

5. BSL (BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE) LOCAL PLAN FOR WEST LoTHIAN COUNCIL 2018-2024

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Corporate Services presenting a draft British Sign Language (BSL) Local Plan 2018-2024 for West Lothian Council.

The report recalled that the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015 received Royal Assent on 22 October 2015. This legislation set out ambitious plans to make Scotland the best place in the world for BSL users to live, work and visit.

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

The council as a listed authority was required to have a local BSL plan in place by the end of 2018.

In February 2018 West Lothian Council participated in a pan-Lothian consultation event involving other local authorities, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue, NHS Lothian and other interested organisations and groups. This was then followed up with a specific West Lothian Council consultation event and included West Lothian residents, persons who used BSL and persons who represented users of BSL.

Based on the consultation events held and the feedback received a draft plan was produced and published for consultation on the council’s web site from 3 to 21 September 2018, a copy of which was attached to the report at Appendix 1. The format of the plan followed that of the National Plan and sets out an ambitious suite of actions which would improve the way BSL users find out about and access council services.

The report concluded that the council recognised the need to deliver services that meets the needs of the diverse communities of West Lothian whilst ensuring legislative compliance.

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

Decision

1. To note the content of the report; and
2. To agree that the report be submitted to the Council Executive for approval.