



PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

SERVICE PERFORMANCE AND WLAM OUTCOME REPORT – CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

REPORT BY DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report provides Performance Committee with an overview of a service assessment from the West Lothian Assessment Model process (2017/20).

It also provides a summary of recommendations from the officer-led scrutiny panel that have been identified for action and are to be delivered by the service management team.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Performance Committee:

1. Note the outcome from the WLAM and Review Panel process;
2. Note the recommendations for improvement;
3. Agree any other recommendations that may improve the performance of the service.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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|------|--|--|
| I. | Council Values | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focusing on our customers' needs• Being honest, open and accountable• Providing equality of opportunity• Developing employees• Making best use of our resources• Working with other organisations |
| II. | Policy and Legal | The West Lothian Assessment Model programme is a key part of the council's Best Value Framework, ensuring that there is robust internal scrutiny and support for continuous improvement of services. |
| III. | Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers | None |

IV.	Impact on performance and performance indicators	The report provides a summary of performance indicators from a key council service to support effective elected member scrutiny.
V.	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	The council has adopted an EFQM-based approach to performance management. This is reflected in the type of indicators used, including council indicators in the SOA.
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	From existing budget.
VII.	Consideration at PDSP/Executive Committee required	Service performance is considered at the appropriate PDSP on an ongoing, scheduled basis.
VIII.	Details of consultations	None.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

Self-assessment is an important part of the council's Best Value Framework, ensuring that there is rigorous challenge of performance and continuous improvement is embedded at all levels of the organisation. Regular, programmed self-assessment is also an integral part of improvement planning and preparation for external inspection.

This report provides the outcome from the self-assessment of the Performance and Improvement Service and the agreed recommendations for improvement for the service, as well as a summary overview of performance.

The WLAM applies an evidence-based, rigorous assessment model – the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) framework. This requires employees to consider the long-term impact of the service in the stated strategic objectives. In detail, the service must consider the effectiveness of leadership, strategies, policies, processes and procedures and also, how effectively the service manages relationships with employees, partners and customers.

D.2 Service Overview

Head of Service: Jo MacPherson, Head of Social Policy (Interim)

Service Managers: Tim Ward and Susan McKenzie, Senior Managers

The Children and Families service comprises a wide range of teams providing interventions for children and their families experiencing a need for support.

The service includes the following teams: Sure Start, Family Centres, Parenting Team, Mental Health and Wellbeing team, school attendance improvement service (AIMS), Child Disability Service, Whole Family Support Service, Child Care and Protection teams, Inclusion and Aftercare Service, Family Placement Team, Residential Children's Houses, Children's Rights Service, Reviewing Officer Team, Domestic and Sexual Assault Team (DASAT), Social Care Emergency Team (SCET), Public Protection lead officers and emergency planning.

The service provides support from pre-birth to age 26 for those who have experienced care.

The main aim of the service is to ensure that children, young people and their families can maximise their potential through the identification and provision of additional support and protection. This includes disabled children, young people and their families. The service is committed to providing services that are child-centred, developed in partnership with other organisations and with families themselves, that tackle inequalities and are focused on improving outcomes for children. These aims are in line with Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) principles. The service is committed to providing help that is appropriate, proportionate and timely to ensure children and young people have the best start to their lives building on family strengths and promoting resilience. It is focused on keeping children safe and teams also provide support through statutory intervention, looked after children services and child protection interventions when these are needed. The service is focussed on minimising the impact of child poverty wherever possible.

The service is also working to shift the balance of care, this means providing support to families and the wider family network to enable them to safely continue to care for children and young people in challenging circumstances. This also means where children or young people require to be accommodated away from home that more use is made of community based resources with less reliance on residential care out with West Lothian.

A summary of the service activities and resources is contained within Appendix 1.

D.3 Service Contribution to Corporate Priorities

Children and Families is part of Social Policy and works with NHS services, through the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), to deliver integrated health and care services that will improve the wellbeing, safety and quality of life for people living in West Lothian, particularly those most at risk in society.

The service makes a critical contribution to the council's number two and seven corporate priorities. In particular, the service has responsibility for a number of deliverables in the Corporate Plan:

Priority 2 – delivering positive outcomes and early interventions for early years

- Develop more sustainable models of parenting support work within home, community and education settings.
- Providing support to vulnerable children and young people to achieve sustainable positive outcomes and destinations in line with priorities in the West Lothian Corporate Parenting Plan.

Priority 7 – reducing crime and improving community safety

- Protecting those in our community who are most at risk by providing effective interventions across the four main strands of public protection; Child Protection, Adult Support and Protection, Violence.

The service also works closely with Education Services to support targeted young people and towards priority 1 – improving attainment and positive destinations. Also, through the wide range support and interventions it delivers, the service makes a contribution to positive outcomes in priority 5 – minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality.

Service contribution to the Corporate Plan will be delivered through a range of policies and procedures, with progress reported through the Corporate Plan scorecard (and the monitoring arrangements in place).

D.4 West Lothian Assessment Model

The service went through the West Lothian Assessment Model process in 2017/18, with a representative group of employees from the service critically evaluating the service effectiveness in the nine criterion parts of the assessment model.

The service scored a total of 539 (out of 1,000). This was an improvement on the service score in the last programme (2014/17) and above the current council average. To date, a total of 20 services have been assessed in the council's rolling three-year programme.

An overview of the service's scores in the last four cycles is set out in table 1. The trend column is based on a comparison between the base position (2008/10) and the current WLAM score.

Table 1: WLAM Scores (2008/10 to 2017/20)					
WLAM Criteria	2008/10	2011/13	2014/17	2017/20	Trend
1 Leadership	-	47	62	66	↑
2 Strategy	-	50	60	62	↑
3 People	-	54	55	72	↑
4 Partnerships and Resources	-	65	56	66	↑
5 Services and Processes	-	58	53	51	↓
6 Customer Results	-	39	61	66	↑
7 People Results	-	9	45	44	↑
8 Society Results**	-	20	40	50	↑
9 Business Results	-	41	50	62	↑
Total score	-	395	482	539	↑
WLC average total score	385	411	468	525*	

* WLC Average to date (based on 20 assessments)

** Criterion is scored corporately and uses validated scores from external EFQM assessments.

For the 2008/10 cycle, Children and Families was split into three teams; Practice Teams (406), Specialist Services (404) and Looked After Children (342). Thereafter, it has been assessed as one service.

Compared to the previous cycle, the service has improved scoring in the 2017/20 cycle in all but two criteria, Strategy and Services and Processes. Relative to other council services, the strength of the service when assessed was the approach to managing and developing employees (People) which was 9 points above the council average. In this cycle, the service is above the current council average for all criteria except Strategy and Services and Processes.

Like many other council services, the service should develop the results it has in place to monitor employee policies and plans (People Results) and may also consider a review of key activities and processes, ensuring that they are fully optimising the value and efficiency of processes.

Results may be improved with a review of target setting rationale and by increasing the use of benchmarking data with relevant comparators. There are five indicators included within the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) and compare performance across the 32 Scottish local authorities. These include cost indicators, balance of care for looked after children, number of placement moves and child protection registration.

D.5 Review Panel Outcome

The Review Panel in the WLAM Programme 2017/20 has three possible outcomes that will identify the progress and risk level of service performance and subsequently, the level of scrutiny that will be applied to the service during the period of the WLAM programme (three years).

The Review Panel outcome is determined by a Panel of three senior officers and is chaired by the Chief Executive.

Table 2: Review Panel Outcome		
Review Panel Cycle		
Cycle 1	The service will return to the panel within three years	✓
Cycle 2	The service will return a report to the Panel within 12 months, who will determine if the service are to move to Cycle 1 or 3	
Cycle 3	The service must return to the Review Panel no later than one year (12 months) from the date of the last report.	

Children and Families was placed on **Cycle 1** by the Review Panel in August 2018. The service will not return to the Panel until the next programme (2020/23).

The service achieved this outcome as it was able to demonstrate strong performance to the Panel and evidence a robust approach to performance management.

Performance management

Performance management standards have been established to help the Panel consistently identify good or poor practice in relation to performance management and to help services address any deficiencies in their performance or management approaches. The following table sets out the evaluation for the service:

Table 3: Evaluation of Performance Management in the service	
Management standard	Service evaluation
Scope and relevance of performance data	The service have identified PIs to monitor progress in most of the key activities and outcomes/ priorities
Compliance with corporate requirements	The performance framework of the service meets the basic corporate requirements
Approach	The service's approach to managing performance is sufficient and will help the service to improve
Management of data	Managers and team leaders positively engage with the performance and actively use the data to improve
Management of information	Performance is reported and communicated effectively to Elected Members, senior officers, employees and the public

Performance trends	PIs show good performance and the panel has confidence that this will continue to be sustained by the service
Targets and thresholds	Targets and thresholds have a clear rationale for most PIs and support performance management and improvement
Benchmarking	The service has comparative data for the PIs that measure some of the key activities and outcomes/ priorities and the service compares well
WLAM score	The service achieved a score of over 500 in the WLAM process

As well as the additional scrutiny, there is ongoing monitoring and reporting of service performance through internal performance management procedures. The service will also continue to report key performance publicly and through agreed committee performance reporting arrangements.

D.6 Recommendations for Improvement

A number of recommendations have been set out for action by the service to improve performance.

The Review Panel key findings and recommendations for the service are:





1. The Panel noted the positive performance of the service in the key measures.
2. The Panel noted the progress update on the actions from external inspection activities in the service and that Quality Review Groups have been established in the service to drive this activity.
3. The Panel recommended that the service needs to better engage service users and parents in future redesign activities, to ensure that the voice of the customer is fully evident in service changes and improvements.
4. The Panel encourage the service to develop a plan to increase participation in the Looked After Children (LAC) reviews.
5. The service should review the customer engagement approach, investigating new methods and good practice in other areas, with the aim of improving the capture of service users' views.
6. Senior managers should consider dissemination of responsibilities for the management of performance to group and team managers in order to increase awareness of service performance and corporate processes.
7. The service should aim to improve staff satisfaction with reward and recognition across all teams.
8. The service should continue to review targets and thresholds set for performance indicators, ensuring they encourage improved levels of performance.
9. The service should continue to develop the benchmarking approach, identifying appropriate benchmarks and using this to improve performance. The Panel noted that the service has pursued the capture of comparative data

from other local authorities.

Progress in these actions will be reviewed at the next Review Panel.

D.7 Service Performance

The service has a total of 95 performance indicators on the council's performance management system (Pentana). At present, the status of those indicators are as follows:

Summary of Performance Indicator status (RAG)	
Status (against target)	Number of PIs
 Green	66
 Amber	8
 Red	8
 Unknown	13

An overview of the performance indicators categorised as Public or High Level for the service is included in Appendix 2.

D.8 Service Benchmarking

In terms of LGBF benchmarking, the service compares well in terms of balance of care, ranked at 14 (out of 32) overall in Scotland with performance of 89.63 percent, which is around the same as the Scottish average. In terms of placement moves of more than 1, West Lothian is also ranked at 14 (out of 32) overall in Scotland with performance of 19.96 percent, which is better than the Scottish average of 21.18 percent.

LGBF benchmarking for children and families occurs at one national event where best practice is shared. The service has used these events to make contact with other council areas and visit these areas to discuss improvements. In recent months this has taken place with Fife, Perth and Kinross and East Renfrewshire.

The service does make use of nationally reported data sets such as the Looked After Children statistical bulletin published by Scottish Government.

There are five indicators in the Local Government Benchmark Framework (LGBF) that are aligned with the activity of Children and Families. The data for 2017/18 will not be published by the Improvement Service until February 2019, however the performance and ranking information for 2016/17 for the three most significant indicators has been provided below.

CHN09 - Balance of Care for Looked After Children: Percentage of Children being Looked After in the Community

89.68% of looked after children were looked after in community placements, this is very similar to the Scottish average of 89.87%.

CHN22 – Percentage of child protection re-registrations within 18 months

A total of 4.38 percent of child protection registrations in West Lothian were re-registered within 18 months. This was lower than the Scottish average of 6.46 percent and ranked at 11 (out of 32) overall in Scotland.

CHN23 – Percentage of LAC with more than 1 placement in the last year (Aug-July)

A total of 19.96 percent of Looked After Children in West Lothian had more than one placement in 2016/17. This was lower than the Scottish average of 21.19 percent and ranked at 14 (out of 32) overall in Scotland.

E. CONCLUSION

Children and Families completed the WLAM process as part of the council's corporate programme of self-assessment. This is a critical part of the council's internal scrutiny arrangements and helps to ensure that excellent practice and performance is supported and that the principle of continuous improvement is adopted in all council services.

The service achieved a total score of 539 and was placed on Cycle 1 by the Review Panel and will not return to the Review Panel until the next programme (2020/23).

BACKGROUND REFERENCES

[West Lothian Council Corporate Plan 2018/23](#)
[West Lothian Council Improvement Strategy 2018/23](#)
[Social Policy Management Plan 2018/19](#)

Appendices/Attachments: 2
Appendix 1_Social Policy Management Plan Extract
Appendix 2_Performance Indicator Report

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