

# Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00am, Thursday 10 June 2021

## Annual Performance Report, 20/21

Executive  
Wards  
Council Commitments

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 That members of the Policy and Sustainability Committee note the annual performance report for the 2020/21 financial year.
- 1.2 Refer the annual performance report to the City of Edinburgh Council on 24 June.
- 1.3 Note that a revised performance framework will be implemented from April 2021 which aligns to the new Council Business Plan.

**Andrew Kerr**

**Chief Executive**

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## Annual Performance Report, 2020/21

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 This report provides an overview of council performance in 2020/21 against the Change Strategy themes, drawing on corporate performance indicators and benchmarking data including the Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2019/20 data.
- 2.2 The report provides a detailed analysis of performance for members consideration in the year of the COVID-19 pandemic. The impact of COVID-19 has been varied across Council services so a Blue RAG has been added to show where this impact makes comparison with performance in previous years or against targets not appropriate (37 out of 87 indicators). Of the remaining indicators where a RAG status has been assigned, 37 show improved or maintained performance and nine show a decline. The indicators that show a decline in performance in 2020/21 are found across the services rather than are focused in a single service area.
- 2.3 The report also identifies areas where performance challenges remain. The report sets out how the Council is focusing on these areas and identifies next steps being put in place to addresses these areas.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 Each year the Council is required to report to citizens on performance. This report fulfils that duty and considers performance within the Council from April 2020 to March 2021.
- 3.2 The suite of performance indicators reported has changed slightly from last year, with one indicator re-introduced; 5 indicators revised; 2 indicators added; and one indicator removed.
- 3.3 The 'percentage of children living in a low-income household' indicator has been re-introduced as the timeseries of data, using the new methodology, has now been published by [End Child Poverty](#).
- 3.4 Five indicators have been revised including:

- the anti-social behaviour indicator to better reflect the change in focus of the service following a review last year;
- the two planning application indicators now align with indicators published at a national level;
- and the two emission indicators now reflect the new target of net zero carbon by 2030.

- 3.5 The two additional indicators are ‘Bed days lost due to delayed discharge’ and ‘Air Quality Management Areas improvement’ and have been included to give a wider view of performance in those areas.
- 3.6 Finally, the ‘percentage of people who feel they have a say on local issues and services’ indicator has been removed as the Edinburgh People Survey has been revised into the Peoples Survey and this question is no longer included.
- 3.7 The impact of COVID-19 on many services means that performance this year is not comparable to previous years. A Blue RAG status has been included to show where COVID-19 has had an impact on performance regardless of whether than change shows improving or decreasing performance.
- 3.8 Some of indicators refer to the latest academic school year (running from August 2019 to June 2020) and trend analysis and RAG status has been reported on this data.
- 3.9 The lag time in the publication of some national reports (delayed by the impact of COVID-19) means there are some indicators where full year data for 2020/21 is not available.

## 4. Main report

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- 4.1 This report contains analysis of our suite of Corporate Key Performance indicators (KPIs) shown over the last three years. Benchmarking data is also included from a number of datasets including the Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2019/20 dataset and Scottish Government national publications.
- 4.2 COVID-19 has had a large impact on our services over the last 12 months and some of the ways in which services have adapted throughout the year is included to provide a holistic picture of how the Council has performed this year.

### ***Performance Overview***

- 4.3 Within the report, a RAG status, which compares performance against the target, has been assigned to the indicators. The RAG status is summarised below:

<b>RAG Status</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Count</b>
Blue	COVID-19 impact, not comparable to previous years/target	37
Green	Performance is on or ahead of target	35

Amber	Performance is behind target by 5% or less	6
Red	Performance is behind target by more than 5%	4
-	RAG status could not be assigned	5

4.4 A high-level analysis comparing performance this year with last year has been added where possible. For those services where COVID-19 has had an impact, narrative has been added to provide to describe the impact and our response.

4.5 A comparison of 2019/20 to 2021/21 performance for 39 indicators, where COVID-19 hasn't had a sustained impact and data is available for 2020/21, is summarised below:

<b>Trend</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Count</b>
Improving	Performance has improved on last year	27
Maintaining	Performance has remained the same as last year	10
Declining	Performance has declined on last year	8
Not appropriate	Comparing performance to last year is not appropriate	42

4.6 A full and detailed analysis of performance is shown in Appendix A showing the impact of COVID-19 on our services and performance and how we have adapted as well as outlining where progress has been made. The Annual Performance report also highlights those areas that remain challenging and provides commentary on the efforts being made and the improvement plans which are in place to address these issues.

4.7 An analysis of our complaints performance for 2020/21 is shown in Appendix B and will be published alongside the Annual Performance Report.

### **Performance Scrutiny, 2020/21**

4.8 It is proposed that:

- the KPIs have been reviewed as part of the development of the new Planning and Performance Framework (PPF) to align with the new Business Plan. The initial suite of KPIs will be reported to Policy and Sustainability as part of the final PPF report.
- Scrutiny of any revised set of KPIs in future will be undertaken by the Policy and Sustainability Committee as part of the regular performance reporting as outlined in the PPF.
- KPIs will be scrutinised by the Corporate Leadership Team via internal Performance Scorecards and Dashboards on a tri-annual basis to align with performance reporting to the Policy and Sustainability Committee.

- 4.9 We are also working to further improve the performance reporting available to the Public via our website as recommended in our recent Best Value Audit report. The Annual Performance Report (Appendix A) is part of our public performance reporting and will be made available on the Strategy, Performance and Research pages of [our website](#) following consideration at Council Committee. We will further enhance this with the publication of additional performance and data, for example, quarterly core performance measures, Best Value reports and Edinburgh By Numbers.
- 4.10 This will ensure compliance with our statutory reporting as set out by the Accounts Commission, Statutory Performance Information 2018 Direction.

## **5. Next Steps**

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- 5.1 The Annual Performance Report, 2020/21 will be published on the Council website and promoted through our social media channels.

## **6. Financial impact**

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- 6.1 Given that this report is retrospective, there is neither a financial nor procurement impact.

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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- 7.1 A communications plan has been put together to promote the Annual Performance Report both within the Council and externally.

## **8. Background reading/external references**

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- 8.1 Programme for the Capital - The City of Edinburgh Council Business Plan 2017-22, The City of Edinburgh Council, 24 August 2017

## **Appendices**

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Appendix A: Annual Performance Report, 2020/21

Appendix B: Annual Complaints Report, 2020/21

# ANNUAL PERFORMANCE

2020/21



# Foreword



Adam McVey  
Council Leader



Cammy Day  
Council Depute Leader



Andrew Kerr  
Chief Executive

We're pleased to present our Annual Performance Report for 2020–2021, which has been a year like no other.

This report captures our work amidst a period of global crisis, which for Edinburgh began in March 2020. Our city and our lives changed very suddenly, and the scale of the Council's involvement to sustain lifeline services and keep our communities safe quickly became clear.

Since then, we've worked hard to keep services running and deliver vital help for those citizens and businesses who need it most. Our teams continue to have pride in working for our Capital City and a willingness to embrace new, innovative ways of working to deliver for the people of Edinburgh. Colleagues across all services have adapted to working differently and employed new technology to ensure the essential work of the Council can continue. Irrespective of our role in the Council, we've all had to change how we work to respond to the needs of our residents.

Yet, while we had to pause or slow down delivery in some areas; in others we've been able to make real progress. The number of children receiving 1,140 hours of early learning and childcare continues to grow, we've successfully reduced our carbon emissions and our parks have more green flags than ever before. Our performance on building warrants has improved despite the need to allocate resources elsewhere, while vital services such as bin collections continued thanks to early actions taken to ensure our colleagues could work safely. This impacted our recycling rates but we're glad to report that these are starting to show an improving trend again.

The recovery from the pandemic will dominate most of our lives for some time to come and we've been honest in this report where our performance has been impacted by COVID-19 and, where possible, set out how we're going to get back on track.

This report fulfils our statutory duty to report on our performance but, more importantly, it provides a holistic picture. It demonstrates how we'll drive forward Edinburgh's continued recovery and the changes we need to make together if we're to make Edinburgh an even better city for our residents.

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# Our response to COVID-19

Scotland was placed in lockdown on 23 March 2020. We quickly put in place many services to support our most vulnerable communities and businesses while maintaining essential public services. We also provided essential support throughout the pandemic working with several partners including the Scottish Government, NHS, EVOC and third sector organisations.

## Supporting shielding and vulnerable people



- 13,000 shielding people contacted to offer support
- 29,000 calls and emails from shielding and vulnerable people
- 28,000 people supported through our Community Resilience Centres
- 10,840 calls to test and protect contacts

## Working with EVOC and third sector

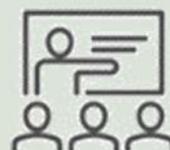


- Together, we supported:
- 5,195 people to get food
  - 615 people get their medicines

## Supporting young people and families



- Made more than 68,000 school meals payments worth over £1.5 million between March and August 2020
- 11,700 boxes delivered to schools and 2,160 to early years centres and distributed to families from June to the end of school term
- 3,587 iPads distributed to pupils and 1,140 data packages
- 19 schools on average kept open each week during the first lockdown up until August 2021
- An average of 281 key workers' and/or vulnerable children that attended hub schools across the city each week



## Keeping in touch



- 185,326 messages handled on social media by our customer care team
- 39 million views of our website and 917,445 views of our coronavirus homepage

## Financial support to people and businesses



- £370,000 worth of isolation support grants awarded to 740 people from October 2020
- £5.5 million+ of Scottish welfare grants awarded to 27,750 people
- £250 million+ grants awarded to 19,000 business

## Protecting our frontline staff



10.53 million PPE items (masks, aprons, gloves) issued to keep frontline workers safe and make sure that they could continue to deliver vital public services

## Finding temporary homes



30% more temporary accommodation provided and we also worked with third sector partners to support people who were homeless.

# Strategic overview

This year we have put extensive resources into supporting the residents of Edinburgh and adapting our services as we live and work through COVID-19 restrictions along with taking forward our long-term strategic priorities. However, the impact of COVID-19 on the city over the last 12 months has been huge, and we need to focus on how we support the city to recover.

We have started to do this through our Adaptation and Renewal programme with five working groups:

- public health
- service operations
- change, people and finance
- sustainable economic recovery
- and life chances.

Through this work and our learning from our response to COVID-19, we have refreshed our Business Plan ([Our Future Council, Our Future City](#)) and we are implementing a new Planning and Performance Framework.

Our 2050 Edinburgh City Vision continues to underpin our work ensuring that Edinburgh recovers to be the fair, pioneering, welcoming and thriving city that residents told us they wanted their city to be.

However, this performance report covers the period between April 2020 and March 2021 and so is aligned to the previous Business Plan, [The Programme for the Capital](#), which sets our strategic direction over the period of the current administration, 2017 - 2022. It includes the 52 Commitments that the Coalition will deliver, and splits our work under three themes that we have focused on:



- targeting investment on prevention and early intervention to reduce long-term reliance on services and allowing citizens to lead active, independent lives
- driving improvements to deliver the high-quality services that our citizens expect and deserve
- delivering growth within the city that is sustainable and inclusive.

You can read more about our progress in our annual Commitments Report.

This annual performance report sets out a summary of our performance under these three themes, and also brings together data on how we have managed our services in 2020/21. We have included our key performance indicators for 2020/21 in this report, along with data from the previous two years to provide a comparison.

# Prevention and early intervention

We support people to live healthier, longer, more independent lives and to improve life chances for all children; especially our most vulnerable. We place the needs of the individual at the centre of our services and supports which we provide at the earliest stage possible. We also want citizens to be involved in designing how their needs are met and for us to be able to respond quickly if these change.

Below are some key performance indicators that give an indication of how we are performing.



Schools and education	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Target	Status
Percentage of early years settings providing 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare	51%	55%	75%	51%	B
Schools (most recent education data)	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Percentage of primary 1 pupils achieving CfE early Level reading	83%	84%	-	84%	-
Percentage of all leavers achieving literacy and numeracy Level 5	66.70%	67.1%	71.7%	67%	B
Percentage of all leavers from deprived areas achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF Level 5 or higher	38.00%	40.4%	49.2%*	40%	B
Percentage of all leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF Level 6 or higher	37.50%	40.4%	44.1%*	37%	B
Percentage of all school leavers in positive initial destination	94.30%	95.1%	92.5%*	94%	B

School Attendance	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Percentage of primary pupils with low attendance	6.50%	8.0%	10.6%**	6%	<b>B</b>
Percentage of secondary pupils with low attendance	13.30%	15.2%	17.2%**	13%	<b>B</b>
<b>Children Services</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Looked After Children					
Number of looked after children (rate per 1,000)	14.5	13.7	12.5	15.4	<b>G</b>
Fostering and adoption	-				
Percentage of placements with Council foster carers	65.20%	67.4%	67.4%	67.0%	<b>G</b>
<b>Homelessness</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Homeless case management					
Average homeless case length (days)	365.3	380.4	476.3	340	<b>B</b>
% repeat homeless presentations	7.0%	5.5%	6.6%***	6.0%	<b>B</b>
% of support referrals made for households with a recognised support need	44.10%	54.10%	64.1%***	55%	<b>B</b>
Homeless accommodation					
% use of B&B as total of all temporary accommodation usage	39.8%	6.7%	13.3%	5.0%	<b>B</b>
No of families in B&Bs (at end March)	21	1	4	0	<b>B</b>
No of 16-17 year olds in B&Bs (at end March)	3	1	0	0	<b>B</b>
Non-contractual spend on B&Bs/shared houses	£3.34M	£2.71M	£7.20M	£2.75M	<b>B</b>
<b>Family and household support</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Antisocial behaviour					
Number of antisocial behaviour complaints per 10k population	32.01	29.86	32.56	30	<b>B</b>
<b>Criminal Justice social work</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Criminal justice orders					
% of criminal justice orders successfully completed	63.6%	65.4%	77.8%	65%	<b>B</b>

% of orders with unpaid work requirements with work placement offered within timescale (5 days)	95.4%	95.1%	70.3%	85%	<b>B</b>
<b>Adult social care services</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Unmet care (at end of March)					
Number of people delayed awaiting discharge from hospital (18+)	150	136	122	Decreasing	<b>G</b>
Bed days lost due to delayed discharge (18+, full year figure)	81,071	62,120	32,798	Decreasing	<b>G</b>
Number of people waiting for a package of care in the community	440	586	355	Decreasing	<b>G</b>
Number of people waiting for a package of care in hospital	40	48	53	Decreasing	<b>A</b>
Balance of care					
Percentage of adults 18+ years receiving care in their home, rather than a residential setting or hospital	57.2%	57.4%	60.4%	Increasing	<b>G</b>
Assessment and care management (at end of March)					
Total number of people waiting for assessment	1,375	1016	697	Decreasing	<b>G</b>
Total number of people with an overdue review	3,828	5239	3790	Decreasing	<b>G</b>
Average assessment waiting time (days)	37	42.8	25.2	Decreasing	<b>G</b>
Number of carer assessments/adult carer support plans completed	909	936	518	Increasing	<b>B</b>
Substance misuse support					
Substance misuse – timely treatment (percentage within three weeks)	85.5%	80.4%	80.6%	90%	<b>R</b>

Notes:

- \* *Attainment data is for academic year 2019/20 where a new method of assessment was used to give grades. Figure for 2019/20 cannot be directly compared with previous year's performance*
- \*\* *Attendance data is only up to December 2020*
- *Due to the move to a new recording system for Homelessness on 25 January 2021 and the reporting system still being finalised, the Homeless data is only available for April to December 2020.*
- *Substance misuse figures are for Oct – Dec 2020 (latest data published)*

Status **B** – COVID-19 impact, not comparable to previous years

**G** – on or ahead of target

**A** – within 5% of target

**R** – greater than 5% behind target

## Schools and early learning

We educate over 51,300 children in our 89 primary, 23 secondary and 11 special schools. We also have 99 early years settings. The number of children in Edinburgh continues to grow and so we continue to invest in our learning estate to be ready to meet expanding rolls in the years to come.

We had to close all our schools and early years provision in response to COVID-19. Throughout the year we have adapted how we provide learning to all pupils depending on the COVID restrictions in place. We quickly developed online learning for the first lockdown, adapted our schools to make them COVID safe for both pupils and staff to return, and also implemented a blended approach to learning for early 2021. Our staff have worked hard to ensure pupils continued to learn during this most challenging of years.

To support home learning, we delivered 3,587 iPads and 1,140 data packages to vulnerable children ensure that all had equal access to the online learning put in place this year. We also had to train staff quickly on how to deliver learning and teaching remotely. Our work with Teaching Unions paved the way for major advances in digital learning, overcoming issues including reporting to parents remotely.

Despite COVID restrictions we continue to increase the **hours of early learning and childcare provided** across all settings and at December 2020 three-quarters of all eligible children had a 1140 hours placement. We continue to work to meet the new Scottish Government deadline of August 2021.

Significant strategic plans had to be paused, including the raising of attainment of Numeracy and Mathematics. With the schools closed there was no standardised testing undertaken for pupils in Broad General Education and the Scottish Government cancelled the collection of Curriculum for Excellence levels in June 2020. For pupils in our senior phase an alternative certification model was developed for the assessment of SQA attainment courses in 2020 and 2021.

In terms of **educational attainment**, this year's cohort have had a more disjointed experience due to lockdowns, partial reopening of schools and home learning and we continue to monitor the situation carefully. There is clear evidence of an impact in terms of positive destinations for the 2019-20 cohort and so this is an area where we are increasing support for schools. This support includes earlier and more effective tracking of pupil destinations, more effective partnership working with Skills Development Scotland staff, and support visits to schools as required. We have focused efforts on identifying pupils originally listed as "unknown" in terms of Positive Destinations and are working to reduce these numbers.

COVID-19 has impacted on our ability to continue to **reduce the number of pupils with low attendance**. To support schools with home learning in 2021, Guidance in Monitoring or Engagement in Remote Learning was developed and shared with schools via an Additional Support for Learning Briefing. A Home Link Team was set up to support school's early intervention to engage children and young people in remote learning and returning to school post lockdown.

Only three special schools remained open for the children of keyworkers and children with complex needs whose parents needed ongoing day care support. Our Additional Support for Learning and Psychological services continued to operate during the period of school closures with direct support provided through Forest Schools and Outdoor Learning or support and advice to schools and families online. We delivered food parcels to vulnerable families, co-ordinated through a central team.

## Children's services

We support children and young people when they need care and protection by making sure they receive the right help, at the right time, from the right people.

We have invested in preventative, strength-based approaches that focus on relationships which has allowed more children and young people to remain in their families and communities. This has resulted in our rate of children being looked after falling from a peak of over 17 per 1,000

population in 2014 to 12.5 in 2020/21 and are now below the national figure for the first time.

We have continued to have a high **proportion of children in foster care placed with an Edinburgh Council foster carer**. At the end of March 2021 over 67% of all foster care placements are now with Council foster carers and the number placed with agency carers is the lowest in over ten years. We have aligned various teams working on supporting carers under one manager for greater sharing of resources and improved the range of training and development opportunities for all carers.

Child Protection related activity has been at levels similar to last year and the number of children on the Child Protection Register remains low.

We have maintained our support services for Looked After Children during the pandemic with assessment, support and direct care being delivered in accordance with Health and Safety guidance. Since March 2020, all staff have worked from home and we adapted intake processes quickly to reflect this new way of working. All face to face interactions with carers and children including the movement of children into and out of foster care placements were assessed to ensure everyone was COVID safe. Residential and Secure care have provided the same level of care delivered prior to March 2020. We have received additional funding to employ a full-time coordinator to enhance collaborative working across the Children's Partnership and assist with the implementation of the Promise.

We have been expanding our residential capacity by identifying supported accommodation options for unaccompanied asylum seekers. In the coming year supported accommodation options will continued to be expanded for care experienced young people and unaccompanied asylum seekers. We have also put in place contingency arrangements in case of COVID related closure of accommodations and arranged for third sector providers to provide placements for emergency admissions. We have developed a comprehensive fostering framework with 16 providers that will start from April 2021.

We've decided to separate responsibility for the recruitment and support of permanent foster carers to address an identified trend of children requiring this type of care to be placed with out of authority carers. A strategy to build on the strengths of Council carers offering permanent placements to children they currently care for will be developed.

## Disability Team

With COVID-19 and the lockdown restrictions from the Scottish Government, we have had to move to working from home and consider the best way to continue supporting families and managing contact for children who are accommodated.

We worked alongside the Locality practice teams to help deliver food and essential medical items to those shielding and to consider the safest way to support the families who were struggling with the care of their disabled child/ren alongside caring for siblings and also having to work from home themselves.

During the first lockdown we worked with our partners to develop a range of bespoke supports for those most in need, as well as managing the key worker hub at Braidburn school. We ensured that all children who were offered support could be kept safe as well as ensuring the safety for our staff. These supports worked well, and we were able to continue with these over the summer and autumn months.

We also worked with our partners who offer short overnight breaks to ensure that the children being offered this were those most in need and all units were following the same guidance. The staff from our behavioural support service have also helped support two special schools who were struggling with support staff for some classes.

We continued to respond to crisis situations and contacted all our families in the summer of 2020 to check that they were managing and to see what support was needed. This process is currently being repeated.

We continue to ensure that children aren't waiting for an assessment starting for more than two weeks. This has been more challenging over this last year as we know families are stressed with children being at home and often assessments have had to be delayed. To reduce delays, we have adapted the format of the assessment of need and risk form to make it shorter and focus on the key areas for families. Also, where possible we have offered support for three years which allows families to plan better and have consistency of care for their children.

We have accessed Scottish Government funding to support families through purchases such as IT and play equipment. We have also enabled families in using their Self-Directed Support funding flexibly where direct support could not take place, while ensuring that this would meet the same outcomes.

Our transitions teams have now been co-located with the Young People with a Disability team for over a year which has increased our understanding of each other's roles and allowed for enhanced partnership working. This has been additionally helpful due to staff working at home as links and relationships were already in place and communication between the two teams continues to improve.

## Homelessness services

Our aim continues to be to prevent homelessness from happening in the first place, but when it happens, we work with individuals to support them into accommodation.

We continued to support vulnerable tenants throughout COVID restrictions by setting up Council Resilience Centres (CRC's) offering emergency assistance for people who required temporary accommodation or homelessness assistance. People were offered support through, COVID safe, face to face and remote appointments. We worked with third party agencies to procure approximately 600 bedspaces which ensured that all rough sleepers were provided with accommodation and support away from the streets in late March and early April 2020. By

continuing this joint working during the year, we have reduced the number of people sleeping rough in the city from a pre-COVID average of 80 -120 people per night to under 10. In addition, we worked with partners to set up accommodation facilities to allow isolation and testing facilities for people who may be infected with COVID living in homeless accommodation.

We have also housed a number of families that would not normally be eligible for accommodation and so met public health requirements and current Scottish Government / COSLA guidance setting out the expectation that local authorities assist people with no eligibility for service to prevent destitution and rough sleeping.

One of the impacts of COVID restrictions has been fewer long-term suitable accommodation vacancies as people are moving less. This means that people in temporary accommodation cannot move into longer term accommodation. This reduced through put of individuals is seen in our performance for 2020/21 (Apr to Dec):

- **Average homeless case length** has increased from 380 in 2019/20 to 476.3 days in 2020/21
- **Percentage of repeat homeless presentations** after decreasing in 19/20 to 5.5% has risen to 6.6% in 2020/21
- **Percentage use of B&B as a total of all temporary accommodation** usage increased to 13.3%, up from 6.7% in 2019/20.
- The **total number of families in B&Bs** on 31 March 2020 was one, due to focused work undertaken to ensure people could safely isolate themselves and their families during the Coronavirus outbreak. This has risen during the year, with a high of 17 as we accommodated families who would not normally be eligible for accommodation (those with no recourse to public funds). As at 31 March 2021, only four families remained in B&Bs.
- Our **non-contractual spend on B&Bs/shared houses** has also increased from £2.75 million in 2019/20 to £7.2 million in 2020/21. In

total, the pandemic has resulted in a net additional cost of £9.3m to homelessness services.

- However, we have maintained the 2019/20 **number of 16 – 17s in B&B accommodation** and continued to show improvement in the **proportion of support referrals made for households with a recognised support need** (from 44.1% in 2018/19, to 54.6% in 2019/20 to 64.1% in 2020/21).

We have developed the second iteration of our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) which was agreed by the Housing, Homelessness & Fair Work Committee on 18 September 2020. Our plan is aligned around four key objectives:

- preventing homelessness in the first place
- where temporary accommodation is required this will meet the needs of the household
- supporting people to access settled accommodation as quickly as possible
- reducing the number of people sleeping rough.

Our RRTP aims to increase prevention activity with a focus on earlier interventions. This work will be helped by the introduction of the Homelessness Transformational Prevention Programme supported by Council investment agreed as part of the budget setting process for 2021/22. This will see the introduction of 28 additional posts focusing on prevention, early intervention, income maximisation and supporting people to move out of temporary accommodation into permanent housing. We will also establish a multi-disciplinary response team which will explore ways to work across our services to identify trigger points that may put someone at risk of homelessness in the future and offer joined up support.

## Antisocial behaviour

We aim to keep the **number of antisocial behaviour complaints** received per 10,000 population below 30.0 per year. Our performance in 2020/21 was just above our target at 32.56 per 10,000 population which was similar to our rate in 2018/19 at 32.01 and higher than our rate in 2019/20 of 29.86. Most of our anti-social behaviour complaints are for noise or nuisance behaviour. We saw an increase in complaints in both of these categories in 2020/21 which are largely attributable to the restrictions placed on households as a result of COVID-19, resulting in more time at home for families and those who would normally be out at work. We saw a significant reduction in complaints about short term lets, with many of these sitting vacant during 2020/21 due to COVID related travel bans and holiday restrictions.

We have developed innovative and resilient community safety and justice services, such as online digital and telephone mediation services, to ensure people continued to access the support they require in COVID safe ways. These new approaches have both shortened the time taken to bring people in dispute together, as well as increased accessibility for those who have a disability, mobility or impairment.

Since April 2020, we have used a flexible model of mediation and shuttle mediation (in response to COVID-19) allowing a rapid response to neighbour disputes, such as noise, to seek early resolution and avoiding escalation. We have also continued to work jointly with Police, using our new formal review process, for all individuals with active ASBOs. As part of our three-year Community Safety Strategy (2020-2023) we continue to work jointly with partners to address community safety issues under our three themes of:

- response to noise
- young people who offend and those who become the victims of crime
- ASB - digital and social media.

## Community justice

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on community justice services. While most of our services moved to being provided remotely, such as assessments, supervision of people on community orders, post-release licences and groupwork activities, our face to face unpaid work activity stopped between April and October.

The gradual restart of **unpaid work services** is seen in our monthly figures with performance levels rising in October to pre-pandemic performance by December 2020 before face to face work was suspended again in December as we went back into lockdown. Performance over the six-month period has averaged out at 70.3% for offering work placements within five days. However, our adapted ways of working have allowed us to exceed the target and in March 2021 it was 96.2%.

The impact of COVID-19 on the courts has also had an impact. We saw considerably fewer requests for assessments and new orders being made. In addition, courts prioritised cases where urgent breaches of orders or extensions were needed. Furthermore, all unpaid work requirements were automatically extended by 12 months. This results in a higher than normal percentage of **successful completed orders** through April to September 2020 with performance returning to normal levels in October to December as services restarted.

There is a significant backlog of court cases and as services restart, we expect a significant increase in our workload with higher numbers of reports being requested resulting in increased numbers of individuals requiring supervision in the community, as well as managing the ongoing supervision and groupwork intervention of the orders that were extended last year.

While most of our staff moved to working from home, we ensured that essential services remained open including our supported accommodation for those convicted of violent offences and our clinical

prescribing service for those being supported on Drug Treatment and Testing Orders.

We have developed new ways of supporting individuals ensuring physical distancing is the basis for all interactions. For group work services, support and supervision was delivered through video conferencing, workbook activities and telephone calls or where appropriate delivered in person at much reduced capacity. At the same time, we have made sure that appropriate supervision of medium and high-risk individuals has been maintained throughout such as risk managed home visits for supervision purposes for cases where the home environment was crucial to effective order management.

The Scottish Government's decision to release a limited number of eligible short term sentenced prisoners to support a safe custodial environment, ran smoothly in Edinburgh. Individuals were released with the support they required in place.

Other services funded by us also continued to support people throughout the pandemic. For example:

- Victim Support supporting victims and witnesses of crime during lockdown through telephone, email and using technology to ensure victims received the support they required and were encouraged to participate fully in the justice system. Victims were able to access the Victims Fund which provided goods and services to victims where they were unable to meet the cost.
- The Edinburgh and Midlothian Offender Recovery Service supporting eligible people being released from prison to access the supports they need remotely through phone contact. This increases their likelihood of successful rehabilitation into the community.
- The Travel Service, which normally transports eligible friends and family to visit their loved ones in prison, continued to support people looking to contact their family member in prison through an 'email a prisoner' scheme and provided updates on changes to prison visits as restrictions eased.

We have also progressed actions under the Edinburgh's Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan 2019-22. Work embedding the Sustainable Housing on Release for Everyone (SHORE) standards continued and a prison-based housing options officer was recruited into the Access to Housing and Support Services Team in January 2021. We have continued developing our trauma informed leadership through providing specific development and mentoring sessions for senior social workers and team leaders; delivering training relating to mental health in the context of trauma; developing materials to support staff in delivering trauma informed interventions and delivered regular trauma informed group supervisions.

## Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership

We continue to focus on supporting people to live as independently as possible. COVID-19 has made 2020/21 a challenging year for all and the work of the Health and Social Care Partnership has been no exception. The way we work and engage with people has changed. We have been focusing on ensuring ongoing support for those most frail and vulnerable; those people whose health and lives are at greatest risk if they do not receive support. These changes to the way we, and our partners, worked are evident in measures throughout the system, for example less activity at A&E and reduced numbers of delayed discharges.

The **numbers of people waiting to be discharged from hospital** has followed a downward trend in the last four years. Throughout 2020/21 we have worked to facilitate timely, safe discharges from hospital as well as working to prevent unnecessary hospital admissions through our Home First programme. By looking additionally at the number of bed days lost it is possible to better understand the impact of delayed discharge. The number of bed days lost during 2020/21, at 28,230 days, is less than half the number lost during 2019/20 (at 62,120 days).

As an early response to the COVID-19 pandemic, measures were put in place to increase hospital capacity. This resulted in the number of people whose discharge was delayed falling by three quarters (74%) from

189 at the January 2020 census to 49 at the April 2020 census. Edinburgh was not alone in seeing a large reduction; across Scotland the number of people delayed fell by 65% in the same period. However, as activity in hospitals increased during the year so did the number of delays. Progress was made over the winter and at March 2021 there were 122 people delayed.

The **number of people waiting for a package of care** in their own home has been following a downward trend in 2020/21. From a peak of 634 people awaiting a package of care in March 2020, a downward trend has followed during the rest of the year and 408 people were waiting for a package of care at the end of March 2021. There have been fewer than 500 people waiting for a package of care in eight out of the last nine months. Some of this reduction will be from constrained demand due to COVID-19, but work has continued to ensure that capacity remains strong for this type of support.

The **number of people waiting for assessment** fell substantially again this year. The latest data show there were 697 people waiting for an assessment at the end of March, down from 1,016 at the same time last year. This reduction has been driven by several factors including changes in people going on the waiting list due to COVID-19. Improvement work such as a focus on prioritising assessments and the rollout of the Three Conversations approach will also have had an impact on these figures. Three Conversations is a preventative approach building on the person's strengths and resilience and is currently being rolled out across different teams. The **average waiting time** for people to have their first conversation with a worker between December 2020 and February 2021 was 2.5 days. This compares with an average of 37.3 days for those working in the traditional assessment model over the same time period.

Carers are a vital partner to the Partnership in supporting people who require help. The Edinburgh Joint Carer's Strategy was approved in the summer of 2019 by the IJB and the City of Edinburgh Council. Due to restrictions on the ability for staff to meet with carers, the **number of Adult Carer Support Plans completed** has been lower this year,

however, the Partnership and Carer Centres continued to offer emotional support, information and practical advice to carers including connecting carers with a service that's right for them.

We aim to ensure that everyone has a regular review to ensure that their social care support continues to meet their needs. Again, this has proved challenging to do in person due to COVID-19 but we have been able to adapt our processes so staff who have been shielding can carry out reviews virtually. From early 2021 we have focused on ensuring all older people who have been in care homes for longer than six months are reviewed by summer 2021. More broadly, the **number of people awaiting a review** at the end of March 2021 was 3,790. This was 1,449 fewer than in March 2020, a reduction of over a quarter (27.7%).

The proportion of **people who started substance misuse treatment within three weeks** was similar in 2020/21 at 80.6% compared to 80.4% and remains behind our target. The challenges to provide consistently rapid treatment access in NHS services continues and was exacerbated by COVID-19. We have worked hard to prioritise the highest risk patients over the last year (mitigating the impact of the average waits), but demand has been high, and the core community treatment services are now seeing approximately a sixth more patients than last year.

You can find more details on the Health and Social Care Partnership's [performance in their Annual Performance report](#).

## Key strategic/service developments

COVID-19 created significant challenges for the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership, however, throughout we have strived to keep staff and the people we support safe including redeploying staff where extra resources were required, for example to enhance staff levels in care homes. Our Transformation Programme continues with some

amendments to accommodate the COVID-19 situation and we are considering how best to embed the positive changes that have been made in our response to COVID-19.

The Home First approach was accelerated in the spring of 2020. A focus on Discharge to Assess and the utilisation of 'Safe Haven' beds meant that fewer people were delayed in hospital and have been able to move home, or if their needs require it, move to a care home. These actions supported the aim in April 2020 of increasing hospital capacity. Discharges to care homes have continued through the year, with two negative COVID tests required to ensure the safety, not only of the person moving to the care home, but the residents and staff in the care home.

The rollout of the Three Conversations approach continued throughout the year. The ethos was spread more widely across all teams as they worked to connect people with their existing networks of support when it wasn't possible for them to be supported by more formal supports such as day care or lunch clubs. The rollout of formal innovation sites continues and, as well as people being seen in a more timely fashion with less need for formal support, staff reported feeling better able to support those requiring help.

We also started a conversation with the people of Edinburgh to develop the Edinburgh Pact, an agreement on expectations between the Partnership and Edinburgh citizens. In the summer of 2020 hundreds of people shared their views on what health and social care meant to them and this resulted in an [online exhibition](#). The Edinburgh Pact will shape the way we deliver services in the future, with a focus on enabling community mobilisation so services can be provided effectively within local communities.

## High quality services

We aim to make our residents' lives better by improving the places where they live, work and visit. We take pride in providing high quality services to residents, businesses, and visitors of Edinburgh. It is essential that all our services, from collecting bins, to providing housing and street lighting, are accessible to all. We are taking advantage of new technology to make sure that services make best value of public money.

Below are some key performance indicators that give an indication of how we are performing.



Waste and cleansing	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Target	Status
Waste Management					
% of waste recycled	41.1%	41.1%	39.6%	Increasing	A
Individual domestic missed bin service requests	33,621	17,690	19,887	21,180	G
Communal Domestic Overflowing and Missed Bin Service Requests	21,868	17,004	19,484	22,020	G
Street Cleansing					
% of streets clean (LEAMS)	92%	92.8%	81.8%	93%	B

<b>Planning and building standards</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Planning					
Average no. of weeks to determine major planning applications (new measure)	61.1	45.7	64	33.5	<b>R</b>
Average no. of weeks to determine non-householder planning applications (new measure)	16.8	15.7	12.2	10.9	<b>G</b>
Building Standards					
% first report building warrants issued within 20 days	80%	96%	98%	95%	<b>G</b>
% of building warrants issued in 10 days after receipt of all satisfactory information	63%	83%	95%	90%	<b>G</b>
<b>Roads</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
% of customer defect enquiries completed within five working days	73%	75%	68%	85%	<b>R</b>
% of emergency road defects made safe within 24 hours	95%	98%	100%	90%	<b>G</b>
% of priority road defects repaired within five days	81%	94%	96%	90%	<b>G</b>
Road condition index (RCI)	36.40%	33.5%	37.1%	Decreasing	<b>A</b>
<b>Housing services</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Housing					
Home completions (all tenures)	2,813	3,127	-	Increasing	-
Number of affordable homes approved	1,626	1,930	1,285	1,574	<b>R</b>
Rent arrears					
Average level of debt of tenants in arrears	£878	£967	£1,184	£900	<b>B</b>
Current rent arrears (end of year)	£5.7M	£6.3M	£9.4M	Decreasing	<b>B</b>
Income collected as a percentage of the total rent due	99.8%	99.6%	96%	n/a	<b>B</b>
<b>Parks, greenspace and cemeteries</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Number of parks achieving green flag award status	32	32	34	32	<b>G</b>

Lifelong learning	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Target	Status
Number of adults achieving personal learning goals through participation in targeted education programmes	1,946	1,882	1,929	2,067	B
Number of young people participating in music, arts, cultural and creative learning activities	22,775	27,216	-	24,300	B
Number of young people participating in sport, physical activity, and outdoor learning (includes Active Schools)	24,086	27,015	28971	25,800	B
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Target	Status
Number of library customer transactions	6.66M	6.38M	3.50M	6.99M	B

Note: the lifelong learning indicators are based on Academic year so latest data is up to August 2020.

Status **B** – COVID-19 impact, not comparable to previous years

**G** – on or ahead of target

**A** – within 5% of target

**R** – greater than 5% behind target

## Waste services

Our waste services have continued throughout 2020/21 as we have adapted how we collect bins to ensure that our staff work in COVID safe ways. As we adjusted to the first lockdown, we had to stop blue box (glass) and brown bin (garden waste) collections, as well as closing recycling centres. This had a significant effect on **our recycling rates** which were unable to reach previous years' levels until June but have since shown an improving trend. As most Councils had to prioritise their essential collection services, our recycling rates is likely to remain in line with the national trend. Over 110,000 tonnes of waste was treated to generate energy rather than end up in landfill in 2020 at the 'Energy from Waste' plant at Millerhill. Early engagement on the Communal Bin Review has been carried out however the full completion of the review has been delayed until 2021/22, due to COVID-19.

Our performance remains positive for **service requests for missed individual bins**. Although there has been a slight increase from 2019/20, requests are almost 40% lower than the level in 2018/19 and ahead of our target. There has also been an increase in the **number of missed and overflowing bin requests for communal services**, though we have

outperformed the target, despite significant changes having to be made through the year. This included suspending services as explained above, reducing crew numbers in cabs, which in turn meant running separate vehicles to accompany collection crews. Also, the rise in home working and people spending more time at home is creating additional pressure on our service as people are generating more household waste.

## Street cleanliness

We have had to cope with significant disruption in 2020/21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including redeploying some staff to support other services in waste and cleansing. Monitoring through the year by Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB) does reflect the difficulties in providing a citywide service. This is reflected in the street cleanliness score which has dropped significantly from previous years. Initial feedback from KSB indicates that this is primarily due to the prevalence of domestic waste in high density residential areas. A full analysis of the data is required to fully understand the reasons behind the score. The report is due to be circulated at the end of May. The report will also allow comparison with the other Scottish Authorities, meanwhile KSB have indicated that the urban authority benchmarking family group as a whole has seen a

significant drop in cleanliness score since last year with the average score, although yet to be confirmed, to be around 85%.

For the programme in 2021/22 an integrated approach will be taken whereby the new Litter Monitoring System platform and technology will be used but the current LEAMs (Local Environment Audit & Management System) methodology will also continue to be used. Litter counts which align with the new code will be undertaken but they won't be used for the KPI in 2021/22. This approach is being taken to provide a reliable transition between the two monitoring regimes and allows those Local Authorities who haven't done so already, time to complete the digitisation of their zones.

## Planning and building standards

We have changed our performance indicators for processing planning applications, so we align with the Scottish Government indicators published each year. Our new indicators measure decision making times by the average number of weeks in which applications without processing agreements or agreed time extensions are determined. Our determining of both major planning applications and non-household applications is improving.

For **major planning**, our average time has increased from 61.1 weeks in 2018/19 to 64 weeks in 2020/21. Timescales for major applications had shown a large improvement in 2020/21 until the last quarter. Performance in quarter 4 was affected by the closure of a legacy case which was first received in 2014 but had been inactive for several periods of time since. Although clearing these types of cases has impacted on average decision times, this is a necessary step to support sustained improvements moving forward. For **non-household applications**, our average time has decreased from 16.8 weeks in 2018/19 to 12.2 weeks in 2020/21. This significant improvement has been achieved at the same time as we have adapted to new ways of working and the number of applications received in the final quarter of 2020/21 was higher than any other quarter in the last two years.

The first two years of our Planning Improvement Plan saw progress in several areas:

- investment in developing leadership and management,
- handling 3,900 planning applications while adapting to COVID-19
- embedding a 'Delivering Excellence' programme of continuous improvement to processes.

Our improvement plan received an interim refresh in February 2021 with the aim of continuing to improve processes and time performance for legal agreements. This will impact on the timescales for major and non-household applications going forward.

We continue to show improvements in our building standards performance with an increase in the **issuing of 1st Reports within 20 days**, up to 98% in 2020/21 from 96% in 2019/20. We are also continuing to increase the **proportion of building warrants issued within 10 days of receiving satisfactory information**, up to 95% in 2020/21 from 83% in 2019/20. The COVID-19 pandemic has meant that we have adapted our systems to enable all staff to successfully work from home. We have also had to change our site inspection process by introducing live video inspections, ensuring that building works continue, helping aid the economic recovery.

We have recently been re-appointed as building standards verifier for this council area for a period of a further two years from 1 May 2021 to 30 April 2023. This is due to the sustained improvements that the service has made in performance, investment in staff and IT and the steps taken to improve customer satisfaction. We remain focused on our Building Standards Improvement Plan in the coming year, to ensure that further improvements are made, and our performance is maintained.

## Roads

Throughout 2020/21 we have shown consistently strong performance in the **percentage of emergency and 5-day priority road defects** that are

repaired within target timescales. During the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic we were only carrying out this type of work, and it was not until late 2020 that we were able to increase it to all defects.

We have also completed our service re-structure which combines services that maintain the safety and performance of all the city's road and transport assets. Our **customer enquires completed within five working days** shows variable performance across the year although performance improved significantly from November onwards, with average for the last 5 months of the year at 78%. The restructure of the teams has allowed inspectors to focus on improving performance and this will remain a priority. Changes have been made to the timescales for repairing minor defects which is expected to allow the Roads Operations team to increase the number that can be permanent repairs, as opposed to temporary make safe repairs.

COVID-19 has had and continues to have an effect on the delivery of road maintenance schemes. However, on the 20th of May 2021 Finance and Resources Committee agreed the one-off allocation of £6m of investment in our roads and pavements which (subject to Council approval of this budget) will significantly increase the delivery of maintenance of the city's road network and improve **our Road Condition Index (RCI) score**. Although the RCI increased from 33.5% to 37.1% in the last year, we are one of the few councils who has extensive data on the full road network that allows delivery of the capital projects to be targeted at the roads that most require it. It is expected that this continued level of investment into the future will reduce the proportion of the adopted road network that requires maintenance.

## Housing

In response to COVID-19, we have had to adapt our working practices quickly to keep our tenants and staff safe through responsive, coordinated, and localised service delivery. This included a new service model for repairs, beginning with a critical service and then adapting to an essential service, taking individual tenant circumstances into account to

ensure tenant and staff safety at all times. There has been an acceleration in digital and remote working, with officers adapting well to new ways of working, whether at home, in the Council Resilience Centres or remote working to carry out essential repairs in tenant's homes.

Our focus over this period has been to maintain as many services as possible to support tenants, to repair and let homes and to maintain collection of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) income. Proactive contact has been made with tenants on an ongoing basis. Housing Officers mobilised quickly to carry out regular wellbeing check-ins with their tenants over the phone and to make them aware of where to get information on the range of advice and assistance that has been available, including foodbank referrals and support for tenants who were shielding.

Our Housing Service Improvement Plan (HSIP) was introduced in 2019 with the aim of significantly increasing customer satisfaction, improving operating performance and reducing costs, with a specific focus on developing more effective and responsive services for customers. The COVID-19 restrictions have reinforced the objectives of the HSIP and has highlighted some emerging priorities which will shape the way the programme is taken forward. The HSIP is driving improvements across several workstreams, centred around digital improvements, enhancements to customer communication, service resilience and efficiencies. We have prioritised improvement projects within the repairs service, to address legacy systems issues and inefficient processes which have a detrimental impact on performance, customer satisfaction, and cost. In response to the pandemic, the accelerated rollout of a new mobile working system, Total Mobile, has been a vital enabler for safe remote working for staff.

We also maintained our rent service throughout lockdown with early intervention, advice and support continuing to be provided to help tenants to meet their rent payment responsibilities and avoid getting into debt. During 2020/21 the cash value **of rent arrears** has, not unexpectedly, increased due to changes in a significant number of household financial

circumstances and the suspension of formal debt recovery measures, to ensure tenants were not at increased risk of losing their home during the pandemic. For those tenants in rent arrears, **the average level of debt** has risen from £938 at the end of March 2020 to £1,184 at the end of March 2021. Overall **collection of rental income** remains positive with 96% of income collected of total due in 2020/21. A contingency has been set aside in the HRA to account for an increase in rent arrears due to the transition of tenants to Universal Credit (UC). The number of tenants with a change in their financial circumstances and moving on to UC during the COVID pandemic saw a sharp increase in the early stages of lockdown, but the rate of increase has levelled in line with business planning assumptions.

Edinburgh continues to see the largest number of new homes built in any council area in Scotland. The 3,127 homes completed in 2019/20 is over twice the number in any other council area. As set out in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2021-2026, a record number of affordable homes were approved for site start in 2019/20 (1,930) and 1,443 homes have been completed.

We continue our ambitious house building programme which sets out a programme to deliver 20,000 new affordable homes by 2027. Over 6,300 homes have been approved during the first four years, and over 4,600 affordable homes have been completed. Construction across the city was paused due to the pandemic, with sites adjusting work practices to ensure workers could work in COVID-19 safe ways. Despite these delays, almost 1,300 homes were approved, and 1,100 homes completed in 2020/21. The Strategic Housing Improvement Plan approved by Housing, Homelessness & Fair Work Committee in January 2021 estimated that 2,000 approvals and almost 1,500 completions in 2021/22, however due to COVID some homes that were expected to complete or be approved for site start in 2020/21 will be delivered in 2021/22. Overall, we remain on target to have 10,000 homes approved for site start, under construction or complete by the end of 2022. There are over 2,000 affordable homes under construction on over 30 sites across the city.

There are almost 1,400 new homes in development and construction on Council owned sites including, Pennywell, North Sighthill, Dumbryden, Bingham and Parkview, as well as, homes in the Granton masterplan area. A contractor has been appointed to design and build around 150 new affordable homes and a new home for Craigmoynton Community Youth Football Club on the former Silverlea care home site, with construction expected to commence in Summer 2022.

We continue to invest in the Council's existing and new build housing to ensure all our homes have a very high energy efficiency standard. In the last five years £165m has been invested in improving existing homes and neighbourhoods. We have delivered more than 28,000 individual improvements, with an emphasis on making homes easier and more affordable to heat. This includes 7,100 homes with new modern heating systems and 1,600 homes with new doors and window upgrades. Much of this work was put on hold as planned works, particularly those inside tenants' homes, were severely impacted by COVID-19. Other programmes faced significant delays as a result of site closures and contractor furloughed staff. A further report will be taken to Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee in June, which will set out a detailed two year investment programme taking into the taking account slippage from 2020/21 and seeking to accelerate energy efficiency works as we develop a roadmap to net zero carbon by 2030.

## Parks and green spaces

A further two parks have been **awarded a green flag** in the 2020 national Green Flag Award scheme, which recognises high quality green spaces. We have received almost half of the 77 flags issued in Scotland. Saughton Park and St Katharine's Park, received the status for the first time, joining the other 32 parks already waving their Green Flag. Corstorphine Walled Garden has successfully retained its Green Flag Community Award.

Our parks have proven invaluable to residents this year and we have worked extremely hard to continue to care for them through challenging

times and restrictive operations. The COVID-19 pandemic has heightened the importance of local outdoor places for people's health and wellbeing, daily exercise and for making the city resilient to the growing global environmental and societal challenges it has had to face.

We opened new cycling facilities at Hunter's Hall Park with the completion of a pump track. Riders of all ages and abilities can use the track for free which is open all year round. This project forms part of the wider masterplan for new sports facilities within Hunter's Hall Park.

The latest benchmarking data (LGBF 2019/20) shows we continue to provide a high-quality service with high customer satisfaction levels and low cost. The £4M investment in our parks and green spaces which was agreed as part of The Sustainable Capital Budget 2021-31, will ensure we continue to provide this top performing service.

We are leading a project to increase tree cover to help Edinburgh fulfil its Climate Emergency commitments and become a Million Tree City by 2030. To achieve this, some 250,000 trees will need to be planted over the next decade across a wide range of public and private land. As our ability to plant trees has been impacted by COVID-19, time has been spent determining existing tree numbers, identifying the means through which tree planting can be funded and encouraged across the city, and ascertaining how we can more effectively monitor, record and communicate tree data. The Woodland Trust has granted nearly £300k to the project and a Project Manager has recently been appointed. A project launch has been re-timetabled to October 2021.

## Lifelong learning services

### Libraries

We had to close our libraries due to COVID-19 in March 2020. We worked to make going to libraries COVID safe and opened six libraries (at least one in each Locality) in October 2020 and a further four libraries reopened on 14th December. We had plans to open another library in

each Locality in January 2021 which had to be paused as we went back into lockdown and all libraries closed again.

Although physical issues and **visits to Libraries** dropped sharply this year, we expanded our online library available free to all citizens. Over two and a half million online books were accessed between April 2020 and March 2021 and issues of e-newspapers have increased by over 105% this year. Edinburgh Libraries won the PressReader award for Most Newspapers Read Online in the World in 2020. In addition, we've offered online library services to all school children to support their online learning as well as allow them to enjoy reading books for leisure.

In the coming year, we will develop our 20-Minute Neighbourhood and Hub models by:

- replacing old library building with a purpose-built library space with community partners in Muirhouse
- building a new combined facility at Ratho co-locating Ratho Library and Early Years Centre nursery provision
- Contributing to development and design process of Community Library spaces within new Liberton Learning Community campus and new Currie High School

### Adult learning

Face to face classes were suspended from April 2020 due to COVID-19 and have been unable to resume within community centres as priority was given to restarting primary and secondary learning first. However, we developed online **Adult Education classes** over the summer months and offered a reduced number of Adult Education classes from October 2020. From January 2021, we have 150 weekly courses running including ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages), Literacies, Syrian ESOL, Family Learning; and Outlook.

In October 2020, we responded to emerging needs of adults in the Granton area and worked with locality and voluntary partners to put in place the Granton Recovery Programme. Family learning workers worked

closely with English as an Additional Language staff to simplify e-learning messaging from schools to parents whose first language is not English and offered home learning sessions for parents unable to access the school's portal.

YouTube channels and resources were developed for adults and families including 58 ESOL Snacks to improve speaking and listening in English and Family Learning Time for a Story and shared with ESOL practitioners at a local and national level.

We have created alternative online learning options for adult learners who didn't have digital devices and other barriers including low literacy and English language skills. Whilst the numbers of learners reached remains good (13,200), capacity and the overall the number of learning hours has been reduced significantly (smaller class numbers, number of classes offered and high levels of staff time to provide online support to adults to access and navigate TEAMS). Resumption of face to face classes for more vulnerable learners e.g. literacies and ESOL remains a priority and is dependent on Facilities Management and cleaning resources being available.

### **Arts and creative learning**

The COVID pandemic resulted in all schools closing except for vulnerable children and the children of key workers. School staff focused their efforts to ensure the schools were COVID safe for the return of pupils and the roll out of online learning.

Until March 2020 Youth Music Initiatives (YMI) staff delivered in-person lessons. All YMI programmes were re-arranged for October 2020 (remote) moving to a mix of remote and in-person in 2021. Restrictions on staff movement and in-person delivery has resulted in a reduction in numbers of pupils accessing YMI. Resources have all been adapted for remote delivery and numbers began to increase when instructors were issued with iPads enabling delivery of live remote lessons. Specific restrictions on brass, wind and voice coupled with limits on the number of schools

visited in a week, continues to impact on the Instrumental Music Service. Priority has been given to Music SQA students.

### **Sport, physical activity and outdoor learning**

During the COVID pandemic face to face Sport and Outdoor Learning Unit (SOLU) ceased including the closure of Benmore and Lagganlia outdoor residential centres. In response, SOLU has targeted and adapted its resources and services including:

- deploying staff to support the delivery of outdoor physical activity in schools and hubs (curriculum and holiday); and Additional Support for Learning hubs (partnership working with Barnardo's).
- led or supported the development of Council guidance and route maps to enable safe and incremental reintroduction of services. Examples include outdoor onsite learning, offsite visits, physical education, and extra-curricular activity.
- developed online learning and teaching resources.
- switched from in-person to online training.
- undertaken wider responsibilities including co-managing and part-staffing the school COVID positive case management process

We have expanded existing services including the Primary 6 Holyrood Park Outdoor Learning Challenge Days and Games @ the Hub. We have continued to target resources to young people with protected characteristics and so reduce inequalities. For example, primary curriculum swimming programme and Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

# Sustainable and inclusive growth

We want Edinburgh to be a sustainable and inclusive city, where good growth means all our citizens can benefit for generations to come. This means promoting environmental, economic and social sustainability as part of a long-term commitment to tackling climate change, delivering good growth, and building resilient communities. We are ambitious in planning how the city's infrastructure needs to develop accordingly and need to make sure that this development is shared by everyone across the city.

Below are some key performance indicators that give an indication of how we are performing. Some of these indicators are from national statistics with lag times for publication so the latest data is shown below.



<b>Emissions reductions</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Total city's emissions – All greenhouse gases (MtCO <sub>2</sub> e)	2.721	2.595	2.428	0 by 2030	<b>G</b>
	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Total Council's emissions – All greenhouse gases (MtCO <sub>2</sub> e)	151	122	74	0 by 2030	<b>G</b>
	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Air Quality Management Areas improvement	6	6	6	Decreasing	<b>A</b>
<b>Fair work and economic growth</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Number of households with no adult in employment	24,700	28,700	-	Decreasing	<b>-</b>
Number of clients supported by employability and skills services		2,156	1,515	-	<b>B</b>
Number of employers in the Edinburgh region accredited as Living Wage Foundation employers	416	494	545	Increasing	<b>G</b>

Culture					
Museums and Galleries					
Attendances at museums and galleries	785,427	820,083	12,927	750,000	B
Communities	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Target	Status
% of children living in a low-income household	21.3%	18.9%	20.3%	Not applicable	-

Note: \* status provided based on latest data

Status **B** – COVID-19 impact, not comparable to previous years

**G** – on or ahead of target

**A** – within 5% of target

**R** – greater than 5% behind target

## Sustainability

In May 2019, we committed to the ambitious target of making Edinburgh net zero by 2030.

The 2019 Short Window Improvement Plan set out immediate actions for delivery in 2019 and 2020; and a final progress report was published in [November 2020](#). Also in 2020, several strategic decisions were taken to mainstream the 2030 target into major city-shaping strategies, for example the City Mobility Plan and City Plan 2030. Most recently, the [2021-2024 Council Business Plan](#) has identified sustainability as one of the three core priorities for the Council.

### Carbon Scenario Tool and our emissions

To evaluate the projected emissions impact of key strategies, decisions, and work programmes, we have been working with the University of Edinburgh and Edinburgh Climate Change Institute to develop a Carbon Scenario Tool. The tool has been used to inform our pathway to net zero 2030. A draft Council Emission Reduction Plan (CERP) and a 2030 city target monitoring approach have been developed and reported to Committee in April 2021.

The tool has been recognised in the Scottish Government’s Climate Change Plan and there are plans to adopt its use across the Scottish Cities Alliance membership.

### City net zero 2030 strategy

During 2020 work commenced on a city net zero strategy. A draft strategy identifying the actions and approaches to be taken by citizens and public and private organisations is scheduled for public consultation over the summer of 2021. The final strategy is due for publication in October 2021 to coincide with CoP26 being hosted in Scotland.

As we are responsible for just three percent of the city’s overall emissions, a significant focus of the strategy has been on developing partnerships, collaboration and agreement to address net zero actions, by:

- hosting city partner forums - made up of the public and private organisations that collectively have the power, resources and solutions necessary to achieve net zero by 2030. Engagement has shown a strong appetite for co-production of the strategy and for partners to sign up to significant commitments to change.

- establishing a third sector roundtable – regular meetings to draw on expertise and experience of key community organisations in Edinburgh that can support the change required to meet net zero.
- co-sponsoring the independent Edinburgh Climate Commission – providing the city with expert, authoritative advice on how to accelerate city action on climate change.
- [adopting the Edinburgh Climate Compact as a founding member](#) in December 2020 – developed by the Edinburgh Climate Commission the compact sets organisational climate commitments for Climate Champions to adopt as part of their leadership on climate action.

## Developing innovative solutions for Edinburgh

Edinburgh is one of only 15 European cities that are part of the [Climate-KIC Healthy, Clean Cities Deep Demonstrator](#) programme. Funding in 2020 has allowed us to work with the Climate Knowledge Innovation Community and its partners to learn from other European cities and design a series of ‘tests of change’. This work will help us work with partners to develop innovative solutions to the complex system change required in key areas to deliver net zero for the city. These include:

- ‘Shortening local value chains’ – focussing on circular economy approaches, regulatory, financial, and social models that build local resilience. Pilots have been tested in the construction sector and are delivering 41,000 homes.
- ‘Whole Community Retrofit’ – testing a model that would enable the decarbonisation of homes in mixed tenure settings. The model seeks to create financial and governance structures that go beyond fabric retrofit and renewable energy to create ‘Green Neighbourhoods as a Service’ that includes climate resilience using ecosystem services, active travel, and community amenities.
- ‘Future Transport Infrastructure’ - collaborating with internal and external partners to develop approaches to roll out of Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure

- ‘Build-to-live’ – testing how the built environment (housing, urban spaces, private spaces) can become a piece of health infrastructure for Edinburgh as well as meeting net zero. This ‘whole system vision’ approach aims to maximise the potential of public land to deliver multiple benefits and will be taken forward subject to the identification of further external funding streams.
- ‘Funding Change’ – helping to develop understanding of the short-term solutions and long-term opportunities for funding major urban transformation to make net zero achievable by 2030. This work will support future funding bids and the development of innovative mixed models of finance to take forward a range of emission reduction and climate adaptation projects

## Air quality and Low Emission Zones (LEZs) development

The latest data for our Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) shows concentrations of pollutants at most locations are decreasing. As data shows no breach of air quality requirements, we are considering the potential revocation of several AQMA declarations (Great Junction Street, St John’s Road Hourly declaration).

To address remaining areas of poor air quality, we will continue to work alongside the Scottish Government and the other Scottish cities to ensure LEZs are introduced across Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Dundee and Glasgow between February and May 2022.

## Poverty

Last Autumn, the Edinburgh Poverty Commission published its [final report](#) on the actions needed to end poverty in Edinburgh. The Council’s response, the End Poverty in Edinburgh Delivery Plan 2020-30, was published in December 2020, and implementation is underway. Ending poverty is central to the Council’s ambitions as one of its three priorities for the Council in the coming years, as described in the Business Plan. You can find out more about the work of [the Poverty Commission](#) and the

work of End Poverty Edinburgh, the independent group of citizens formed in 2020 to hold the city to account.

## Economy

Our business and employment services have had to undergo several changes this year due to COVID-19 and the impact it has had on the economy. We adapted new ways of working to provide quick and essential support to businesses and citizens, working with partners across all sectors and industries. We administered over £181.4M in grants to more than 19,000 businesses through several Scottish Government business support schemes, including the Business Grant scheme, Break Restrictions Fund, Furlough Support, Strategic Framework Business Fund, and the Taxi & Private Hire Driver fund as well as many more smaller schemes for specific sectors. We also distributed over £12M to businesses that had not been eligible for other Scottish Government funded support through the Edinburgh Discretionary Business Support Fund. We continue to work with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development Group (SLAED) and the Scottish Government on new schemes. This has helped to ensure that Edinburgh is more involved in the early framing of these and the related administrative tasks.

We have been able to maintain core business support and employability services including Business Gateway, No One Left Behind support and all our Third Party funded services. Although some services, such as Project SEARCH, were reduced or suspended for health and safety reasons during the pandemic. We have also extended our Edinburgh Employer Recruitment Incentives and grant funded specific projects for supporting parents into employment, in response to additional funding from the Scottish Government. We have also expanded our Edinburgh Guarantee from a youth only employability provision to now supporting all citizens but with a specific focus on those with barriers to employment.

## City centre transformation

The final proposed concept designs for the transformation of Edinburgh's historic George Street were unveiled in February 2021. These included artist's impressions and a 3D fly-through illustrating how the street and surrounding area, within the UNESCO World Heritage Site, could look under the George Street and First New Town Public Realm Improvements Project. The changes include:

- significantly widened pavements
- landscaped spaces for play and relaxation
- a cycling thoroughfare, where motor traffic is largely removed
- removal of street clutter alongside 'urban greening' through shrubs and hedging.

Improvements are being delivered as part of a coordinated package of projects under Edinburgh City Centre Transformation. This includes the forthcoming Meadows to George Street and City Centre West to East Link schemes, which will transform walking, wheeling and cycling routes and connections across the city centre.

## City mobility plan

The ten-year plan to deliver a better connected, net zero carbon transport system, a healthier environment and a thriving, inclusive Capital was agreed in February 2021. The plan has been inspired by forward-thinking cities around the world embracing challenges posed by climate change, poverty and inequality. It sets out our approach to the sustainable and effective movement of people and goods to and around the city over the next decade. The Plan aims to encourage a change in public behaviour towards the use of sustainable transport through:

- expansion of the tram and mass rapid transit network
- improvements to bus routes
- creation of 'mobility hubs' in existing communities and new developments

- introducing a city operations centre to monitor traffic
- create more liveable places less dominated by motor traffic
- build on the city's network of walking, wheeling and cycling routes.

The final plan follows several years of engagement with the public, stakeholders and partners. A consultation in 2020 gathered more than 1,800 comments on draft proposals with support demonstrated for all policy measures. The plan acknowledges the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on transport demands and mobility patterns, and how a green recovery can harness the associated effects of lower traffic levels. It also champions 20-minute neighbourhoods, an internationally recognised concept where local services are within a 20-minute walk of your front door. It goes even further to envision neighbourhoods where people's daily needs can be met within a 10-minute walk or wheel from their house.

## Trams

The Trams to Newhaven site preparation works re-started on Monday 1 June 2020. New ways of working to ensure the sites were COVID-19 safe included the introduction of infection control stations, additional water stations and toilet facilities for workers within the site, ensuring all office workspaces and facilities were set up appropriately, and the removal of the protective in-fill material that was used. As a result of COVID-19, the project experienced a 13 week delay due to the construction site shut down. In order to take this delay and new physical distancing working guidelines into account the programme has been reviewed and updated. Although the project has faced significant challenges, we are still on track to deliver Trams to Newhaven by spring 2023. The project was allocated £207.3m as part of the final business case presented to committee on 18 March 2019. We continue to work within that budget.

Support continues to be provided to local business affected by the tram works. Over £2.4m of funding to support local business via a series of measures intended to maintain the accessibility, vibrancy and desirability of the affected streets. The primary aim is to provide support to the

diverse range of independent businesses along the route. Recognising that the tram works have the potential to affect business as usual in the local area, we previously invited feedback from the local business community on a set of measures. These measures have now been developed following feedback from local traders, members of the public and interest groups.

## City Region Deal

Since the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal (CRD) was signed in August 2018, £165m of the UK and Scottish Government grant of £600m has been drawn down and projects worth 61% of the full Deal allocation have had business cases approved for implementation by Joint Committee. The City of Edinburgh Council acts as the Accountable Body for the Deal and has worked well to ensure that spend is aligned to profile.

All six projects in the Data-Driven Innovation Programme have now had business cases approved. Thirty industry partners are working with world-leading researchers in the University of Edinburgh's data-driven innovation hub, the Bayes Centre, with industrial innovation zones in Fife and the Scottish Borders also underway.

Our regional skills programme is progressing well. It comprises seven skills and employability projects for school pupils, people facing barriers to work, and those looking to learn new skills. The programme includes an intensive family support project and initiatives to promote skills development in housing, construction, renewables, and digital sectors. This work has been supported by our Arms-Length External Organisation (ALEO), the Capital City Partnership (CCP), who are in a unique position to facilitate wider regional working beyond the Deal. Following the COVID-19 outbreak, the CRD partners re-purposed and fast-tracked the launch of a job-matching portal to help employees and employers impacted by the pandemic. 3,650 jobs have been advertised, plus training opportunities. An employee grant scheme was also rolled-out with 77

micro-businesses across the city region, of which 18 are in Edinburgh, receiving grants of £500-£1,000 to help retain staff.

The West Edinburgh project is underway with the West Edinburgh Transport Improvement Programme Board established. Consultation on draft orders for Sheriffhall has closed. Discussions are ongoing with stakeholders including the City of Edinburgh Council on public and active travel provision.

Progress has also been made on the Dunard Centre, Edinburgh's first purpose-built music venue in 100 years. A revised planning application will be submitted in May and a revised business case is scheduled for consideration in September.

In terms of Housing, Edinburgh Living has been operational for two years. All £16.1M in available Scottish Government grant funding has been claimed. So far 299 homes have been completed to date with over 100 more due to be completed this year.

Work to finalise the outline business case for Edinburgh's Waterfront is underway. This will be reported to Council in Autumn. A number of early action projects are currently underway including the renovation of Granton Station building for use as a creative hub and three housing sites that will deliver around 650 mixed tenure net zero carbon homes.

Regional partners continue to work well together to develop a Regional Growth Framework, which seeks to articulate the long-term aspirational goals for the region and guide the future direction of regional partners and a range of other public sector organisations over the next 20 years. Non-statutory in nature, it will be a public statement of aligned vision, ambition and priorities for South East Scotland, seeking to influence and be influenced by plans and strategies developed at national, regional and local levels. Joint Committee will consider a draft Regional Growth Framework for consultation in June, and the final framework is scheduled to be considered by Joint Committee in September and constituent councils immediately thereafter.

## Granton Waterfront

The first phase of housing for the development of Granton Waterfront was given the go ahead by Councillors in May 2020. The Granton Waterfront regeneration is expected to lead the way in sustainable development as part of Edinburgh's commitment to be net zero carbon by 2030. A £1.5m contract was awarded to CCG (Scotland) Ltd to take forward designs for planning approval for an affordable housing development to include around 450 high quality homes. We are engaging with the community to develop the designs for the site.

The wider proposals will create one of Europe's largest coastal city parks linking Granton Harbour to Cramond and Lauriston Castle, reconnecting the city with its waterfront and providing the opportunity for residents and visitors to enjoy spectacular views across the Forth while experiencing enhanced leisure and outdoor activity. The plan is also set to deliver an exemplar urban design centred around climate resilience, leading the way in future sustainable development and growing the economy in an inclusive way.

The proposals will bring around 3,500 new homes of which at least 35% will be affordable, a school, medical centre, creative and commercial space, new cycling and walking routes and enhanced sustainable transport connections with the city, making a significant contribution to Edinburgh's target to become a net zero carbon city by 2030. With an overall gross development value of around £1.3 billion, we are committed to investing around £196m to accelerate the regeneration, attracting significant public and private sector funding to deliver the vision.

The Edwardian B-listed former Granton Station, set in the heart of the city's planned new sustainable Granton Waterfront district, is to be restored by us at a cost of up to £4.75m. Work will commence to bring the historic former Granton Station building back into use by early 2022 as a high-quality creative workspace and the derelict land in front of the building will once again be used as a public square for community events and recreation to be enjoyed by residents and visitors to the area.

## Culture

### Museums and galleries

In line with Scottish Government guidance, all Museums and Galleries closed when lockdown was introduced in March 2020. The City Art Centre was approved for COVID-19 secure re-opening briefly during the autumn. Whilst open, for 14 weeks before the second lockdown at Christmas, 8,924 people visited who enjoyed four exhibitions: Bright Shadows, City Art Centre at 40, Jock Mcfadyen goes to the Pictures (in partnership with the artist) and E A Hornel; From Camera to Canvas (in partnership with the National Trust for Scotland). This figure equates to 1.1% of total visits to museums and galleries in 2019/20. Museums Galleries Scotland contributed a grant towards re-opening costs in September 2020 of £7,211.

To assess visitor reaction and support future venue re-opening, two online visitor surveys were carried out between September and December 2020. Results were extremely encouraging.

- 99% of respondents said that they felt safe visiting the gallery,
- 85% rated their overall experience as very good
- 88% rated the staff as very welcoming and helpful.

While it was open, the City Art Centre generated £21,125 in retail revenue. Mimi's café generated over £85,000 in takings of which we receive a percentage. With the introduction of a new EPOS system, online donations can now be made and visitors encouraged to give when booking entry. This generated 300% more than the previous year's donations.

Donations were received to the City's Art Collection from the family of photographer Robert Blomfield and from photographer Colin Maclean. The Jean F Watson Bequest Committee met twice in 2020. In February they approved the purchase of a suite of 29 prints from Edinburgh Printmakers at a cost of £13,024, and works by James Lumsden, Michael Craik and Eric Cruikshank. In the autumn the Committee approved the

purchase of three prints by artist Rachel MacLean. National Fund for Acquisitions Grants were awarded for all the above acquisitions. Within the past year loans of museum collections have been made to the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Fife Contemporary and a museum in the South of France.

Given the unprecedented impact of the pandemic on the people of Edinburgh, we began a contemporary collecting programme in Spring 2020 with a call for objects reflecting experiences of lockdown across the city, to be added to the city's [social history collections](#). This attracted wide community and press interest, and has also resulted in partnership with University of Edinburgh to [record and preserve personal testimonies and oral history recordings](#).

### Monuments

The circumstances of the past year have prevented a lot of work on the monument estate. One item of note is that the Meadows Jawbones have now been restored, electronically scanned, and are now back in Edinburgh awaiting the completion of the support fixings. Installation is planned for later this year. Work has been progressed on a reinterpretation and improvements plan for the Stone of Remembrance at the City Chambers, and conservation surveys have been undertaken on a number of key statues with a view to future restoration. The installation of a new bronze plaque on the Melville Monument is also in final planning stages.

### Travelling Gallery

Travelling Gallery secured £2,606 from Scotland's Events Recovery Fund which has been used to deliver remote learning activities to engage national partners and audiences while the Gallery is unable to tour. The fund also enabled three films to be commissioned. These films demonstrated creative learning activities and provided an introduction to the organisation and to the exhibition '*Shaped of Water*'. [These are now available on our website](#).

## Learning and public programme

We delivered 74 virtual events in 2020/21 to many thousands of people both locally and internationally. These include lectures as well as live streamed dance, music and choir sessions, bringing people together from home.

## Digital exhibitions

The *Adjust/Adapt* exhibition in partnership with the Scottish Furniture Makers Association and Visual Arts Scotland was due to be staged at the City Art Centre, but has gone online, opening March 2021. We worked with LGBT Youth Scotland to create a digital version of the Proud City exhibition that opened at Queensferry Museum in March 2020, just days before lockdown. The exhibition celebrates the lives of LGBTQIA+ people and was co-created with young people who are part of the LGBT youth group in Queensferry. [It is available to view on the Museums and Galleries Edinburgh website](#). Black Lives Matter protests were held in Edinburgh in 2020 from which Museums and Galleries staff acquired a large donation of placards, banners and signs. We produced a [digital exhibition for the Capital Collections platform using these donations](#). They demonstrate the importance of the Black Lives Matter movement to Edinburgh residents and the wide-ranging impact the movement is having in the city.

## Archaeology

All construction work was stopped during the first COVID lockdown. Nonetheless during 2020 we had input into a record 375 planning and listed building applications (up 11% from last year), 186 of which needed further archaeological mitigation. The year also saw a five-fold increase in responses to major utilities projects requiring archaeological work. As an integral part of the tram project's management team, a significant focus of the service's work has been helping to deliver the Trams to Newhaven project, centred upon the taking down and rebuilding of South Leith Parish Kirk's Constitution Graveyard wall and the burials associated with its medieval graveyard. COVID-19 restrictions required development and

implementation, with the main contractors (GUARD Archaeology and MUS Utilities Services), of new ways of safely excavating on site. The excavations lasted six months and unearthed c.360 burials including a possible plague pit, evidence of disabilities and a pre-graveyard ditch containing a possible murder victim. The planned programme of community engagement also had to be significantly altered. As a result, a [programme of social media outreach](#) was produced, principally through regular weekly Vlogs on YouTube and on the Trams to Newhaven website.

## Key strategic developments

### Auld Reekie Retold

This three-year project to undertake a detailed inventory and condition review of the Museum and Galleries collections has progressed well despite significant challenges for the team in being able to access collections and undertake community engagement activity as planned.

### Inclusion Working Group and Digital Engagement Strategy

The pandemic experience has highlighted areas where Museums and Galleries require to develop skills and resource. The need to connect, innovate and engage digitally led to a successful grant application to Museums Galleries Scotland for £55,000 to create the Service's first Digital Engagement Strategy.

### Cultural venues

In line with Scottish Government public health guidelines, the Cultural Venues - Usher Hall, Assembly Rooms, Church Hill Theatre and Ross Bandstand have been closed for events since the first lockdown in March 2020. This has had a serious impact on service delivery, seeing attendance figures fall to zero from over 662,000 in 2019/2020.

During the past year we have been managing busy venue schedules, with the main aim of initially maintaining bookings. The majority of concert and events chose to roll forward to future dates as lockdown continued to

impact trading. All the Cultural venues continue to receive new enquiries and bookings for the Autumn of 2021 onwards, although the impact on income and business in year has been severe.

We have worked with internal and external industry colleagues, Scottish and UK Governments and sectoral groups to lobby and inform the ongoing plans to reopen venues. Service plans and risk assessments have subsequently been developed where performances and events can be managed while adhering to public health and government guidelines. The Usher Hall was successful in achieving £240,000 of financial support from Creative Scotland's Performing Arts Venues Relief Fund to help offset the cost of staff and maintaining audience development work.

Staff from across our venues have also supported other areas of our response to COVID-19 such as:

- driving and managing Facilities food deliveries to people shielding and schools during lockdowns
- supporting the Symptomatic Testing Centre at Usher Hall
- administrative support for Spaces for People
- election support for postal votes
- leading roles in setting up and running Asymptomatic Testing Centres.

### **Festival 2020**

Assembly Rooms played host to the Edinburgh International Book Festival first ever fully virtual event in August 2020. The event ran throughout August 2020 and included 146 talks viewed 210,000 times by

a worldwide audience – this figure continues to grow as audiences continue to watch the events on demand. The Usher Hall and Ross Bandstand infrastructure were utilised by Edinburgh International Festival in August 2020 to facilitate a series of activities throughout the month under the headline of My Light Shines On.

Looking forward to how we deliver the summer festivals has had to be revisited and conversations are ongoing in order to deliver activities in summer 2021.

By working with the city's myriad cultural ecosystem representatives, we have been contributing to the work citywide to ensure sector retention and recovery going forward – including the city's strategic positioning as a cultural destination and host to events, and home to festivals.

The core challenge in the year ahead is to safely reopen our venues and services in line with Scottish Government guidelines. This will involve the recommissioning of buildings with appropriate measures in place to manage the post-pandemic environment, restoring supply chain networks, rebuilding audience confidence in taking part in public activities and balancing the financial requirements of income maximisation and budget pressures. The post-COVID environment will also require innovation within our digital offering, rescoping and redesigning our ICT infrastructure to provide the offer of hybrid and streamed events on a more regular basis.

## Delivering effective and efficient corporate services

As a large and complex organisation, we rely upon a range of professional and enabling corporate services such as finance, property, human resources, legal services and digital services. These teams make sure that we have robust internal controls and governance arrangements, allow us to manage our assets well, support our teams and achieve value for money across our operations. These functions also provide a range of key services and support to citizens through our customer contact and transactions team and manage the administration of welfare and benefit services.

Below are some key performance indicators that give an indication of how we are performing.



Customer services	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Target	Status
Citizen and service user contact					
Calls answered within 60 Seconds	65.0%*	64.9%	71.0%	60%	G
User satisfaction with contact centre	75.0%	76.0%	72.0%	75%	A
Call abandonment in contact centre	6%	7%	5%	10%	G
Shared repairs (essential works) case resolution % closed (updated PI) (March 19)	85%	82%	84%	70%	G
Key processes					
Days to process new benefit claims	25.2	16.75	17.1	28	G
Days to process benefit change of circumstances	7.8	7.1	6.6	10	G

Days to process community care grants	19.1	11.5	8.9	15	G
Days to process discretionary housing payment claims	19.2	15.5	26.5	15	B
Days to process crisis grants	2	1.9	2	2	G
<b>Compliance</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Information Compliance					
FOI(S)A enquiries - % answered within statutory timescales	86%	84%	87%	90%	A
<b>Revenue management</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) collection					
Proportion of NDR collected	96.9%	96.3%	90.5%	83.4%	B
Council Tax Collection					
Proportion of Council Tax collected	97.00%	96.95%	95.96%	95.67%	B
Commercial income					
Commercial property portfolio rental income	£14.88M	£14.35M	£8.364M	£15.416M	B
Void rate on commercial property portfolio	2.60%	3.40%	5.28%	4%	B
<b>Our buildings and technology</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Property and asset management					
Asset management works capital expenditure	£21.29M	£47.34M	£14.13M	£30M	B
Proportion of schools in good or satisfactory condition	80.33%	90.16%	91.53%	88.3 % (national average)	G
Percentage of primary schools operating above 80% capacity	75%	70%	69%	78%	R
Percentage of Secondary Schools operating above 80% capacity	65%	74%	74%	74%	G

Digital Services					
Number of severity 1 ICT incidents where resolution is greater than four hrs	18	7	7	12	<b>G</b>
<b>Our people</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Productivity and wellbeing					
Lost working time due to ill-health absence (Council)	5.18%	5.37%	3.99%	4.00%	<b>B</b>
RIDDOR reportable injuries rate per 100 employees	0.02	0.04	0.02	Decreasing	<b>G</b>
Workforce numbers					
Total employed full-time equivalent (FTE)	14,736	14,764	14,898	Not applicable	-
Total spend on flexible workforce (agency workers)	£22.5M	£19.4M	£17.7M	Decreasing	<b>G</b>
<b>Financial management</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Status</b>
Council-wide					
Proportion of approved budget savings delivered	60%	77%	82%	85%	<b>B</b>
Revenue: current year's projected outturn	99.8%	100.5%	99.2%	100%	<b>G</b>
Procurement and contract management					
% of invoices paid within 30 days	95%	95%	96%	95%	<b>G</b>
% of revenue spend placed with contracted suppliers	92%	94%	93%	93%	<b>G</b>

Note: COVID absences are not included in our absence figures

Status **B** – COVID-19 impact, not comparable to previous years

**G** – on or ahead of target

**A** – within 5% of target

**R** – greater than 5% behind target

## Customer contact services

Our contact centre and transactions team continues to perform well with over 70% of **customers asked indicating they were satisfied** with the service they have received. In the last year, 73% of calls to the contact centre were **answered within 60 seconds**, above the 60% target. We have also maintained **our essential shared repairs services**, and we remain above our target of 80% in 2020/21. The COVID-19 pandemic required us to adopt new ways of working and the Contact Centre was successfully supporting a blended homeworking/office-based structure. We remained operational throughout 2020/21, providing initial support for all essential services, before reverting to a full service in the second half of the year. We have also supported a wide range of additional COVID-19 specific services, including support and advice to shielding, vulnerable and self-isolating citizens in Edinburgh and completed thousands of wellbeing calls to Edinburgh residents during 2020/21.

The last 12 months has brought significant challenges that impacted on normal service activities. We have responded to this by introducing new ways of working and additional services to mitigate the challenges faced by Edinburgh residents, businesses and service users. These include:

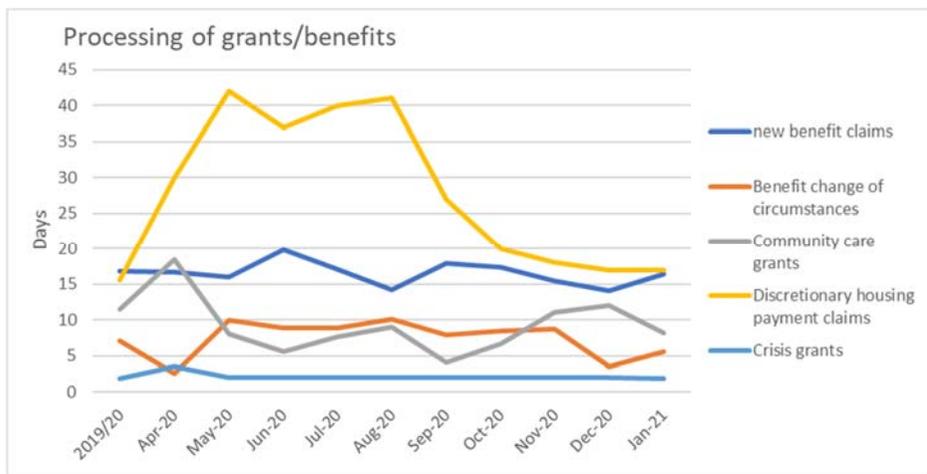
- Fully functioning home working operations for all essential services, including a 24/7 contact centre;
- Council Resilience Centres have provided emergency face to face service support in key locations in Edinburgh;
- Dedicated contact lines to support shielding, vulnerable and self-isolation queries and concerns. These have provided financial support, food and advice for people experiencing hardship;
- Ongoing welfare contact calls to vulnerable Edinburgh residents, providing advice and support;
- Administering dedicated funding to support eligible foodbanks in Edinburgh;

- Administering a range of Scottish Government schemes, including self-isolation grant scheme, £100 hardship payments and £130 Council Tax Reduction support scheme;
- Establishing and managing a major Personal Protective Equipment supply chain, storage and distribution service for the Council and partner agencies, such as the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board;
- Making compensatory free school meal payments in line with reopening plans for schools; and
- Administering a range of business support grants, including the recently announced restart grants (£200m of business grants paid to date).

## Welfare

We have **maintained or improved the processing times for most welfare grants/claims during 2020/21**. This has been achieved against a backdrop of increased levels of queries and applications, related to the ongoing COVID pandemic and we have introduced new ways of working and automation to support these vital services.

**Discretionary Housing Payment claims** processing rose from 15 days to over 40 days during the first lockdown returned to normal levels by October 2020. The initial increase was directly related to an increase in applications, which has been mitigated through local initiatives, targeting support for temporary accommodation applicants and wider national welfare changes, including changes to personal and local housing allowance rates.



## Information governance

The proportion of **Freedom of Information (FOI) requests** completed to timescale rises this year from 84% to 87% and is just behind our target of 90%. We've employed an extra Information Right Officer which has increased the support available to help those asked to respond to a FOI to do so timeously.

## Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates collection

During the last 12 months Edinburgh households and businesses have experienced exceptional challenges. This has inevitably impacted on normal **collection rates for both Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates**. We suspended all recovery actions for outstanding invoices for the majority of 2020 and continue to offer extended repayment schedules for those experiencing financial hardship. We continue to promote and apply all appropriate business reliefs and grants.

The **rate of commercial properties being empty** rises this year to 5% due to the economic impact of COVID-19. We have also put in place several initiatives to give commercial tenants rental relief to support them during the COVID-19 lockdowns. As at 31 March 2021 there was a total

outstanding debt from the portfolio of £8.763M. However, there is some element within this figure of rent demands for the second quarter of the year which overlaps into 2021/22. Work is ongoing to quantify this figure. The working assumption is that the portfolio has performed better than the forecast budget shortfall of £9M. These two events mean that **our rental income** drops to £8.364M in 2020/21.

## Our buildings

As the third year of a five-year **programme of targeted investment**, we have still achieved an actual spend of £14.4 million in 2020/21 to date (48% of the annual budget), with a projected year-end spend of £15.6 million (52% of the annual budget). Despite the 2020/21 spend being significantly impacted by COVID-19 restrictions which impacted the construction industry, the overall five-year programme of scheduled spend is ahead of schedule; with approximately £83 million or 70% of the five-year programme budget having been expended with 58% of the programme time elapsed. This means the overall progress of the programme to bring our buildings up to a sustainable, safe and effective state is good, prioritising this investment into our schools and learning estate.

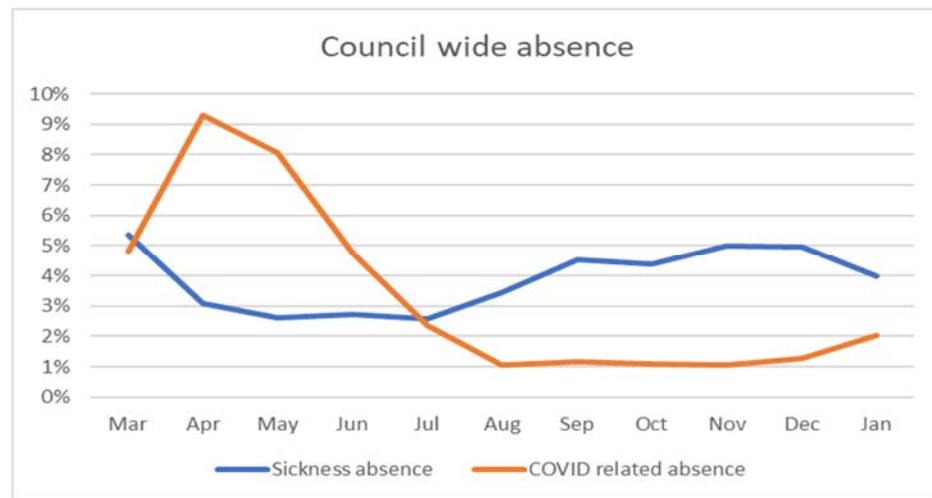
Investment in our school estate continued in 2020/21 with the completion of the new Queensferry High School. There has been advancement with the construction of three new primary schools and the replacement of one special and one secondary school. Completion of the two Wave 4 secondary schools has been delayed until later in 2021 due to the implications of COVID.

During 2020/21 75% of the floorspace was surveyed in periods that COVID-19 lockdown did not prevent activity. 48 Communities and Families properties/buildings were surveyed between April 2020 and March 2021 (10 Nursery Schools; 32 Primary Schools; 4 High Schools; 2 Community Centres) adding to the 173 between October 2017 and March 2020.

Our proportion of secondary schools operating at above 80% capacity remains on target and in line with 2019/20 at 74%. However, the proportion of our primary schools operating above 80% capacity decreases slightly to 69% remaining behind the target of 78%. This is due to the ongoing steady decrease in birth rates which results in primary schools rolls beginning to fall in certain areas of the city.

## Our people

Almost 14,900 people work for us to provide the services and supports we do for Edinburgh residents and its visitors.



The time staff were off work has varied across the year. During the first lockdown, almost 10% of staff were off work due to COVID – either shielding or unwell – and this has fallen over the year to around 1%. The time people were off work unwell for other reasons fell during the first lockdown to 3% and then increased to around 4.5% by the end of the year.

If time off due to COVID-19 and other illness is added together, our level of sickness remains similar to previous years.

During 2020/21 we have continued to support our colleagues – those that have continued to deliver frontline services and those who have been working from home. We have ensured that all of our payroll & Human Resources transactions which have been operating remotely have maintained service levels and that we have continued to support the recruitment and onboarding of hundreds of new colleagues during this time. We've responded to supporting colleagues' wellbeing by rolling out virtual wellbeing roadshows, 'Be well to lead well' sessions and have enhanced our digital training, development and support for all leaders and colleagues. We've successfully rolled out a new benefits platform for our colleagues and have consolidated Scottish Local Government Living Wage which improved the take home pay for over 4,000 of our lowest paid employees.

## Health and Safety

**Adverse event reporting** through the SHE health and safety system was maintained throughout the pandemic. With reduced services the comparative rate of events was expected to reduce the number of submitted reports, however the requirement to report COVID-19 (for statutory purposes) brought the overall number of reports to pre COVID-19 levels. It should be noted that, using the RIDDOR classification criteria we have not submitted any 'communicable disease' RIDDOR events to the Health and Safety Executive.

## A safe place to work

The performance of all workplaces within Edinburgh Council boundaries derived from Health and Safety Executive statistics shows that Edinburgh across all workplaces has consistently been a high performer in Scotland in respect of non-fatal injuries (per 100,000 employees). This will be due, in part, to the high performing service provision from regulatory services, particularly Environmental Health which conduct robust and supportive inspections:

- 2016/17 Edinburgh second best performer
- 2017/18 Edinburgh best performer
- 2018/19 Edinburgh best performer
- 2019/20 Edinburgh best performer.

## Financial management

While the initial financial impacts of the pandemic were felt in 2019/20, the extent of this additional expenditure, and in particular loss of income, increased greatly in 2020/21. By the end of the year, the net cost to us, including exposure through its Arm's-Length External Organisations (ALEOs), had reached nearly £80m. Given the unprecedented scale of these impacts, elected members considered detailed financial reports on a monthly basis during 2020/21 and through a combination of identifying savings in corporate budgets and receiving additional grant funding later in the financial year, expenditure and income were brought into balance.

Looking forward, in order to provide resilience against the longer-lasting financial impacts of the pandemic and other risks, the approved 2021/22 budget set aside further monies for this purpose and almost doubled the size of our unallocated reserves. Significant additional service investment was also approved across a number of priority areas.

## Procurement

We understand why it is important to businesses that we pay our bills promptly and in 2020/21 we continued to pay over 95% of **our invoices within 30 days**, just as we have done in each of the past three years.

One way in which we try to ensure good value for money is by using **contracted suppliers** as often as possible. In 2020/21 93% of our orders were with contracted suppliers, similar to our reported performance in the previous two years (2018/19, 2019/20).

## Digital Services

The **number of ICT Severity 1 incidents** where resolution is greater than four hours was seven for 2020/21 equalling the figure for 2019/20.

Maintaining this performance during the year of COVID where over 5,000 people were working from home, teachers were teaching remotely and learners were home schooling for much of the year highlights the stability of the service provided by both our strategic IT Partner, CGI, and ourselves as well as the responsiveness when incidents do occur. This stability is particularly of note when major upgrades of end user device software and mobile device management (MDM) were undertaken under the COVID restrictions. Following the move to lockdown last March, our end user device refresh programme was paused until we could safely distribute devices. All other components of our strategic programme of work within Digital Services continued with many delivered or moved to full implementation during the last year. CGI and Digital Services also undertook a range of additional projects to support home working and learning and teaching including the implementation of remote working for SEEMiS users and new MDM tool for learners, as well as the rapid expansion of our Corporate remote access platform, implementation of MS Teams and the rollout of Use Your Own Device access to MS365 tools for Corporate users. Services were also supported with new technology as they changed their delivery approach to adapt to COVID-19 restrictions e.g. booking systems for household waste and recycling centres and for libraries.

## Key strategic developments

During the last 12 months, we have continued to progress a significant range of key strategic and service developments, in support of the whole Council. This has included major progress with our medium-term financial plan and ten year Capital Budget Strategy, revised Sustainable Procurement Strategy, the development of a coherent Digital and Smart City Strategy for the period 2020-2023, the refresh of our People Strategy for 2021-24 and the associated Strategic Workforce Plan.

Key service related developments have included the progression of a range of technology enhancements for areas like Customer Digital Enablement, Financial, HR and Payroll systems upgrades, strengthening our cyber defences and the implementation of our new print and digital mail solutions to reduction unnecessary printing and postage and also working to reduce our carbon emissions as a business.

All these improvements have been delivered whilst also reducing the cost of corporate services provision for the fourth successive year. We now spend the fourth lowest amount on corporate services out of all 32 Scottish Local Authorities and is significantly better value for money in the provision of corporate services than other city councils within the Scotland (latest LGBF dataset).

# Performance reporting

## Performance

Throughout the year, we use key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor how well we are delivering services. The KPIs shown in this report are only some of the indicators we use to monitor our services throughout the year.

We are also investing in Business Intelligence software which will support our performance monitoring and increase the insight gained from the data we hold.

Our new Business Plan and Performance Framework will be launched in April 2021 which includes our revised list of KPIs.

## Benchmarking

We are committed to improving the services we deliver to citizens. As well as measuring ourselves against our key performance indicators, we carry out a wide range of formal and informal benchmarking across our different service areas. Benchmarking gives us a focus to share best practice and service improvement initiatives.

Benchmarking groups we participate in include various Scottish Government Local Authority Groups, the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE), Scotland's Housing Network and Keep Scotland Beautiful.



Our primary benchmarking tool, however, is the **Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF)**. The framework is applicable to all Local Authorities in Scotland and is made up of a suite of standard indicators which cover a large number of our service areas. We report annually to committee on this data.

You can also find more information on our [most recent benchmarking data \(2019/20\)](#) on My Local Council website.

# Communities and partners

## Partnership and localities

The Edinburgh Partnership brings together public agencies, third and private sectors with local communities to work together to reduce poverty and inequality across Edinburgh. The Partnership's strategic direction at a citywide level is set out in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) which describes three priority workstreams to ensure citizens have: enough money to live on, access to work, learning and training and a good place to live.

During this past year, the Partners have worked together to respond to COVID-19, identifying opportunities where joint working ensured that residents received the support they needed quickly and that the ways we work together continue to adapt as the COVID-19 guidance and restrictions changed. The Partnership will continue to focus on how joint working will support Edinburgh to recover ensuring reducing inequalities remains a focus for all partners.

Over the last 12 months, we have reviewed the Locality Improvement Plans (LIPs) to ensure a focus on issues where joint working is required at a local level. The partnership has also, in response to Best Value Audit findings, agreed an improvement plan to strengthen support for community planning infrastructure and community empowerment through the establishment of a new Council Community Empowerment team; develop a framework for collaboration with the Edinburgh Associations of Community Councils to support them to fulfil their statutory functions in representing local communities; agreed to develop a partnership approach to community hubs, 20 minute neighbourhoods and strengthen its role in community wealth building.



The Partnership is currently reviewing the 'a good place to live' priority to reflect a broader definition of health and wellbeing that supports the development and growth of healthy, sustainable communities across the city. This will strengthen the alignment between the Partnership's priorities and the new [Council Business Plan](#). The Partnership also sponsored the Edinburgh Poverty Commission which concluded this year, with recommendations to key partners and for community planning which the Board accepted and has agreed to reflect in the LOIP and its delivery programme – starting with a review of the city advice provision.

## Consultation and engagement

The last year of necessary COVID-19 restrictions has had a significant and material impact on our ability to involve residents in decision-making. Ensuring that our colleagues and residents remain safe, and that people are able to have a fair say in issues that matter to them has meant many consultation activities were postponed. As the vaccination programme continues and Scotland emerges from lockdown, we anticipate that normal consultation activity will resume from July 2021.

In 2021 we jointly commissioned, with NHS Lothian, the Capital Residents Survey to explore experiences of life and use of public services during the pandemic, and preferences for public services in the long-term. This survey will enable us to better understand and plan together to deliver service improvements and efficiencies.

Even during the pandemic, it has been possible to continue meaningful discussions with residents and other stakeholders on the climate emergency including through our online discussion forum Edinburgh Talks Climate, and in our first major workshop with our civil society partners. Building on the success of 2020's first youth summit on climate change, we continue to involve schools in how we make Edinburgh a net zero city by 2030.

In April 2021, we will introduce a new Consultation Policy that seeks to improve the quality of consultation and engagement across the Council, making our processes more transparent, strengthening our communications, and giving all participants more confidence that the time they invest in participation leads to positive change. The strengths and weaknesses of our consultation and engagement approach were a major component of Audit Scotland's Best Value Audit, and the Consultation Policy will help us to address those areas where we need to improve.

# Edinburgh Council Complaints Analysis

1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021

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**A Forward Looking Council**



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# Introduction

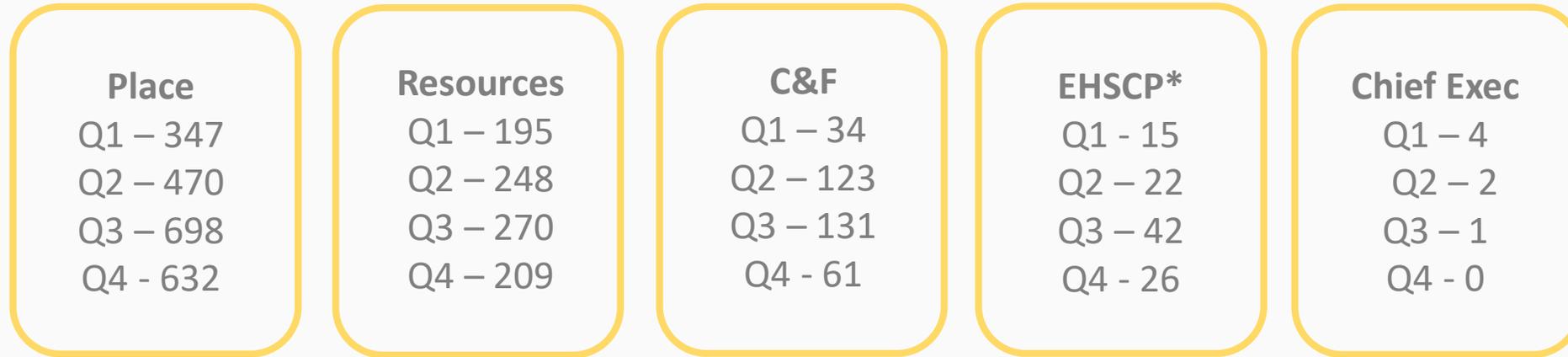
This is the review of the Council's annual complaints performance for 2020-21.

## Key headlines:

- Council services closed 3530 complaints during 2020-21.
- 85% of closed complaints were resolved at Stage 1 (front line resolution).
- Council services answered 62% of complaints within time during 2020-21.
- Council services upheld or partially upheld 64% of complaints closed in 2020-21.
- The number of Edinburgh complaints referred to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman continues to decrease with 32 referrals during 2020-21.
- A revised Complaint Handling Procedure was developed throughout 2020-21 and introduced on 1 April 2021. This included the introduction of revised processes and a new e-learning module.
- The Council's Corporate Complaints Management Group continues to share best practice and identify opportunities to improve complaints management within the Council, including the need to improve service provision through learning from complaints.

## Complaints closed

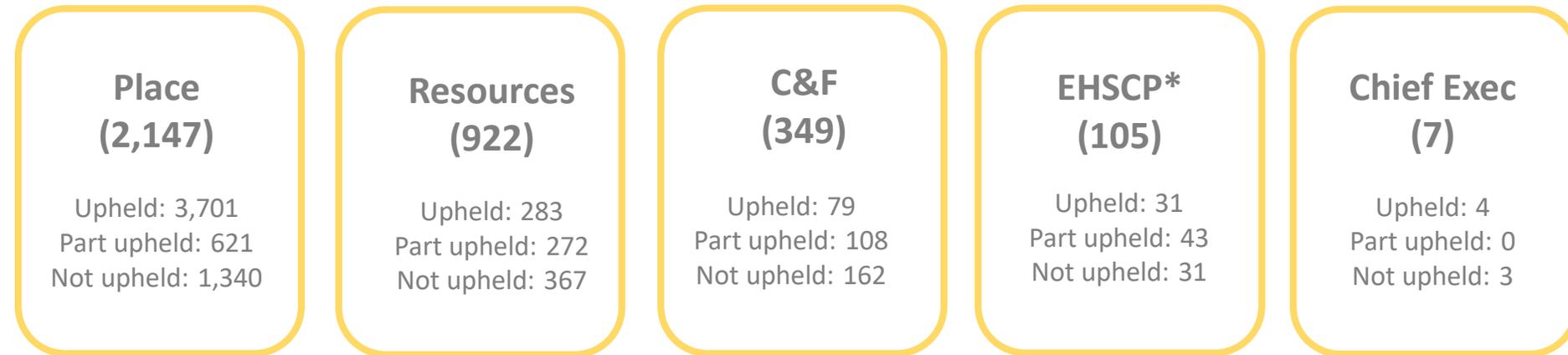
# 3530



- These figures provide information on the number of complaints which were processed and closed by Council services. Overall, there was a 55% decrease in the number of complaints closed during 2020-21 compared with the 7,917 complaints which were closed in 2019-20. This drop can largely be attributed to the impact of Covid which significantly reduced the number and nature of complaints received by the Council during 2020-21.
- During this period 3,947 complaints were received by the Council (7.5 per 1000 of population).
- 3004 (85%) of the total number of complaints closed were frontline resolutions (Stage 1) and 526 (15%) were investigations (Stage 2).

# Complaints upheld or partially upheld

# 2,258



- These figures set the number of complaints which were upheld, partially upheld or not upheld by Council services.
- Overall, the Council upheld or partially upheld 2258 (64%) of complaints from a total of 3530 complaints closed in 2020-21. This is an overall reduction from the 75% of complaints which were upheld or partially upheld in 2019-20.
- Following the development of the Council's revised Complaint Handling Procedure, a new complaint outcome of 'resolved' has been introduced for 2021-22. This means that it is now possible to close a complaint as 'resolved' without deciding whether the complaint should be upheld or not. This outcome can be used where it's possible to agree on an action that will satisfy the customer.

\*EHSCP: Adult Social Work only

# Performance against timescales

	Apr – Mar 2020	Jun – Sept 2020	Oct - Dec - 2020	Jan – Mar 2021	2020/21
Place	36% (124/347)	56% (265/470)	56% (402/698)	43% (396/922)	55% (1187/2147)
Resources	91% (178/195)	83% (209/248)	77% (207/270)	71% (148/209)	80% (742/922)
C & F	35% (12/34)	89% (110/123)	39% (51/131)	97% (59/61)	66% (232/349)
EHSCP	53% (8/15)	41% (9/22)	24% (10/42)	38% (10/26)	35% (37/105)
Chief Executive	50% (2/4)	0% (0/2)	0% (0/1)	N/A	29%(2/7)

- These figures reflect performance against the Stage 1 (5 working days) and Stage 2 (20 working days) timescales set out in the Council's Complaint Procedure. These are based on source data collected from Council recording systems and include any agreed extended timescales.
- When necessary, and with agreement of the customer, timescales can be extended at both Stages 1 and 2. Over the period, 331 (11%) extensions were agreed at Stage 1 and 118 (22.4%) extensions agreed at Stage 2.
- Overall, the Council answered 62% of complaints within time in 2020-21 - a small increase compared with 2019-20 when 58% were responded to within timescales.
- The average recorded period for providing a full response at Stage 1 was 16.6 days and 41.5 days at Stage 2. This is largely due to complaints not being closed on recording systems. Services have been reminded of the need to close complaints promptly.

# Complaints during Covid

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## Impact of Covid on Council Complaints

The Coronavirus pandemic, and the Council's response to it, had a considerable impact on the number and nature of complaints received by the Council.

- Complaints reduced significantly in Q1 and, while increasing, have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels. This trend accords with the experience of other Scottish local authorities.
- Some of the factors that influenced the overall drop in complaints were Council decisions made in response to the pandemic. For example, not proceeding with debt recovery for a period, the temporary abolition of parking charges, and the short-term cessation of some collection services, such as garden waste and glass.
- The nature of complaints also changed as a result of different service delivery models. For example, schools received several complaints relating to their digital delivery and virtual learning.
- The need to prioritise resources in response to the pandemic had an impact on performance figures for some services. For example, Adult Social Care Services staff had to prioritise pandemic related work over complaint responses.
- While for figures have decreased, the top three service areas receiving complaints continue to be Waste (993), Customer (958), and Place Development (937).

# Complaints and referrals to the SPSO

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- Once customers have been through Stage 1 and 2 of the Council's complaints process, they can take their concerns to the SPSO. The SPSO is the final stage for complaints about most Scottish public authorities.
- During 2020-21, there were 32 referrals to the SPSO. These mostly concerned Customer (3), Safer and Stronger Communities (3), Planning and Building Standards (4) and Schools and Lifelong Learning (4). Of those 32 referrals, only one was fully investigated, resulting in an actual decision.
- Due to the coronavirus pandemic, local authority benchmarking data is not yet available for 2020-21. However, previous data revealed that the number of local authority related referrals to the SPSO increased from 1,149 in 2018-19 to 1,308 to 2019-20.

	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
<b>Referrals:</b>	32	129	133	162	192
<b>Decisions:</b>	1	3	9	27	26

- While the coronavirus pandemic has had an impact with decreased complaint totals during the last year, the figures indicate a continued trend of fewer complaints and referrals being taken to the SPSO about the Council.

# Next Steps

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- The Information Governance Unit and the Corporate Complaints Management Group will continue to promote the revised Complaint Handling Procedure to ensure appropriate levels of awareness and better complaint handling across the organisation.
- The Council will publish information on a quarterly basis about complaint outcomes to build public confidence and trust in the value of complaints and complaining, including the actions taken to improve services.
- The Council will continue to contribute to the work of the Local Authority Complaint Handlers' Network to share best practice and benchmarking information to improve complaint handling and performance in Edinburgh.
- A revised and nationally agreed questionnaire will be introduced to assess customer satisfaction levels and inform improvements when required.
- Discussions are taking place about the wider roll out of the Council's CRM system which should (through time) provide better complaints data to inform service improvements.

For more information regarding Complaints please contact:  
[Information.compliance@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:Information.compliance@edinburgh.gov.uk)

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