Home strategy by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing the new service structure following completion of the service re-design and review.</li> <li>• Working with partners focusing on early intervention and providing targeted services and reduce the number of children who need social work.</li> <li>• Refreshing GIRFEC and service accountability re roles and processes across the partnership.</li> <li>• Effective use of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund to deliver on the Promise and reduce the need for social work support.</li> </ul> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Continue to develop our 'Grow your Own' approach to staff development of social work assistants into social workers</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Refresh Edinburgh's Promise to keep it in line with the renewed Scotland wide Promise and its new plan 2024–30.</p>

1	Core services for people in need of care and support are improved
Objective	Actions
<p>1c: Work with partners to make sure that children and vulnerable adults are safe and protected through consistent city- wide approaches</p>	<p><b>Years 3 and 4</b> Work with partners to ensure every child has a GIRFEC plan and support from all partners involved.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4</b> Deliver social work improvement in line with the improvement plan and ensure practice is compliant with standards.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4</b> Ensure robust quality assurance activity continues and where issues are highlighted, social work practice is changed so children and young people are safe and cared for.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4</b> Implement new information system (MOSAIC) across all social work teams and services.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4</b> Create a LA Development Officer role to ensure all allegations against professionals in relation to vulnerable people have a single point of oversight.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Work with our partners across the Children's Services Partnership and through Corporate Parenting to deliver on our partnership improvement plans.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Work with our partnerships to ensure continuous improvement and quality assurance.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Work with our partnerships to deliver the Equally Safe Strategy across Edinburgh.</p>
<p>1d: Ensure children have the best start to life through expanding the uptake of early years care and support</p>	<p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Deliver our Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-27 including actions to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase children accessing their full funded entitlement to early learning care.</li> <li>• Work with health professionals to address inequalities related to speech, language and social development.</li> <li>• Introduce creative approaches to leadership development.</li> <li>• Take forward improvement work in the quality of children's experience, environments, leadership and staffing through four working groups.</li> </ul>

## Core services for people in need of care and support are improved

Objective	Actions
1e: Ensure that the care needs of vulnerable adults in Edinburgh are met consistently and safely	<p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Work with partners to deliver on the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board's Strategic Plan 2025-28, including to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximise independence for people with learning disabilities by improving the transition process between Children's and Adult Services, implementing a new framework for care providers and ensuring regular reviews of care are undertaken.</li> <li>• Continue to embed a reablement approach to internal home care services to ensure everyone starting a new package of care can benefit from a period of reablement.</li> <li>• Invest in the Mental Health Officer (MHO) service to ensure we have the capacity and capabilities to protect the most vulnerable citizens of Edinburgh.</li> <li>• Work with care providers and the City of Edinburgh Council to grow care home capacity in Edinburgh and implement a brokerage approach to help control high costs of care.</li> <li>• Ensure the charging policy is consistently applied to recoup the costs of care where it is appropriate to do so.</li> <li>• Progress the redesign of our processes so that citizens have a single point of access into health and social care services that seamlessly support their needs.</li> </ul>



2	People can access fair work and the support they need to prevent and stay out of poverty and homelessness
Objective	Actions
<p>2a: Reform Money and Welfare Advice services to prevent crisis escalation, increase the number of citizens fully accessing benefits entitlements, and reduce the number of families experiencing problem debt</p>	<p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Increase accessibility of money, benefit and debt advice services to support the most vulnerable households across the city.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Ensure the continuation of partnership-commissioned income maximisation services provided in community settings across Edinburgh.</p>
<p>2b: Design and roll out a new whole-family support model across the city, embedded in community settings to support early intervention and prevent poverty and homelessness</p>	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Work with partners and communities to initiate tests of change that deliver support to people and families in need using early intervention/preventative approaches.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Establish learning cycles between and across the tests of change that will enable the evolution of transformation from the ground up.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Continue delivery of statutory homelessness service provision with actions to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevent homelessness in the first place.</li> <li>• Ensure that where it is required temporary accommodation meets the needs of the household.</li> <li>• Support people to access settled accommodation as quickly as possible.</li> <li>• Reduce the number of people sleeping rough in Edinburgh.</li> </ul> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Develop future commissioning framework, to include joint planning approach with third sector for investment in and delivery of early intervention and prevention priorities.</p>

Objective	Actions
<p>2c: Deliver the Edinburgh Guarantee and our employability programmes, supporting more citizens into sustainable, fair work, and helping to tackle in-work poverty</p>	<p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Continue to promote the Edinburgh Guarantee brand and programme by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging with business leaders and employers and the ongoing Edinburgh Guarantee marketing campaign to ensure citizens are aware of available support.</li> <li>• Coordinating employability support and skills providers.</li> <li>• Delivering in house employability programmes to create pathways into employment with the Council and external employers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Continued delivery of the Vocational Training Framework to support the recruitment needs of key sectors in Edinburgh. This is subject to continued Scottish Government funding and continued engagement with the Integrated Regional Employability and Skills programme, monitoring sectors requiring support.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Expand the remit of the Living Wage Action Group to focus more on the wider Fair Work agenda by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launching and promoting the Edinburgh Fair Work Charter.</li> <li>• Supporting employers to commit to the Charter and to offer high quality job opportunities and training.</li> </ul>
<p>2d: Develop and deliver a new poverty prevention programme</p>	<p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Develop and deliver a new poverty prevention programme, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing a model for local place based partnerships to provide early intervention support for households at risk of crisis.</li> <li>• Embedding key poverty prevention services (such as income maximisation, employability, and health and wellbeing) in community settings across Edinburgh.</li> <li>• Reviewing council and partnership approaches to supporting the third sector.</li> <li>• Using data driven approaches to designing and targeting support.</li> <li>• Evaluating the impact of the changes we make using robust methods to add our forward planning.</li> </ul>

3 Edinburgh is a cleaner, better maintained city that we can all be proud of	
Objective	Actions
3a: Deliver improvement in waste collection, recycling and cleansing service performance	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Develop and deliver communication and engagement plans that drive behavioural shift including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications to encourage residents to reduce waste and increase recycling.</li> <li>• Working with Keep Scotland Beautiful on a plan to reduce the use of single use containers, including raising public awareness.</li> </ul> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Complete phase 5 of the communal bin review and identify areas for review through business as usual.</p> <p><b>Year 4:</b> Where practicable align the service with the revised code of practice for recyclable materials, commencing with kerbside collections.</p>
3b: Ensure our parks and green space are safe, well maintained, and accessible to all whilst supporting nature	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Complete the final year of play park investment allocated through the Scottish Governments funding programme.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Deliver the capital investment programme to maintain and improve our parks and greenspaces.</p>
3c: Deliver long-term sustainable investment in the city's roads, paths, pavements, gullies, and street lighting	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Deliver investment for year 3 (2025/26) of the new capital budget and make the case for continued funding at those levels.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Review surface dressings to expand the portfolio of types used and review previous surface dressing works.</p>

<b>4 People can access public services locally and digitally in ways that meet their needs and expectations and contribute to a greener net zero city</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Actions</b>
4a: Improve access to and co-location of services using a place based approach in all council building and public realm projects	<p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Projects will be developed and delivered through the <u>Place Based Property Improvement Programme</u>. Full business cases are to be developed for each project, and these will be progressed through the corporate property governance structures and presented to committee as necessary.</p>
4b: Review our library model to improve access to library and community services	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Deliver the Future Libraries Strategy through development and delivery of year one of the Implementation Plan and organisational change review.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Deliver two new mobile library electric vehicles and outreach service development.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Deliver the new temporary Blackhall Library service provision.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Continue to identify libraries where there are opportunities for change and develop and progress plans where appropriate.</p>

4	People can access public services locally and digitally in ways that meet their needs and expectations and contribute to a greener net zero city
Objective	Actions
4c: Work with Edinburgh Leisure and other partners to ensure inclusive access is maintained to sport, fitness and leisure activity across the city	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Delivery of the Physical Activity &amp; Sport Strategy through year one of the action plan.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Develop and deliver a Pitch Strategy to ensure inclusive access and improvement across the city's pitches.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Work with Edinburgh Leisure on future priorities and a sustainable funding agreement.</p>
4d: Deliver council led infrastructure investments, policies and strategies that enable Edinburgh's transition to a net zero city	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Continue work on City Plan 2040 with submission of Evidence Report for Gate Check by end of 2025.</p>



5 People have decent, energy efficient, climate proofed homes they can afford to live in	
Objective	Actions
5a: Increase supply of affordable housing with an ambition to reach 25,000 new affordable homes.	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Deliver the Affordable Housing Supply Programme in 2025/26.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Deliver the acquisition programme for 2025/26.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Continue to explore alternative funding models for both the council housebuilding programme and RSL partners in an attempt to lessen the reliance on grant funding, improve compliance with homelessness legislation and reduce the costs of temporary accommodation.</p>
5b: Deliver efficient regulation of short term lets to increase access to housing	<p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Following consultation on the Short Term Let policy, implement the agreed changes, including those to fees, renewals and temporary exemptions.</p>
5c: Deliver improvements to the council housing repairs service, increase tenant satisfaction, and improve operational efficiency	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Increase the return rate of void council properties to the lettable standard and allocate them, bringing a significant number of Council homes back in to use.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Drive improvements in repairs completed within the service standards and ensure repair work carried out on council properties represents value for money for tenants.</p>

5 People have decent, energy efficient, climate proofed homes they can afford to live in	
Objective	Actions
5d: Continue to invest in ensuring that all council owned homes are brought up to climate-ready and modern standards, so all our tenants have a warm, safe, and secure home	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Complete Phase 3 of the low-rise Whole House Retrofit scheme.</p> <p><b>Year 4:</b> Continue with the 15 year programme of low-rise area based improvement schemes.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Continue the current high-rise retrofit and upgrade programmes, including energy efficiency and fire safety improvements, across 33 blocks, around 2,600 homes.</p>

6	Attainment, achievement, and positive destinations are improved for all with a particular focus on those in poverty
Objective	Actions
6a. Deliver inclusive, high quality education that supports children to develop a love of learning, raises attainment, provides opportunities for achievement and leads to sustained positive destinations	<p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Continue to focus on raising attainment and reduce educational inequity for all children and young people including actions to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed pupil tracking across primary, secondary &amp; special sectors.</li> <li>• Extend functionality of system to ensure we meet the needs of learners/workforce (2025/26).</li> <li>• Implement tracking system in Early Years settings (2026/27).</li> <li>• Continue to develop the role of Head Teacher Learning Community Leads in alignment with Inclusion review (2025/26).</li> <li>• Evaluate the impact of revised Literacy Policy through attainment/quality assurance impacts.</li> </ul>
6b: Deliver community based support by working with families to coordinate their support, build their resilience and improve their outcomes	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Ongoing development of a place-based partnership approach, in Liberton/Gracemount and Craigroyston communities. Working alongside families to identify and coordinate the support they need at the earliest stage of emerging risk. Objectives are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevent the impact of household poverty and associated harm on outcomes for children, young people and families.</li> <li>• Reduce duplication to make more efficient use of resources.</li> <li>• Build individual and community capacity and resilience.</li> </ul> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Develop approach for working collaboratively across core council services, health and other partners according to resources in each proof of concept site.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Develop monitoring and evaluation to measure impact of 'proof of concept sites'.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Scale up the Teams Around the Community 'proofs of concept' (selected Learning Communities).</p>

6	Attainment, achievement, and positive destinations are improved for all with a particular focus on those in poverty
Objective	Actions
6c: Take actions to improve equity and reduce the cost of the school day	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Continue delivery of the Leadership for Equity training.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Support the development of the Teams around the Community (see objective 6b) to ensure continued focus on reducing cost of school day and the poverty related attainment gap.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Refresh the Staged Intervention Pathways to rebalance understanding of universal, targeted and intensive levels of support for children with additional support needs.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Develop options for sustainable holiday provision for children with additional support needs.</p>
6d: Develop a learning workforce that feel part of a team and are supported and challenged to continuously improve	<p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Improve skills of educators, support staff, Lifelong Learning staff, Wider Achievement staff and Early Years Practitioners through continued implementation of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers' Charter.</li> <li>• Support Charter.</li> <li>• Inclusive Charter.</li> <li>• Apple Teacher/Apple Professional Coach.</li> <li>• and continued implementation of revised PRD process.</li> </ul>

6	Attainment, achievement, and positive destinations are improved for all with a particular focus on those in poverty
Objective	Actions
6e: Ensure that investment in our learning estate is targeted to areas of deprivation and areas of new demand due to city growth	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Review the special school estate and the provision of a variety of flexible and adaptable spaces within mainstream schools that enable inclusion of children and young people with additional support needs.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Completion of Liberton Nursery and Brunstane Primary School retrofit projects.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Progress the Trinity Academy replacement, including construction of a new school building and refurbishment of the Victorian building.</p>

7 People use decarbonised public transport and active travel as the first choice way to get round the city	
Objective	Actions
7a: Deliver agreed investment increases in active travel, street design, road safety, and local mobility systems in alignment with City Mobility Plan commitments and related action plans.	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Review capital investment across the City Mobility Plan Implementation Plan and produce a Capital Investment Plan to inform the prioritisation of infrastructure projects.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Continue delivery of active travel projects and improvements including Leith Connections Phase 1A (Foot of the Walk to Ocean Terminal route), expansion of on-street cycle storage and public realm improvements at the King's Theatre, Elm Row and Queensferry High Street.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Use additional funding to increase resources and progress the Road Safety Delivery Plan, with a particular focus on creating safer schools and reducing the risk for our most vulnerable road users.</p>
7b: Work in partnership with local bus companies to agree plans for the decarbonisation of the bus infrastructure and improvement of Edinburgh's public transport offer	<p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Improve Edinburgh's public transport offer in alignment with City Mobility Plan commitments.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Raise awareness of the new supported bus services in the relevant communities and monitor these for reliability and patronage.</p>
7c: Complete the Trams to Newhaven project and develop plans for further expansion of the network in alignment with City Mobility Plan commitments.	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Ensure all defects in the Newhaven line are resolved during the defects liability period and complete final close out report on the project.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Complete public consultation on the North South Tram extension proposal.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Deliver outline business case for expansion of the network (following outcome of consultation).</p>
7e: Increase the number of publicly accessible Electric Vehicle chargers and continue to invest in the transition of the Council fleet	<p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Work with SEStrans and lead a collaborative South East Scotland Local Authority procurement project for electric vehicle charging points.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Continue the fleet renewal programme, ensuring all vehicles are LEZ compliant and maintaining the councils owned and hired fleet at 28% electric.</p>

*Note: Objective 7d: Delivering the approved Low Emission Zone scheme – This scheme was implemented in Years 1 & 2 of this Business Plan. Objective delivered so no further actions identified for Years 3 & 4.*

8	Edinburgh is a climate adapted, nature positive city, with biodiverse green spaces, and cheaper cleaner networks for energy use
Objective	Actions
<p>8a: Develop a new adaptation plan and Nature Vision to climate proof our infrastructure, communities, business and the natural and built environment, whilst supporting biodiversity and nature, protection and enhancement.</p>	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Produce an implementation plan and financial strategy to support new Climate Ready Edinburgh Plan delivery.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Develop our nature vision for the city to respond to the nature emergency, setting out how to protect, restore and enhance nature across the city.</p> <p><b>Year 4:</b> Deliver actions set out in the Climate Ready Edinburgh Plan ensuring adaptation is built in to plans and developments across the city, prioritising areas most at risk from climate change.</p> <p><b>Year 4:</b> Explore large scale investment opportunities for climate adaptation.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Maintain delivery of projects identified through our key plans including the Thriving Green Spaces Strategy, One Million Tree City Project and Green Blue Neighbourhoods and track progress through quantified metrics and KPIs.</p>
<p>8b: Create new publicly accessible open space and biodiverse green space within the Granton development working towards a ground-breaking coastal park.</p>	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Complete tree planting and the final section of the active travel route to tie in with the neighbouring development.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Complete Western Villages in spring/summer 2025.</p>
<p>8c: Deliver final business cases for approval to begin construction of the first phase of climate ready regeneration in Granton, the BioQuarter and West Edinburgh</p>	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Complete all 388 affordable net zero homes in Western Villages.</p> <p><b>Year 4:</b> Complete all 143 affordable net zero homes in Silverlea.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Sign Granton Phase 1 Development Agreement in summer 2025, with work to commence on site in November 2025.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Final business case for the Granton heat network to be presented for approval and appointment of concessionaire in summer 2025, with aim to site start in winter 2025/26.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Reset delivery of the development strategy for the BioQuarter reflecting current economic conditions and begin delivery of actions under revised strategy.</p>



8	Edinburgh is a climate adapted, nature positive city, with biodiverse green spaces, and cheaper cleaner networks for energy use
8d: Develop a city-wide heat and energy masterplan including plans to expand renewable energy generation in the city	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Produce a Heat Network Delivery Framework setting out the Council's approach to rolling-out heat networks.</p> <p><b>Year 4:</b> Continue delivery of the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) including execution of the Heat Network Delivery Framework.</p>

9	Edinburgh has a stronger, fairer, greener economy and remains a world leading cultural capital
Objective	Actions
9a: Ensure regulatory and planning services respond efficiently to business needs and support economic recovery	<b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Continue to deliver the range of actions set out in the Planning Improvement Action Plan.
9b: Provide targeted support to help new and growing businesses thrive in the city	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Implementation of a new local delivery model for Business Gateway which expands on the success of our Inclusion Outreach pilot; champions responsible businesses and accelerates sustainable growth.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Work with our partners on supporting the continued development and transition to a green economy.</p>
9c: Deliver a world class cultural and visitor destination offer and enable all Edinburgh residents to access cultural experiences in their local area	<p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Deliver the tourism 2030 strategy, including actions to ensure that tourism businesses thrive while ensuring that tourism activity in Edinburgh delivers direct financial benefits for local communities, and supports the sustainable growth of the city's economy.</p> <p><b>Year 4:</b> Start the development of an Edinburgh Tourism 2040 strategy.</p> <p><b>Year 4:</b> Review the delivery model of the 2030 strategy in the wake of the introduction of the Visitor Levy.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Continue with the Museums and Galleries transformation project to engage more effectively across the city, generate more income, improve the existing estate, with plans to build a new collections centre.</p>

**9** **Edinburgh has a stronger, fairer, greener economy and remains a world leading cultural capital**

Objective	Actions
<p>9d: Ensure that Edinburgh is a welcoming and supportive city where people can choose to develop their careers</p>	<p><b>Year 3:</b> Develop the new Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Framework 2026-30 via accessible pre-engagement and consultation.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Develop and deliver interim equality outcomes for 2025-26.</p> <p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Continue to programme manage the Edinburgh &amp; South East Scotland City Region Deal, where the Integrated Regional Employability &amp; Skills component facilitates employment opportunities and career progressions through the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Skills Gateway.</li> <li>• Housing and Construction Infrastructure Skills Gateway.</li> <li>• Integrated Employer Engagement programme delivered by Capital City Partnership.</li> </ul>
<p>9e: Maximise opportunities to raise local income to provide additional resources to our strategic priorities</p>	<p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Continue to progress actions for the Edinburgh Visitor Levy programme to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish the Visitor Levy Forum.</li> <li>• Develop, engage and agree spending programmes and projects from funds raised by a visitor levy from 2026/27.</li> <li>• Work with accommodation providers to ensure they are ready for the levy collection platform going live.</li> </ul> <p><b>Year 4:</b> Visitor Levy launch and begin levy collection and investment programmes.</p>

10	The Council has the capacity, skills, and resources to deliver its priorities efficiently, effectively and at lower cost
Objective	Actions
<p>10a: Modernise and streamline the Council's core business processes to deliver better outcomes for citizens, and a more secure and efficient organisation</p>	<p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Development and delivery of future system improvements of high demand Council business processes to make it easier for our customers to do business with us including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximise the use of the Verint CRM centralised portal so residents can access all council services simply.</li> <li>• Maximise the deployment of chatbots and virtual assistants for 24/7 support on frequently asked questions and simple requests.</li> <li>• Automate repetitive tasks, such as appointment scheduling and form submissions, to improve efficiency.</li> </ul> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Provide accessible technologies, such as screen readers, multi-language support, and mobile-friendly interfaces.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Progress the Council's AI strategy and procurement programme, with the aim of gaining investment and member approval for roll out across 2025/26.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Maximise the return on investment in Smart City Technology platform through further roll out of integrated IoT sensors and data analytics to other service areas like waste management, traffic congestion, and infrastructure maintenance, smart buildings, smart housing, smart campus and smart tourism.</p> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Implement the Council's new Sustainable Procurement Strategy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting community wealth building approaches which benefit our citizens and communities.</li> <li>• Delivering savings and Best Value outcomes through innovative and sustainable solutions.</li> </ul>

10	The Council has the capacity, skills, and resources to deliver its priorities efficiently, effectively and at lower cost
Objective	Actions
<p>10b: Support and equip the Council workforce with the skills and enabling culture needed to deliver safely these Council Business Plan priorities and our wider statutory duties</p>	<p>Delivery of People Strategy 2024-27 including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Delivery of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2027 Action Plan.</li> <li>• <b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Implementation of reward and recognition framework.</li> <li>• <b>Year 3:</b> Create a succession framework.</li> <li>• <b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Achievement of Equality Charter Mark Standards.</li> <li>• <b>Year 3:</b> Review and implementation of recruitment processes and delivery model.</li> <li>• <b>Year 3:</b> Implementation of Workforce Government Assurance Framework.</li> <li>• <b>Year 3 and 4:</b> Refresh and implementation of Service Workforce Plans.</li> </ul>
<p>10c: Ensure that the priorities committed to in this Council Business Plan are affordable and achievable within the resources we have available</p>	<p><b>Years 3 and 4:</b> Deliver the budget strategy, including actions to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reform and rationalisation of the Council's property estate</li> <li>• Improve the use of cost and performance benchmarking to target areas for improvement</li> <li>• Roll-out of zero-based budgeting and reprioritising resources according to prevention principles and key strategic outcomes, taking appropriate account of equalities-based considerations (e.g. gender budgeting). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ These initiatives will be used to set the 26/27 budget and medium term financial plan for the Council.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Year 3:</b> Move to a collaborative way of delivering change and transformation across the Council by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evolving the Change Community of Practice to build understanding, capability and capacity for change within the Council.</li> <li>• Embedding continuous improvement practices across Council through robust cost/performance analysis and consistent processes for addressing outcomes.</li> <li>• Establishing agile methodology within key projects.</li> </ul>