



Social Work Service Improvement Plan

2026/28

Message from the Head of Social Work



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Head of Social Work

Our services provide social work and social care support for children and their families, for adults and older people and justice services when needed.

In support of the Corporate Plan 2023/28, we contribute to the five council priorities and have a key focus on strengthening care and support for children, adults and older people.

There has been much change across social work and social care services over the last three years. The next two years will also bring transformation as we deliver on key strategic objectives. We remain committed to continuous improvement to support our service to strengthen care and support for people, safeguard and protect where needed and provide good quality direct care in a variety of settings. The financial and budget backdrop to these strategic priorities and to operational practice presents significant challenge for social work and social care services looking forward to the next two years.

Social work services are underpinned by a range of statutory duties and responsibilities including the protection of children, the support and protection of adults at risk and communities when there are broader risks presented. To deliver on our duties, social work services work closely with partners across all areas of public protection activity.

We remain fully committed to supporting and developing the social work and social care workforce. Our teams are keen to attract new recruits into social work and social care to provide good learning and work opportunities alongside providing the services needed to support the citizens of West Lothian for now and the future.

This improvement plan sets out how the social work service will use its resources to contribute to the delivery of positive outcomes for West Lothian. It is the result of a detailed process to make sure that council services continue to be well planned and managed.

I hope this plan will help people who use our services, employees and partners to understand how we will plan for, deliver and transform our services for West Lothian over the next two-year period.

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I. Our Service

What we do

We deliver social work and social care services for the people of West Lothian with the core areas being, Adult and older people services, Children and Families services (including the Inclusion and Support Service) and Justice Services. Adult and older people social work and social care services are delegated functions to West Lothian Integration Joint Board (IJB). Children and Justice services fall within West Lothian Council governance arrangements.

Our Service Users

Social work and social care services are delivered for individuals most at risk and in need in communities, providing support for individuals and families from pre-birth through to older age. To meet the needs of our service users we provide services in a number of ways for people after we have assessed people's needs.

Our services users mostly live at home and in their own communities with supports provided for individuals and whole family support. We support kinship networks and offer group work when needed. Some of our services supervise court mandated orders or Children's Hearings supervision orders. We provide a prison based social work service. A key area of support is providing or commissioning support at home services for older people living at home and providing needed supports for unpaid carers. We provide and commission day services for adults with disabilities and make provisions for adults with disabilities to live in supported accommodation settings. We provide housing with care services and care home services for older adults and commission care home places to meet the needs of people when they can no longer live at home.

Our Way of Working

The service actively works with service users, employees, partners and stakeholders to plan, design and deliver improved services. This encompasses person centred, trauma responsive and human-rights based approaches, promoting principles of choice and control for service users.

Our Purpose

We provide social work and social care support to meet needs with a focus on support for those who are vulnerable

The service helps individuals and families to live safely and well in their homes and supports people to have better life chances and outcomes. Social Work services also provide direct support and care for people when they are not able to live at home

The service contributes to the protection of children and adults at risk of harm, to public protection and offender management

2. Social Work Overview

Our Services:

Adults and Older People

Budget: £124,115,620

Staff resource: 561.27 FTE

A range of social work and social care services are provided for adults and older adults to assess needs and support individuals to remain living independently at home or in a homely setting. These include; statutory social work services including adult support and protection and mental health officer teams, care at home support, care homes for older adults, supported accommodation for adults with complex learning disabilities, community Occupational Therapy, housing with care and day support services for adults with learning disabilities.

Services are extensively commissioned from the independent to meet service needs and in line with strategic direction.

Children and Families

Budget: £35,666,880

Staff resource: 209.20 FTE

Children and families services supporting improved outcomes, opportunities and protection include; social work practice teams, a duty and child protection team, out of hours social work service, child disability service, residential houses for young people, through and aftercare for care experienced young people, family-based care services covering kinship care, foster care, adoption, continuing care and supported placements for young people, services for children and adults experiencing or affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Services are also commissioned from the third and independent sector in line with service needs and strategic direction.

Inclusion and Support Service

Budget: £4,102,038

Staff resource: 73.97 FTE

Inclusion and Support Service, a collaboration between education and social policy services, provides early intervention support for children, young people and their families with additional support needs. The service provides educational support and a range of other interventions including outreach parenting support and family work, parenting group work and counselling.

Justice Services

Budget: £3,529,478

Staff resource: 74.73 FTE

Justice social work provides services statutorily required for the assessment, supervision and management of offenders. Justice adopts the 'Whole system approach' to supporting young people who are at risk of offending. Non-statutory early intervention and prevention services are also provided to support people to avoid conflict with the law or to minimise the risk of further conflict with the law.

FTE = full time equivalent

3. Operating Context

Social work services operate within complex systems with a range of policies and legislation underpinning practice and activities. There are several factors the service must consider when future planning to ensure we make best use of available opportunities, resources and manage any risks and threats to the delivery of social work and social care services. Key factors likely to shape our services over the next two years are set out below.

Corporate Priorities

The council has identified five priorities for the period 2023/24 to 2027/28. These reflect the areas that are most important for the community and contribute to improving the quality of life for all living, working and visiting West Lothian.

The priorities have been set through consultation with our community, staff and partner agencies and identify and address the most pronounced, collective needs of the local area. They also provide a focus for decision making and resource prioritisation over the next years, ensuring that we target our efforts towards the issues that matter most to the community.

In the next two years, the council will focus on achieving outcomes in each priority area.



Social work services work to support delivery of outcomes relating to all council priorities, with a particular focus on strengthening care and support for children, adults and older people.

Social Work delivers a range of statutory services for people in need of support and protection from pre-birth through to older age. There are several factors, many interconnected, the service must consider when future planning, including:

- A range of demographic factors including an increasing older population
- Increased complexity of assessed need alongside increased demand
- Significant financial constraint experienced by the Council and Integration Joint Board
- Digital developments and technology supporting care
- New legislation and national policy commitments
- Our workforce
- Commissioning care

Customer needs, demographic factors, demand and complexity

The service aims to anticipate and respond to demographic factors in developing approaches and planning the shape of service provision in the years ahead. As such, there are a number of improvement actions planned for the next two years that are informed by anticipated growth of our older adult population and also take account of increased complexity of need that people of all ages are experiencing in their lives, with impact on the level of support and care people of all ages are likely to require. These transformation and improvement actions support the delivery of our key objectives within the context of increased demand and complexity of needs and within available resources.

Informed by the voices and wishes of people we support, our services are committed to supporting people to remain living in their own homes, with their own families and within their own communities for as long as it is safe and possible to do so. Looking forward the service will continue engagement with service users and their families to strengthen our strategic planning processes, building on individual strengths and provide the best possible levels of support to meet increasing levels of needs and complexity.

Partnership working remains a key foundation for social work services approach to operationally assessing and meeting needs for individuals and families. In addition, Social Work services contribute to partnership working in three key strategic planning partnerships: The Integration Joint Board and its Strategic Planning Group; the Children and Families Strategic Planning Group; and the Safer Communities Strategic Planning Group. These partnership groups cover the work of social work services and set strategic direction across children, adults and older people and justice services.

Social Work services hold key statutory public protection duties and implementing these duties are of the highest priority, working alongside our multi agency partners. Social work services contribute to all public protection committees reporting to the West Lothian Chief Officer Group (COG) with COG providing leadership and direction across all areas of public protection. Social work services contribute to delivery of a range of actions set out in the business plans developed by the West Lothian strategic partnerships noted above and the priority workstreams reporting to them.

Financial constraint and budget pressures

Ongoing budget and financial pressures, set alongside the above noted increased levels of demand and complexity, are expected to continue over the next two years. Our services will continue to evaluate and reprioritise approaches and provisions to meet the assessed needs of children, their families, adults and older adults and the needs of communities when public protection risks are being managed.

Over the two-year period 2026/27 and 2027/28, the council has allocated budget saving measures to Social Work of £8.229 million.

A range of service re-design and transformational work continues to support delivery of services within available budget, including the delivery of agreed savings measures. These actions will focus on ensuring that social work services continue to meet their statutory duties alongside continuing to explore all possible options to support the future sustainability of social work and social care services. We will prioritise service redesign, efficiency and modernisation of services and will continue to explore digital improvements and technology to empower people to make informed choices in ways that meet their needs.

Digital developments and Technology

The service will continue to improve processes and systems to enable more customers to access advice, guidance and support digitally.

Over the next two years we will also continue to progress the ongoing deployment of technology enabled care (TEC) to support and help people live independently longer in line with wishes and rights.

Collaborative links have been established with the Digital Office and other local authority areas, providing access to comparative data and sector intelligence to support improvement-focused benchmarking and service development.

These aims form a part of the services approaches to managing levels of demand and complexity within available budgets and ensuring out workforce is supported in their day-to-day practice by effective digital supports.

TEC supports people to remain as independent for as long as possible in the environment they choose to be in and empower them to have better choice and control over their care and support. TEC will not be able to meet the needs of everyone who needs care at home support or residential care and the service will always deploy technology in consultation with individuals, their families and carers.

Teams ensure that Technology Enabled Care and digital solutions are central to assessment of needs and review activity. The Home Safety Service has continued to progress the transition to digital telecare by January 2027. The transition to digital telecare enhances system resilience and functionality, delivering faster connection times and future-proofing technology to meet evolving service demands.

A Social Work Digital Oversight Group has also been established to provide strategic leadership and governance for the development and implementation of digital and ethical artificial intelligence solutions across the workforce. The Group will oversee delivery of agreed transformation initiatives, monitor progress against key digital priorities, and ensure alignment with the Council's Performance and Transformation Strategy.

Legislative and Policy context

Social work services operate within a complex and evolving landscape of national policy drivers, ambitions and legislation. Looking ahead to the next two years, we will continue to assess the impact of new legislation and policy developments, including the impact of these on available financial resources and the changes to practice and standards that will be required of us to deliver on these.

There are a few legislative developments, including changes to eligibility for care experienced young people to receive aftercare services and introduction of a right for unpaid carers to receive a break from caring, that will have significant relevance to the activities of social work over the period of this improvement plan.

There will be significant work and resource required to prepare, coordinate and plan local authority implementation of the MAPPS system which is the replacement database system for

ViSOR. MAPPS allows for the secure record sharing and retention of information relating to the management of individuals under Multi Agency Public Protection arrangements (MAPPA).

The above changes and reforms are provided as examples to illustrate a sample of the change implementation programmes that will impact over the next two-year period, requiring the service and its internal and external partners to be continually responsive and ready to implement change.

Workforce

Overall currently for social work and social care services, the workforce position in terms of recruitment is stable with ability to recruit to vacant posts.

We welcome newly qualified social workers into our teams and remain mindful of the increasing complexity of need and demand across all social work specialisms in managing their transition from learning to early practice. Maintaining an appropriate balance of experience within teams is essential to managing complex demand effectively and protecting employee wellbeing.

Staff wellbeing remains a key priority for the service and the service Supervision Policy has been reviewed to ensure it is trauma-informed and places staff wellbeing at its core. As part of this, the policy now includes the implementation of wellbeing plans, with support provided to assist with their rollout. The Four Pillars of Wellbeing toolkit is promoted with all staff to support positive outcomes for wellbeing. All social work services remain focussed on supporting employees and effectively managing, and preventing where possible, absence from work to reduce risk and impact.

Commissioning care

Effective commissioning of care will remain a key element of how Social Work Services plan and deliver sustainable support for the people of West Lothian over the period of this improvement plan. Commissioning activity will be informed by statutory duties, analysis of local population needs, demographic trends, service demand and outcomes, alongside engagement with people who use services, carers, providers and partners.

The service will continue to work collaboratively with partners across the independent and third sectors to ensure that high-quality care and support services are available across all Social Policy service areas. These partners play a vital role in the delivery of person-centred care and support for people in West Lothian, supporting individuals to live safely and independently within their homes and communities wherever possible.

Robust contract monitoring and contract management arrangements are in place to ensure that commissioned services deliver safe, effective and high-quality targeted care, provide good value for public resources and continue to meet the needs of people who use our services. This approach will also support the service to respond to demographic change, increasing complexity of need and the ongoing financial pressures facing the council and the Integration Joint Board.

4. Key Objectives

The Social Work service have an important part to play in the delivery of the priorities set out in Council's Corporate Plan 2023/28. The service will continue to review, transform and modernise services as well as developing strategic and delivery plans to ensure services are provided as effectively and efficiently as possible.

We strive to continually improve services and embed a learning culture in all areas to support the provision of effective social work and social care support for people in West Lothian when they need it, to support them to have the best chance of leading safe, fulfilling and healthy lives.

The key objectives are grouped around the service key business areas. The service will monitor progress on each objective, supported by service action plans with appropriate performance indicators and targets, set to drive improvement.

Objective 1

To deliver and strengthen care and support for adults and older people

A key strategic driver is for service delivery to enable people to live as independently as possible and to live at home or in a homely setting as long as possible. This also recognises the crucial contribution that unpaid carers make to their families, friends and extended communities.

The service is committed to the principles of Self-Directed Support (SDS) and recognises that when people have more control over how they live their lives and any support they may require, they are likely to achieve better outcomes. The service takes steps to facilitate the four SDS principles: participation and dignity, involvement, informed choice, and collaboration, to ensure service users can make informed decisions on how their care is delivered on an individual basis.

Activities to deliver the objectives include:

- ▾ Integrated Access Point
- ▾ East and West Locality social work teams for adults and older people
- ▾ Adult Support and Protection social work team
- ▾ Mental Health Officer Team
- ▾ Community Occupational Therapy Team
- ▾ Assessment and Review Team
- ▾ Internal Support at Home / Intermediate care / Reablement and Crisis Care services
- ▾ Internal residential care homes for older people
- ▾ Day Opportunities for adults with learning and physical disabilities
- ▾ Housing with care
- ▾ Supported accommodation for adults with learning disabilities

- ▀ Provision of Home Safety Services and development of Telecare
- ▀ Joint management with NHS Lothian of the Community Equipment Store
- ▀ Business Support and Administrative Services for all Social Work
- ▀ Commissioning of care home placements including residential respite care
- ▀ Commissioning of community-based care and support services
- ▀ Support to unpaid carers including breaks from caring

Performance will be monitored through:

Key Output	Key Indicator	2025/26 Performance	Target
Through the delivery of the Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan, older people can live independently in the community with an improved quality of life.	SW03a_9b.1b Percentage of People Aged 65+ with long-term care needs who are receiving personal care at home	67.7% (2024/25)	66%
Redesigning services for older people with a focus on supporting those most in need and maximising the use of technology enabled care where appropriate.	P:SPCC100_9b.2a The number of people aged 75+ supported by technology to remain at home	3,282	2,755
Developing a more sustainable service delivery model targeted to those most in need with an increased emphasis on reablement to retain or regain independence within their home or community setting.	CP:SPCC014_6b.5 Percentage of Occupational Therapy assessments allocated within 6 weeks of referral.	97%	90%
	CP:SPCC062_6a.2 Percentage of customers who rated the service delivered by Learning Disability (adults) services as good or excellent.	99.3%	100%
	P:SPCC024_9a.1a Net cost per head of population of services for older people.	£1,745 (2024/25)	£1,783
	P:SPCC015_9b.2a Number of households receiving telecare	3,852	3,750
	CP:SPCC101_9b.2 The number of carers of older people who have an adult carer support plan.	201	360
Improving support to carers over the next five years through improved identification of carers, assessment, information and advice, health and well-being, carer support, participation and partnership.	SOA1306_17 Percentage of carers who feel supported in their care role	26% (2023/24)	46%

Objective 2

Deliver and strengthen care and support for Children and Families

The Children and Families service comprises a range of teams providing a continuum of support services for children and their families. The primary function of the teams is to ensure that children, young people and families can maximise their potential through the provision of targeted support services, ensuring that children and young people are safe and supported as far as possible within their own family, their own family network and community.

The delivery of services encompasses the principles of Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), The Promise and complies with the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024. There is a commitment to providing early help and prevention supports and where required, intensive and crisis support. The service provides support from pre-birth to age 26 years for those who have care experience.

Children and Families Services are committed to providing supports that are holistic, developed with families themselves and partner agencies; that tackle inequalities, and focus on improved outcomes for children and deliver the right help at the right time.

Activities to deliver the objectives include:

- ▼ Children and families social work Practice Teams,
- ▼ Duty and child protection service, offering short term support
- ▼ Throughcare service for young people who have experienced care
- ▼ Provision of a Child Disability Service
- ▼ Families Together offering Intensive family support and crisis services
- ▼ Social Care Emergency Team (SCET) providing out of hours social work response
- ▼ Residential Houses for children and young people
- ▼ Family based care services delivering assessment, recruitment, supervision and support for foster carers and adoptive families and assessment and support for kinship carers.
- ▼ Mental health and wellbeing early intervention and prevention services
- ▼ Domestic and Sexual Assault Team (DASAT)
- ▼ Public Protection Lead Officers, supporting the Public Protection committees
- ▼ Participation and engagement with children, young people and their families
- ▼ Reviewing Officers Team, providing a chairing service for key child protection and looked after children meetings, independent from the involved team
- ▼ Commissioning early intervention services from third sector providers
- ▼ Commissioning specialist services from third sector providers, for example, Family Group Decision Making Service and services providing support for children with complex disabilities

Performance will be monitored through:

Key Output	Key Indicator	2025/26 Performance	Target
Promoting the Promise and providing local community-based care for children who become looked after	SPCF096_9b Balance of Care for Looked After Children: Percentage of Children being Looked After in the Community	88%	91%
Providing intensive support for families, sustaining children and young people within their family network	P:SPCF138_9b.1c Percentage of children involved with the Families Together service who have avoided becoming accommodated who were assessed as being at high risk of being accommodated.	91%	85%
Care experienced young people will have positive destinations	SPCF127_9b.1c Percentage of young people eligible for Aftercare identified as homeless as at 31st July	6%	2%
Children are protected and effective multi-agency planning and interventions prevent repeat child protection registration	SCHN22 Percentage of child protection re-registrations within 18 months	8.41%	3%
Young children have security of permanent care	P:SPCF112_9b Average time taken from point of accommodation for a child under the age of 5 to obtain a permanent placement decision	53.75 weeks	52 weeks
Children feel safe and supported	SOA1305_17: Percentage of children who report feeling safer as a result of intervention by specialist domestic abuse services	100%	100%

Objective 3

Deliver and strengthen Inclusion and Support Services

The Inclusion and Support Service brings together teams from Social Policy and Education to enable a coordinated approach to earlier intervention and support for young people and their families. The service encompasses school and outreach teaching support as well as early intervention and family support. The service supports children and young people most at risk of disengaging from education or assessed as having additional support needs.

The service has close connections to the voluntary sector, CAMHS, social work practice teams, education (ASN) and DASAT. The Wellbeing Recovery Group - a multi-agency group - meets regularly to consider requests for supports for children and their families when this is appropriate. Supports are provided for school aged children and care experienced young people up to the age of 26 years.

Part of the service offered is the Family Assessment and Support Service which has close links to the third sector with multi-agency group working to consider supports where needed for vulnerable unborn babies and children under age 5 years.

Strengthening strategic alignment has supported consideration and review of how resources can most effectively be targeted with individual families as well as specific school cluster areas where there are themes of emerging need. The development of the Inclusion Support Review Group (ISRG) in Education, with Social Work representation enables there to be shared objectives and joined up approaches to supporting families where there is an ongoing escalation of need for a child with the overarching aim of promoting positive outcomes and preventing crisis.

Activities to deliver the objectives include:

- ▼ Supporting children and young people most at risk of disengaging from education or assessed as having additional support needs
- ▼ Support relating to promoting school attendance
- ▼ Outreach parenting support
- ▼ Range of parenting groupwork programmes
- ▼ Counselling
- ▼ Range of groupwork and individual work to promote children's mental health and wellbeing
- ▼ Providing support for women during their pregnancy, and in the early stages of parenthood
- ▼ Targeted and tailored support for fathers-to-be and those who have young children
- ▼ Support for women who are experiencing post-natal depression

Performance will be monitored through:

Key Output	Key Indicator	2025/26 Performance	Target
Providing an effective early intervention service and preventing escalation to crisis and intensive support	SPISS040_9b.1a Percentage of families allocated to ISS who do not go on to receive a service from Families Together within 6 months of ISS ending their involvement	93.5%	95%
Parental wellbeing improves, with positive impact on child and preventing other interventions	SPISS137_9b.1a Percentage of parents involved with Positive Steps programme who indicate an improvement in mental wellbeing	84%	90%
Effective early intervention for parents so they are supported and empowered, improving outcomes for children and families and preventing escalation	SPISS144_9b.1c Percentage of parents who complete the parenting programme they were referred to	73%	75%

Objective 4

Deliver and strengthen Justice Services

Justice Social Work Services provide services statutorily required through legislation for the assessment, supervision and management of young people and adults who are in conflict with the law and who may have been charged with offences.

The Justice service is also focussed on the delivery of the 'Whole System Approach' supporting young people who are potentially at risk of harm from offending behaviour. The service provides support to people who have been charged with offences to enable them to contribute positively to their communities and to ensure that the strategic aims of reducing reoffending are achieved.

In West Lothian, responsibility for Community Justice is undertaken by the Community Justice Partnership which is part of the West Lothian Community Planning Partnership structure. The revised National Strategy for Community Justice was launched in June 2022 and includes four national aims and associated priority actions. The Community Justice planning partnership is working on a revised action plan which aligns with the Community Justice Performance Framework.

Activities to deliver the objectives include:

- ▀ Community Payback, the management of supervision and unpaid work requirements
- ▀ Providing early intervention and support using the Whole System Approach
- ▀ Working with young people who are in conflict with the law and who may have been charged with offences through the Assess and Connect Team and Youth Justice

- The Almond Project aimed at women who offend and reducing reoffending
- Early and Effective Intervention Programme (EEL) for young people at risk of entering the justice system
- Protecting the public and communities by managing high risk offenders
- Providing offender assessment, court support services, and offering alternatives to prosecution and to custodial remands
- Providing a Drug Treatment and Testing service
- Delivering a prison-based social work service at HMP Addiewell
- Enhancing throughcare arrangements for short-term prisoners
- Providing offender intervention programmes, including a Domestic Abuse Perpetrators' programme
- Full engagement in Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)

Performance will be monitored through:

Key Output	Key Indicator	2025/26 Performance	Target
Working with our partner agencies to deliver the priorities agreed in the Community Justice Strategy; focused on ensuring that those over the age of 16 involved in the justice system are best supported not to reoffend	CP:SPCJ103a_9b Percentage of Early and Effective Intervention (EEL) cases 12 to 17 years who do not become known to the Youth Justice Team within 12 months	95 %	95%
	CP:SPCJ144_9b.1a Percentage of Community based supervision Orders supervised by the Justice Service with a successful termination	70%	71%
	P:SPCJ082_6b.5 - Percentage of Criminal Justice Social Work Reports (CJSWRs) delivered to Court on time	99%	95%

5. Delivering Our Services

Social Work services aim to provide the highest possible quality of service. We have used the principles of Connect – Empower – Deliver to develop clear commitments to our service users about the way we will work with them and for them:

Connect



- We will be connected to the business of the council and the services we deliver by working collaboratively with service users, employees and partners
- We will focus on earlier intervention approaches to provide effective support and information for service users
- We will build productive relationships with service users through regular engagement
- We will communicate with clarity, providing concise information for service users

Empower



- We will empower service users through Self Directed Support legislation to have control over how their care and support outcomes are achieved
- We expect teamwork and collaborative working across all Social Work teams and with partners to add value for service users
- We will empower service users, employees and partners to make the right decisions by providing them with information to help them identify and manage opportunities and risks, and provide independent advocacy services for service users
- We will seek feedback from service users and adapt service delivery where appropriate

Deliver



- We will continue to prioritise the delivery of services that meet the needs of service users
- We will strive to continuously improve the quality of our services by learning from best practice
- We will encourage and support our service users to achieve their goals
- We will ensure our employees are equipped to deliver outstanding customer service

6. Risk Management

The council aims to mitigate risks to its objectives by implementing robust risk management procedures which enable managers to effectively manage their risks.

Significant risks to Social Work service objectives are set out in the council's corporate risk register. The risks identified below align directly to the key objectives outlined at section 4. This ensures key objectives outcomes are closely monitored and improvement actions put in place if necessary. Service risks are regularly monitored by managers and are reviewed monthly by the senior management team to ensure that appropriate and effective control measures are in place and the level of risk robustly reviewed.

The service is currently managing the following risks considered to be high and moderate: The risks are:

Risk Title	Risk Description	Current Risk Score	Traffic Light Icon
SPCF004 External placements - inability to reduce reliance on external placements for looked after children resulting in budget pressure	The risk concerns the extent children are looked after in foster care and residential placements external to council resources. These placements are purchased and result in budget pressures due to higher costs. These placements are relied on when there is no availability of internal placements or due to complex needs that cannot be met through internal resources. Some of these placements are underpinned by statutory orders, with conditions of residence there or by a right to remain resident there through Continuing Care statutory requirements.	20	
SPCC005 Increasing expenditure on commissioned care services for adults and older people resulting in significant budgetary overspend	Increasing costs in relation to providing care services for adults and older people leading to expenditure exceeding available budget.	12	
SP003 Failure of a commissioned provider	Organisational failure of a commissioned care provider because of financial instability, inadequate management or external factors (e.g. workforce shortages) leading to disruption or non-delivery of care services resulting in inability to provide high quality care, inability to meet regulatory requirements, increased risk of closure, operational challenges, financial budget pressures or reputational damage.	10	

Risk Title	Risk Description	Current Risk Score	Traffic Light Icon
SP006 Failure to deliver agreed budget measures	Unanticipated external events such as higher than expected inflation, economic recession, social or demographic changes, or internal factors such as deficient project management, leading to an inability to deliver the agreed budget measures relevant to the medium-term financial plan. Resulting in unplanned budget savings with an adverse impact on service delivery, and reputational damage.	9	
SP018 Employee sickness absence and risk to service sustainability.	Levels of employee sickness absence above council target levels can present serious risk with adverse impact on the quality of service provision and on service performance. High absence levels present a significant financial risk to services where absence must be covered by other staff or overtime arrangements to ensure appropriate levels of direct care.	9	
SP001 Unauthorised disclosure of sensitive information	Failure to maintain service user confidentiality through inappropriate release of personal data, including data breaches relevant to the Data Protection Act 2018. Unauthorised disclosure of personal information could lead to death or significant injury in the most serious circumstances. A protected address provided to a perpetrator of violence or harm could have very significant adverse impact. Breaching of personal data could result in significant financial penalty being applied by the Information Commissioners Office.	8	
SP011 Failure to maintain effective staffing levels	External economic factors, demographic pressures, and/or internal financial pressures, leading to a failure to recruit staff in sufficient numbers to maintain an effective level of service provision.	8	
SPCC001 Insufficient availability of beds to meet service demands - care homes	Insufficient supply of care home beds for individuals assessed as requiring this type of provision. Currently this risk is highest in respect to older people services. The risk is also linked to pressures associated with delayed discharge (one of the sources of pressure), also noted as a risk for the IJB (IJB006).	8	

Social Work services will undertake several actions in support of the Council's Corporate Plan, Budget Strategy and other relevant plans. Adult and Older adult services will also undertake actions in support of the IJB strategic plan and budget plan. We will focus on actions that will improve the customer experience, increase the efficiency and effectiveness of services and advance our use of technologies to increase choice and/or reduce costs.

Key This action should have the following intended impact:



Improve services for service users



Improve performance and/or process efficiency



Reduce the cost of delivering our services



Increase the use of technology

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Responsible Officer	Start	End	Links
Maximise use of TEC, creating choice for service users in the way they access and receive services	Further development and use of TEC in supporting care for adults and older adults	Service users have the best possible technology options to support their care needs.	Adult and Older People Senior Managers	April 2023	March 2028	Objective I 
Improving Self Directed Support approaches.	Building on SDS improvement work commenced 2025/26 to ensure revised approaches are fully embedded, ensuring individuals have greater choice and control over the delivery of their care and support.	Service users will experience support that is flexible, personalised and responsive, enabling them to live fulfilling and independent lives. Practitioners will demonstrate improved confidence and competence in explaining and supporting all four SDS options.	Senior Manager Adult Services	April 2026	March 2028	Objective I 
Redesign of internal support at home services	A review of internal support at home services to ensure best value and secure future sustainability.	Support at home services delivered effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of service users.	Senior Manager Older People	September 2023	March 2027	Objective I 

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Responsible Officer	Start	End	Links
Full Review of provision of transport for day services/ all commissioned transport	A full review of the provision of transport will be progressed to deliver financial efficiencies.	The review will look at options to radically reform provision of transport and support individuals to use personal and public transport where appropriate, ensuring that individuals have greater choice and control over how they access services.	Senior Manager – Adults Services	April 2026	March 2028	Objective 1 
Implementation of Coming Home – Supporting Adults with Learning Disabilities	Deliver key actions in line with “Coming Home” Implementation supporting adults with learning disabilities to return to home communities where their wish is to do so.	Adults with learning disabilities and complex care needs will be supported to be active members of local communities through the provision of person-centred supports.	Senior Manager, Adult Services	October 2024	March 2028	Objective 1  
Imbedding of Multi-Disciplinary locality working for social work services.	Deliver and embed practice improvements following redesign of Adults and Older Adults social work teams.	Where an individual requires social work/social care support they will receive a timeous person-centred service	Senior Manager, Adults Services Senior Manager, Older Adult Services	June 2025	March 2028	Objective 1   
Whitrigg Replacement	Upgrade/refurbishment of Letham House and Torcroft House to provide Care Inspectorate compliant accommodation and replace the current Whitrigg House.	This will increase care capacity and will ensure accommodation is modernised and Care Inspectorate Design compliant.	Senior Manager, Children and Justice Services	March 2026	June 2027	Objective 2  

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Responsible Officer	Start	End	Links
Development of Bairns' Hoose Model	Develop the Bairns' Hoose model and approach through provision of therapeutic recovery to children who have been victims or witnesses of harm.	Child centred therapeutic support is provided to children who have been victims or witness of abuse and to children under the age of criminal responsibility whose behaviour has caused harm	Senior Manager, Children's Services	August 2024	March 2027	Objective 2 
Children and Justice Social work and Family Support Services Workforce Modernisation.	Review of Children's and justice social work teams	To maximise the effectiveness of teams and resources and ensure the service meets required efficiencies	Senior Managers for Children and Justice Services	April 2026	September 2027	Objective 2, 3  
Make better use of data to drive performance in the Children & Families Services	The service will strengthen recording and reporting of data.	Improved performance data, service planning and priority setting.	Children and Families Senior Managers / Business Support Performance Team	April 2026	March 2027	Objective 2, 3   
Implementation of key actions - West Lothian Carers Strategy 2026/28	Full Implementation of the West Lothian Carers Strategy and Short Breaks from Caring Statement.	Carers feel supported in their caring role and involved in the design of services to support their cared for person.	Senior Manager Adults Services	April 2026	March 2028	Objective 1, 2, 3 
Development of Justice Programme Team	Development of a local justice services programmes team with the aim of preventing reoffending.	An established local justice services programmes team in place with the aim of preventing reoffending.	Senior Manager, Justice Services	January 2026	January 2027	Objective 4  

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Responsible Officer	Start	End	Links
Strengthen approaches to service user engagement	The service will review and enhance participatory approaches to service delivery and maximise service user participation and engagement. The service will enhance options to gather feedback on service user experiences.	Improvements to service delivery, service user experience and service user engagement. Improved response to service user consultation.	Group Manager, Business Support	April 2023	March 2027	Objective 1,2, 3,4 
Building a Trauma Informed workforce	The service will progress building a trauma informed and trauma responsive workforce.	Service users impacted by trauma are provided with services which support recovery. The workforce will respond in ways which prevent further harm.	Senior Managers	April 2023	December 2026	Objective 1, 2, 3, 4 
Digital Transformation Programme for Social Work	Create and deliver a digital transformation programme across the service to drive forward efficiency, maximise use of the current social work digital system MOSAIC and improve digital services for service users.	Service delivery and change programs are supported by more effective digital practices	Senior Manager, Justice Services	July 2025	March 2027	Objective 1, 2, 3, 4 
Develop and implement national unpaid work digital solution	Develop and implement a secure and scalable digital platform to support the management of unpaid work within local justice services and nationally	Enhance Operational efficiency, strengthen data governance and reduce manual processes	Senior Manager, Justice Services	April 2026	September 2027	Objective 4 