



PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

BSL (BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE) LOCAL PLAN FOR WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL 2018-2024

REPORT BY HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present for consideration a draft BSL Local Plan 2018 – 2024 for West Lothian Council.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel note and provide comment upon the content of the draft BSL Local Plan 2018 – 2024 for West Lothian Council which is intended to be submitted to Council Executive for approval.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; providing equality of opportunities; working in partnership
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015 An initial Integrated Relevance Assessment has been completed with regards to the Draft Plan.
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	None
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	National Outcome 15: Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and respond to local people's needs
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	Ring-fenced funding from the Scottish Government of £11,000 has been allocated to West Lothian Council to assist with the implantation of the BSL Plan.
VII	Consideration at PDSP	Partnership and resources PDSP 7 December 2018

VIII Other consultations

Pan Lothian consultation involving other local authorities, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, NHS Lothian and other interested organisations and groups. West Lothian council specific consultation event involving council officers and partner organisations.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

Background

The British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015 received Royal Assent on 22 October 2015. This legislation sets out ambitious plans to make Scotland the best place in the world for BSL users to live, work and visit. The Scottish government published the National British Sign Language (BSL) Plan in October 2017.

The BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 requires that all 'listed Authorities' in Scotland must produce an Authority Plan (local plan) demonstrating how they will work towards implementing the national plan and improving services for BSL users throughout the area.

The Council, as a listed authority, is required to have a local BSL plan in place by the end of 2018.

BSL Local Plan for West Lothian Council

West Lothian Council is required to consult on a draft plan and those to be consulted are to be those who the authority considers are likely to be directly affected by the Authority Plan or otherwise to have an interest in that plan and in particular are to include:

- (a) persons who use BSL, and
- (b) persons who represent users of BSL.

The Council is required to produce a BSL and English version of both the draft and final plan. The ring-fenced budget allocated by the Scottish Government will assist with this and the delivery of actions contained within the final plan.

In February 2018 West Lothian Council participated in a Pan Lothian consultation event involving other local authorities, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, NHS Lothian and other interested organisations and groups.

This was followed up in June 2018 with a West Lothian Council specific consultation event. This involved council officers from across service areas and partner organisations. West Lothian residents who use BSL took part to tell us what they would like in the plan.

Based on the consultation events held and the feedback received a draft plan was produced and published for consultation on the Council website from 3rd September to 21 September 2018.

The draft BSL Local Plan 2018 – 2024 for West Lothian Council, which is attached as an Appendix to this report, follows the format of the National Plan and sets out an ambitious suite of actions which will improve the way BSL users find out about and access council services.

E. CONCLUSION

The council recognises the need to deliver services that meet the needs of the diverse communities of West Lothian whilst ensuring legislative compliance. In consultation with BSL users and the deaf community of West Lothian a local plan has been developed that will support progress towards making West Lothian the best place for BSL users and the deaf community to live, work and visit..

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

- British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015
- Scottish Government consultation on British Sign Language National Plan

Appendices/Attachments: 1

- BSL (British Sign Language) Local Plan West Lothian Council

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