West Lothian Council

Services for the Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel

West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
LIVINGSTON
EH54 6FF

2 May 2018

A meeting of the **Services for the Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel** of West Lothian Council will be held within the **Council Chambers, West Lothian Civic Centre** on **Tuesday 8 May 2018** at **2:00pm**.

For Chief Executive

BUSINESS

Public Session

1.   Apologies for Absence

2.   Declarations of Interest - Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration at the meeting, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.

3.   Order of Business, including notice of urgent business and declarations of interest in any urgent business

4.   Confirm Draft Minute of Meeting of Services for the Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel held on Tuesday 10 April 2018 (herewith)

5.   Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012: Post-Legislative Scrutiny - Report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith)

6.   New Policing Model for West Lothian - Verbal Update by Police Scotland

7.   Scottish Fire and Rescue Local Plan Performance Report - Report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith)

8.   Property Turnover January - March 2018 - Report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith)

9.   Scottish Government Consultation: Review of Landlord Registration Applications and Fees - Report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith)

10.   Performance Reporting - Report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith)

11.   Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2018/19 - Report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith)

12.   2017/18 Financial Performance - Month 12 Monitoring Report - Report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith)

13.   Workplan (herewith)

NOTE   **For further information contact Anne Higgins, Tel: 01506 281601 or email: anne.higgins@westlothian.gov.uk**

MINUTE of MEETING of the SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL of WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 10 APRIL 2018.

Present – Councillors George Paul (Chair), Andrew McGuire, Alison Adamson, Frank Anderson, Lawrence Fitzpatrick, Peter Heggie and Dom McGuire (substitute for John McGinty);

Apologies – Councillor John McGinty

In Attendance – Jessie Duncan (Tenants Panel Representative)

1.   MINUTE

        The Services for the Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel approved the minute of its meeting held on 20 February 2018.   The minute was then signed by the Chair.

2.   SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY CONSULTATION

        A report had been circulated by the Head of Housing, Customer and building Services informing Panel members on the proposed Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) transformation strategy which was currently out for consultation and would close on 14 May 2018.

        The report explained that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Services was operating with significantly changing risks and the greatest financial challenge seen in decades. SFRS was planning to transform to continue to protect communities from new and emerging risks. A transformation strategy had been published by SFRS for consideration.

        The transformation strategy highlighted a number of issues that should be considered. These were:-

        •   Fires were reducing but new risks were emerging such as terrorism, emergency medical response and severe weather due to climate change.

        •   The need to be trained, equipped and ready to meet these new risks.

        •   SFRS people and resources were currently not aligned to need.

        •   The Retained Duty System model needed strengthened to ensure the continued safety of rural communities and changing demographics.

        The consultation asked a number of questions for consideration and these

and the proposed responses were shown in Appendix A to the report.

The Panel was recommended to:-

1. Note the transformation strategy consultation by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

2. Agree the proposed response be submitted to Council Executive for approval prior to the consultation closing on 14 May 2018.

During discussion, the Panel heard a suggestion in relation to the statement at page 5 of the consultation response, "Firefighters should be rewarded for taking on an expanded role, and in accordance with the risks they take". One Panel member considered that the response should be changed from "No Opinion" to "Agree". This suggestion was not supported by the majority of Panel members.

<u>Decision</u>

1. To note the terms of the report; and

2. To agree that the proposed response be submitted to Council Executive for approval prior to the consultation closing on 14 May 2018.

3. <u>CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF HOUSING SCOTLAND HOUSING FESTIVAL 2018</u>

A report had been circulated by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services outlining some of the key issues highlighted as part of the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) Scotland Housing Festival 2018. The report followed a decision by the Council Executive meeting of 23 January 2018 for officers to report back with an overview of issues considered at the event.

The Panel was informed that the conference was held at the EICC Edinburgh on 27th to 28th February 2018. The feedback from the event had been communicated to relevant officers for sharing of good practice to help inform future council policy as appropriate and relevant.

It was noted that the conference had been cancelled early into the second day due to the instigation of the red weather warning. In addition, adverse weather had impacted attendance and sessions on day one.

The topics discussed at the conference were examined in the report under the following headings:-

<u>Day 1</u>
- Keynote - Are we becoming a one rented sector?
- Building an ACE Housing Service
- Ministerial Address – Angela Constance MSP
- Can we end homelessness and rough sleeping?
- Sir Harry Burns – Housing, Health and Inequality

- Whole System Thinking – Accessible Housing
- Universal Credit

Day 2
- Keynote – Far From Fixed
- Hovels, Houses and Habitats

It was recommended that the Panel note the issues highlighted as feedback from the CIH Scotland Housing Festival 2018.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

4.   SITES FOR NEXT PHASE OF NEW BUILD COUNCIL HOUSING

A report had been circulated by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services setting out a proposed list of sites capable of accommodating 250 new build council houses over the period of the 2018/19 to 2022/23 Housing Capital Programme.

The report explained that the Housing Capital Programme for the period to 2022/23 had been approved by West Lothian Council on 13 February 2018. It had been agreed that a further 250 new build council houses should be provided over the period of the new programme.

Details of potential sites for affordable housing delivery by Registered Social Landlords had been included in the West Lothian Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP). A list of the potential RSL sites was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

The Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) approved on 24 October 2017 included a provisional list of sites for a new programme of council housing. The sites were:-

Eagle Brae, Livingston
Guildiehaugh, Bathgate
Vion, Broxburn
Mossend, West Calder
Standhill, Bathgate
Brucefield, Livingston
Drumshoreland

Since the approval of the SHIP, further due diligence had been carried out on these sites. As a consequence of the work, it was recommended that Drumshoreland was not included in the next new build council housing programme. The number of units proposed at Guildiehaugh could be increased to compensate for Drumshoreland not being included in the programme.

It was recommended that the following sites made up the next new build council housing programme:

Site	No of Units
Eagle Brae, Livingston	30
Guildiehaugh, Bathgate	88
Vion, Broxburn	12
Mossend, West Calder	69
Standhill, Bathgate	25
Brucefield, Livingston	26
Total	250

Site capacities were indicative and could be subject to change. Location plans for each site were provided at Appendix 2 to the report.

The report included an expenditure profile for the future new build as set out in the approved Housing Capital Investment Programme. The expenditure profile reflected the fact that each site would require a lead in time before housing development could commence. The current status of each of the proposed sites was provided in the report.

The report concluded that, over the coming few years, in addition to providing new build homes and purchasing former council houses from the open market, the council would work closely with Registered Social Landlords to support their plans to deliver affordable housing in West Lothian.

It was recommended that the Panel:

1. Note the proposed list of sites to be developed for the next phase of new build council housing; and

2. Note that a report would be submitted to Council Executive seeking approval to build council houses on these sites.

A number of questions were raised by Panel members and these were dealt with by the Housing Strategy and Development Manager.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report; and

2. To note that a report would be submitted To Council Executive seeking approval to build council houses on these sites.

5.   DEANS SOUTH - PROPOSED APPROACH TO ACHIEVE COMPREHENSIVE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE ESTATE

A report had been circulated by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services seeking the views of the Panel on a proposed way forward to achieve the comprehensive redevelopment of the Deans South estate.

The report recalled that the Council Executive had approved the Deans

South estate being identified as a site for comprehensive redevelopment in the West Lothian Local Development Plan (LDP) (Proposed Plan). The council received the LDP Examination Report in November 2017 and it was expected that the LDP would be adopted in spring 2018. McTaggart Construction had completed their enabling works for a development of 54 council houses on the west side of the estate and these were expected to be completed by December 2018.

A second phase of new building council housing at Deans South was now planned. Lovell Partnership had submitted a planning application for 37 new build council houses on the east side of the estate.

The Panel was informed that a house building company, Springfield Properties, was seeking to assemble land at Deans South with a view to building affordable homes for a Housing Association. Springfield Properties had sought to partner with the Wheatley Group in the comprehensive redevelopment proposals for Deans South. Officers continued to have dialogue with interested parties to establish if there was potential to progress with detailed proposals. Springfield had made contact with the homeowners at Deans South in the previous year and they had acquired one of the houses on the estate in May 2017.

The initiative from Springfield had resulted in several of the remaining home owners agreeing to sell their property to Springfield. The commercial details were a matter for the parties concerned. There was still the possibility that the two owners who had not agreed to sell would accept the offer which had been made, thus avoiding the need for a CPO to be progressed. CPO would need to be considered if the land assembly could not be completed because one or more owners did not agree to sell their property. If CPO was required, the cost would be met by Wheatley Group. The current Wheatley proposal was to build 137 social rented houses and cottage flats and seven private houses.

It was recommended that the Panel:-

1. Note that the council would build a total of 91 new build council houses at Deans South as part of the 1,000 houses programme that there was potential for further housing development at Deans South if the remaining 56 houses on the estate were demolished.

2. Note that officers have had discussions with Wheatley Group with a view of Wheatley acquiring council land at Deans South in order that they could progress redevelopment proposals for housing at Deans South;

3. Note that Springfield Properties own one of the houses on the estate and that Springfield had agreed in principle to purchase seven of the remaining nine private houses on the estate;

4. Note that Springfield intend to continue negotiations with the two other owners on the estate with a view to purchasing their houses in order to progress the land assembly needed to achieve the comprehensive redevelopment of the estate;

5. Note that the Wheatley Group and Springfield Properties intend to enter into contract to assemble the land and develop the combined sites mainly for social rented housing;

6. Note that the council may need to consider promoting a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) for a small number of properties if the land assembly needed to facilitate the comprehensive redevelopment of the estate cannot be achieved by agreement;

7. Note that Council Executive would be asked to agree that Springfield Properties (on behalf of Wheatley Group) were invited to submit a planning application for housing development on the parts of the estate shown in Appendix 2 to the report; to agree that officers instruct the District Valuer to provide a valuation for the council's land interests within the area shown in Appendix 2 in order that terms for the disposal of the council's land interests to Wheatley can be negotiated; and to agree that Springfield be granted a licence to carry out site investigations on council land at Deans South.

8. Should Council Executive agree to recommendation 7 above, a further report would be brought to PDSP and Council Executive in due course to outline progress and, in the event that sufficient progress was made, to seek approval for the terms of the disposal of the council's land interests at Deans South to Wheatley.

A number of questions were raised by Panel members and these were dealt with by the Housing Strategy and Development Manager.

Decision

1. To note the report setting out a proposed way forward to achieve the comprehensive redevelopment of the Deans South estate.

2. To note the recommendations set out in Section B of the report; and

3. To agree to forward the report to Council Executive as recommended by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services.

6.   CONSULTATION RESPONSE ON PROPOSED SOCIAL HOUSING (AUTOMATIC FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEMS) (SCOTLAND) BILL

A report had been circulated by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services advising the Panel on the council's proposed response to the consultation on the Social Housing (Automatic Fire Suppression Systems) Bill.

The Panel was informed that the proposed Bill aimed to improve fire safety across Scotland and reduce the numbers of fire fatalities and

injuries in some of the most socially deprived areas where a significant amount of social housing was located. To achieve this, the proposed Bill would require all new-build social housing to include the installation of a fire suppression (sprinkler) system, and possibly require the retrofitting of fire suppression systems into existing high-rise social housing stock.

The report contained fire statistics in Scotland and suggested that one method of addressing the high prevalence of fires and fire damage across Scotland was through the use of automatic fire suppression ("sprinkler") systems. It was noted that there had been no multiple fire deaths in Scotland where a sprinkler system had been installed and was operational.

The consultation document included figures for the installation of fire suppression systems in new build properties and retrofitting to existing properties. Based on quotes gathered, the Scottish Government's cost-benefit analysis estimated retrofit costs per until could range from approximately:

Flats: £1,000 - £4,500
Houses: £2,500 - £4,500

There were additional points raised in the consultation, and these were examined in the report.

A proposed response to the consultation was attached as Appendix 1 to the report. It was recommended that the council should support the installation of fire suppression measures in new build social housing. The cost would need to be met from the existing budget for the future new build programme.

There were no high rise blocks of social housing in West Lothian so the suggestion that such blocks were retrofitted with fire suppression measures would have no impact on social housing in West Lothian.

The Panel was asked to note the consultation on a proposed Social Housing (Automatic Fire Suppression Systems) Bill and the proposed response to the consultation.

Finally, the Panel was informed that officers would seek approval of the proposed response under Standing Order 31 (Urgent Business) to allow submission to the Scottish Government by the closing date of 16 April 2018.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report and the proposed response to the consultation.

2. To note that officers would seek approval of the proposed response under Standing Order 31 (Urgent Business).

7.   AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY UPDATE

A report had been circulated by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services updating the Panel on various initiatives to increase the supply of affordable housing in West Lothian.

The Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services reported that, since the beginning of 2012/13, 1,260 affordable homes had been built/acquired. A breakdown was provided in Table 1 within the report. The majority of the affordable homes had been provided by West Lothian Council. However, the approved West Lothian Housing Strategy 2017/22 highlighted the opportunity for other housing providers to make a greater contribution to affordable housing delivery over the period of the strategy.

During 2017/18, five new build sites had been completed. These sites were shown within Table 2 within the report, together with the number of units completed on each site.

Table 3 within the report provided a breakdown of affordable homes currently under construction at 13 sites across West Lothian. 11 of the site were part of the council's new build programme and two of the sites were being developed by West Lothian Housing Partnership. A total of 758 houses were under construction.

Table 4 within the report showed a breakdown of the 489 affordable housing sites expected to commence in 2018/19. The list was indicative and subject to change. The Panel would be updated on progress at various stages throughout the year. The council was also planning to acquire a further 41 former council houses from the open market during 2018/19.

Good progress had been made towards achieving the 3,000 affordable home target. 1,260 homes had been delivered, 758 were under construction and there was a pipeline of future council and Registered Social Housing developments which would take place in the coming few years. Table 5 within the report summarised the current position.

A list of potential RSL affordable housing developments was attached as Appendix 1 to the report. This was based on information contained within the approved Strategic Housing Investment Plan and would be reviewed later in 2018.

It was recommended that the Panel note the progress being made on delivering 3,000 affordable homes in West Lothian over the period 2012-2022.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

8.   WORKPLAN

A copy of the Workplan had been circulated for information.

<u>Decision</u>

To note the Workplan.

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West Lothian Council

SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

POLICE AND FIRE REFORM (SCOTLAND) ACT 2012: POST-LEGISLATIVE SCRUTINY

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

A.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Panel Members on the Scottish Parliament's Justice Committee call for written views on its post-legislative scrutiny of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.

B.   RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the panel notes the proposed response to the Scottish Parliament's Justice Committee which is intended to be submitted to Council Executive for approval

C.   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs Being honest, open and accountable Making best use of our resources Working in partnership Providing equality of opportunity
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	Local Police and Fire Plans and PI's
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	This report will have a positive impact on the following SOA indicators; SOA10 – We live in well designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the services we need SOA11 – We have strong resilient and supportive communities, where people take

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		responsibility for their actions and how they affect
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	None
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	To report to the Scottish Government directly and as part of a wider COSLA response
VIII	**Other consultations**	None

D.   TERMS OF REPORT

D.1   Background

The Scottish Parliament's Justice Committee is undertaking post-legislative scrutiny of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012. Five years after Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service began operating the Committee wishes to scrutinise whether the policy objectives of the 2012 Act have been delivered, and if not, the reasons for this.

D.2   Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012

The 2012 Act created a single police service and a single fire and rescue service, replacing the eight police forces and the eight fire brigades that had existed previously.

The 2012 Act includes provision for new national governance arrangements as well as arrangements for the scrutiny, oversight and funding of the police and fire and rescue services. It provides the statutory framework for bodies such as the Scottish Police Authority, the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner (PIRC) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS). The 2012 Act sets out powers for local authorities in relation to the provisions of fire and rescue services and the policing of their areas.

The Scottish Government's three main policy intentions in promoting the 2012 Act were:

- To protect and improve local services despite financial cuts, by stopping duplication of support services eight times over and not cutting front line services;
- To create more equal access to specialist support and national capacity - like murder investigation teams, firearms teams or flood rescue - where and when they are needed; and
- To strengthen the connection between services and communities, involving many more local councillors and better integrating with community planning partnerships.

The remit for the Scottish Parliament's Justice Committee's post-legislative scrutiny is to consider whether:

- The policy intentions of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 have been realised and are being delivered; and whether
- Any further policy or legislative changes are required to improve the effectiveness of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.

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D.3   Council Response

The council's response on the benefits/negative consequences of the 2012 Act for Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is set out in Appendix 1.

The deadline for sending written submissions being 24 May 2018. COSLA are conducting a united response to the local government. COSLA wish to have the returns from local authorities by 7 May 2018

E.   CONCLUSION

This report informs Panel Members of West Lothian Councils' views on the benefits/negative consequences of the 2012 Act for Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service as set out by The Scottish Parliament's Justice Committee.

F.   BACKGROUND REFERENCES

The Scottish Parliament's Justice Committee web link is below:
http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/108181.aspx

The Policy Memorandum accompanying the Bill for the 2012 Act sets the main policy intentions out in more detail.

Appendices/Attachments: Appendix 1

Contact Person:
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**Alistair Shaw
Head of Service
8 May 2018**

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Sent to Chief Executives, Police/Fire Scrutiny Conveners, Supporting Officers

The Scottish Parliament's Justice Committee have launched its call for written views on its post-legislative scrutiny of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 outlined in the weblink below.

http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/108181.aspx

In summary, we wish to obtain response from councils by **Monday 7 May** in relation to the following questions to inform our united local government COSLA response.

Police service

1. In your view, what have been the consequences of the 2012 Act for the police service? Please set out your views on (a) any benefits and (b) any negative consequences of the 2012 Act for the police service.

(a) any benefits

- To protect and improve local services despite financial cuts, by stopping duplication of support services eight times over and not cutting front line services;

  West Lothian has seen limited benefits relating to local services as a consequence of the 2012 Act and Police Scotland are proposing reductions to front line police services in West Lothian.

- To create more equal access to specialist support and national capacity - like murder investigation teams, firearms teams or flood rescue - where and when they are needed; and

  Whilst it is beneficial to have access to specialist support and national capacity when they are needed, Police Scotland have the not conducted any transparent exercise on how Police Scotland resources are allocated across Scotland. Much of the current allocation to Divisions appears to be based on historical practice and little evidence that it is based on need.

- To strengthen the connection between services and communities, involving many more local councillors and better integrating with community planning partnerships

  West Lothian has seen no strengthened connection between services and communities as a result of the implementation of the 2012 Act.

(b) any negative consequences

- To protect and improve local services despite financial cuts, by stopping duplication of support services eight times over and not cutting front line services;

  Local service delivery has been sustained in West Lothian Council through the council contributing toward the cost of the Community Police Team in West Lothian. This funding support will cease in 2018/19 as a result of significant funding pressures facing the council due to the underfunding of local government by the Scottish Government.

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However Police Scotland has advised that their funding contribution in support of this resource with also be withdrawn and that their resources will be removed from West Lothian irrespective of local need. As a result Police Scotland will effectively be 'cutting front line services' for West Lothian, and will include a reduction in school community campus officer posts from six officers to a single post.

There is considerable anecdotal evidence from community groups and community activists over response times attending to incidents/crimes are being reported by the public and challenges in getting through to the 101 call number.

Police front line services have been reduced at a range of levels. West Lothian no longer has a local Chief Superintendent or a Superintendent, and instead has a single Chief Inspector. Local Inspectors have been reduced from four to two and will soon be reduced further to a single post.

Officers who are trained in West Lothian are generally placed elsewhere in other local authority areas and despite a portfolio that covers West Lothian along with other geographic areas within J Division, the location of officers at times is a factor in their ability to attending meetings/events etc.

As indicated previously Police Scotland have not undertaken any shared transparent exercise on how Police Scotland resources are allocated and as a result it's very difficult for any local authority area or community to be confident that its allocation of resource adequately addresses need.

Local services have not been improved as there are more instances of calls not yet been attended. The daily partnership working is often hindered when police have yet to attend the initial call and other partners await clarity on what has been carried out before a decision can be made as to what else can be provided. This can only be due to a lack of local police resources.

- To create more equal access to specialist support and national capacity - like murder investigation teams, firearms teams or flood rescue - where and when they are needed;

  Whilst having access to additional national resources that are 'helicoptered' in to complement local resources and will provide specialist support, officers from out with the local area are invariably not familiar with the local community and may have limited local knowledge and this may hinder local effectiveness, and building relationships with the local community.

- To strengthen the connection between services and communities, involving many more local councillors and better integrating with community planning partnerships

  The level of integration and planning has been steady and consistent, however there is no evidence of any better integration with community planning partnerships as a result of the 2012 Act.

  Community and partner confidence in Police has been affected by the poor communication surrounding major issues such as review Police counters, which saw Police Scotland close a facility in a purpose built partnership centre in one of our most deprived communities (Fauldhouse), decriminalisation of parking and more recently proposed charging for the policing of events including gala days

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Scrutiny of Police is undertaken via the Councils Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel. Police scrutiny reports have been poor in both content and presentation in comparison to Scottish Fire and Rescue service, with limited benchmarking information and an increasing reluctance to provide information at elected member ward level, as requested by the council.

Whilst it is acknowledged that there are reasons for changes in personnel, the frequency that it occurs and the level of knowledge of local priorities and ongoing work that comes with new replacement officers, serves to be a short-term disadvantage in the workflow between Police Scotland and West Lothian Council.

Partnership working and community confidence has been affected by having four Divisional Commanders and five Local Area Commanders since the Act was introduced.

The support to strategic planning remains varied. Whilst the contact at the Community Planning Partnership remains stable, there has been no regular contact at a senior level by either Police Scotland or the Scottish Police Authority defining aims /next steps and ascertaining any barriers to local outcomes.

2. Have the policy intentions of the 2012 Act in relation to the police service been met?

The policy intentions of the 2012 Act in relation to the development of the single police service have not been met. Whilst partnership working remains effective, it has not improved as a result of the Act. The needs of the communities of West Lothian were better met prior to the changes implemented by the 2012 Act.

[It is considered that the current Scottish Government/COSLA review of Local Governance provides for the opportunity for local police services to become part of a single public authority for West Lothian.]

Fire and rescue service

3. In your view, what have been the consequences of the 2012 Act for the fire and rescue service? Please set out your views on (a) any benefits and (b) any negative consequences of the 2012 Act for the fire and rescue service.

(a) any benefits

- To protect and improve local services despite financial cuts, by stopping duplication of support services eight times over and not cutting front line services;

  The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) continue to be an open proactive engaged partner locally. Keen to share knowledge and good practice.

  SFRS have continually sought to exchange and explain any proposed change to service provision well in advance of any implementation and have proactively sought Council views prior to any formal consultation

  The SFRS readily responded to the Councils request for performance improvement targets to be added to the Local Fire Plan.

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SFRS scrutiny reports are of a high standard in both content and presentation containing a good balance of strategic and local data and also allow includes appropriate benchmarking data

To date, the availability of officers within communities would appear to have been protected and the availability of officers and the partnership working has remained strong and stable.

- To create more equal access to specialist support and national capacity - like murder investigation teams, firearms teams or flood rescue - where and when they are needed;

  It is good to have the specialist teams, and to have them where they are most needed, should the need arise.

- To strengthen the connection between services and communities, involving many more local councillors and better integrating with community planning partnerships

  West Lothian has seen no significant strengthened connection between services and communities.

  What has been improved, appreciated and acknowledged, is that senior SFRS officers have met regularly with representatives of the council in order to keep them appraised of various steps and forward planning within the planning and transformation process.

(b) any negative consequences

- To protect and improve local services despite financial cuts, by stopping duplication of support services eight times over and not cutting front line services;

  To date West Lothian has not experienced any cuts in service provision. Whilst we appreciate that the continued retention and recruiting new retained firefighters in local communities is getting harder to maintain, the removal of these officers and local tenders and stations within communities would be a genuine concern. What would also be a concern would be for SFRS to maintain the local tenders and stations but finding that the numbers of firefighters were so low that in fact it breached safety regulations to allow them to fight fires and attend particular calls.

  If indeed the numbers of retained firefighters reduce, there maybe a concern that SFRS have developed and transformed into new areas of business that would leave their full time firefighters short in numbers to deal with the level of fire calls received.

- To create more equal access to specialist support and national capacity - like murder investigation teams, firearms teams or flood rescue - where and when they are needed;

  It is good to have the specialist teams, and to have them where they are most needed, should the need arise.

- To strengthen the connection between services and communities, involving many more local councillors and better integrating with community planning partnerships

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West Lothian has seen no strengthened connection between services and communities.

4. Have the policy intentions of the 2012 Act in relation to the fire and rescue service been met?

The views of West Lothian Council are that the policy intentions of the 2012 Act in relation to the development of the single fire service have not been met.

The needs of the communities of West Lothian were similarly met prior to the changes implemented by the 2012 Act. The Council has witnessed no significant improvement over the 5 years although the commitment and service delivery has been steady. The service delivery and partnership working with a continued availability of firefighters on the front line and in communities has been maintained. It is only now, that through further transformation we are concerned that we may see a reduction in the number of retained officers, tenders and local village stations.

Other issues

5. Are there any other issues you would like to raise in connection with the operation of the 2012 Act?

[It is considered that the current Scottish Government/Cosla review of Local Governance provides for the opportunity for local fire services to become part of a single public authority for West Lothian.]

We look forward to receiving a response from your council.
Regards, Mike Callaghan, COSLA

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SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE LOCAL PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

A.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is to update Panel Members on the Local Plan Performance for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in West Lothian for the period 1st January 2018 to 31st March 2018.

B.   RECOMMENDATION

Panel members are asked to note the contents of the report.

C.   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Being honest, open and accountable; Focusing on our customers' needs; Making best use of our resources; and Working in partnership.
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	The production and Council approval of the Local Police and Local Fire and Rescue Plan is a statutory requirement of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None at this stage.
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	There is no direct impact however this report is part of the agreed process for strategic performance reporting.
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	This report will have a positive impact on the following SOA indicators: We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities. People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life changes.
VI	**Resources – (Financial, Staffing and Property**	The council contributes directly and in partnership to the delivery of the plan.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	Yes.
VIII	**Consultations**	Council Executive, Community Planning Partners, Elected Members.

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C:\Users\young.kirsty\Desktop\2018.05.02 SftC PDSP Fire Performance Report.doc

D. TERMS OF REPORT

The West Lothian Scottish Fire and Rescue Local Plan set out the local fire and rescue priorities and objectives for West Lothian and is a statutory requirement of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.

Council Executive has agreed that the monitoring of performance against the plans will be reported and considered on a quarterly basis by the Services for Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel. This report covers the period from 1st January 2018 to 31st March 2018.

E. CONCLUSION

This report provides an update on the performance to enable panel members to scrutinise the work of the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Appendix 1: Local Plan Performance Report for West Lothian 1st January 2018 to 31st March 2018.

G. Contact Person: Alison Smith alison.smith@westlothian.gov.uk T: 01506 281367.

Alistair Shaw
Head of Housing Customer and Building Services

Date of meeting: 8th May 2018

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LOCAL PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT

FOR WEST LOTHIAN

Year To Date Report , 1st April – 31st March, 2018

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CONTENTS   **PAGE**

Introduction

The national priorities for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) are set out in the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland. The SFRS Strategic Plan 2016-2019 outlines how the SFRS will deliver against these priorities and the outcomes against which this delivery can be measured.

The priorities contained within the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for West Lothian 2014-2017 contribute towards the priorities within the West Lothian Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2013-2023 and the Community Safety Strategic Assessment 2015-18.

The aims of the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service in West Lothian are to reduce fire deaths throughout the West Lothian area and to reduce injuries from fire and other emergencies in the community. We aim to achieve this by working in partnership, being pro-active and targeting our prevention and protection activities to where they are required, based on evidence.

Within the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for West Lothian 2014-2017, seven objectives for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to work towards have been identified for 2014-17 (listed below):

Priority 1. Local Risk Management and Preparedness
Priority 2. Reduction of Accidental Dwelling Fires
Priority 3. Reduction in Fire Casualties and Fatalities
Priority 4. Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting
Priority 5. Reduction of Fires in Non-Domestic Property
Priority 6. Reduction in Casualties from Non-Fire Emergencies
Priority 7. Reduction of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals.

Area Manager David Lockhart
Local Senior Officer for Falkirk & West Lothian
David.Lockhart@firescotland.gov.uk

Performance Summary

We measure how well we are meeting our priorities using 6 key indicators, depicted below

| Key performance indicator | Apr to (& incl.) Mar | | | | | RAG rating |
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	YTD
All accidental dwelling fires	164	156	131	124	149	🔴
All fire casualties (fatal & non-fatal (incl. p/c's))	37	33	38	37	40	🔺
All deliberate fires	608	552	763	707	798	🔴
Non domestic fires	82	86	86	75	74	🟢
Special Service Casualties - All	81	100	141	171	127	🟢
False Alarms - All	1962	1947	2011	2091	2000	🟢

RAG rating - KEY		
🔴	RED DIAMOND	10% higher than the previous YTD period, or local target not achieved.
🔺	YELLOW TRIANGLE	Up to 9% higher than the previous YTD period, or local target not achieved.
🟢	GREEN CIRCLE	Equal to or improved upon the previous equivalent quarter (or YTD period), or local target achieved.

Note
Quarterly comparison RAG Rating = the reporting period compared to the average of the three previous reporting periods. Year to Date RAG Rating = the cumulative total of all quarterly performance in current year compared to cumulative total of all quarterly performance in previous year.

Incident Overview
SFRS has responded to a total of 3,663 incidents within the West Lothian area year to date 2017/18. This is an increase of 2% when compared to the corresponding period 2016/17.

The chart below illustrates incidents YTD attended within West Lothian council over the last 8 fiscal years

Progress on local fire & rescue plan priorities
Local Risk Management and Preparedness

The Service must identify, prioritise and plan to meet the risks in each local community.

We said we would:

• train our staff to deal with our local risks

• gather and analyse risk information

• work with partners to mitigate risks

• deal with major events.

Train our staff to deal with our local risks

Our operational staff continue to undertake routine and risk specific skill acquisition and maintenance training. All firefighters have participated in the modular 'Training For Operational Competence' programme.

Year to date, the modules covered are: Driving, Water Awareness, Incident Command, Silos, Aircraft, Trench, Pits and Wells, Ladders, Protecting the Environment, Safe Work at Height, Animal Rescues, Casualty Care, RTC, Breathing Apparatus, Sewer Incidents, Knots & lines, Incidents at Places of Public Entertainment, Electricity and Vehicle Extirication Techniques.

Firefighter safety remains a priority and this theme is underpinned within all activities. Theorectical inputs are confirmed with practical sessions and exercises. Our firefighters continue to exercise at local venues that present a risk in order to prepare for any operational emergency.

Gather and analyse risk information

Our operational staff continue to gather and analyse local risk information and operational intelligence which is used in our preparations to ensure the successful resolution of operational incidents.

We conduct Post Incident Debriefs through the use of a Structured Debriefing process, to identify any lessons that can be learned from our preparedness and response to emergency events.

We use Urgent Operational Intelligence Briefings to inform our operational staff of any safety critical information.

Work with partners to mitigate risks

We continue to be an active member of the Lothians and Borders Local Resilience Partnership and share appropriate information. We share information with local authority partners and other key stakeholders (e.g. Police Scotland) to ensure emergency event risks are mitigated and prepared for.

Deal with major events

During this reporting period, there has been no requirement for SFRS to respond to any major incidents in the West Lothian area.

Reduction of 'All accidental dwelling fires'

Accidental dwelling fires can have devastating effects on our community. The SFRS is committed to keeping people safe in their homes. We have developed information sharing protocols and referral processes with our partners to ensure that SFRS access the homes in our community, particularly those who are vulnerable due to age, isolation or addiction. Reduction of Accidental Dwelling Fires contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_14 Number of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 population.

Results

There has been an increase of 20% in accidental dwelling fires YTD 2017/18 compared to the same reporting period in 2016/17 however there has been a stabilisation in figures since Quarter 1. The five year trendline for West Lothian continues on a downward trajectory and SFRS will work hard to maintain this going forward.

Reasons

Over half of these incidents were in dwellings with a single occupant (56%), which on a number of occasions were elderly. Cooking continues to be the most prevalent cause of incidents (47%) with the occupant being distracted. Alcohol or Drugs have been identified as a contributory factor on only 17 occasions (11%) and 41 involved fire and rescue service assitance in evacuation (27%).

Actions

SFRS will continue to seek out new ways to reduce accidental dwelling fires. Appendix 1 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.

Five year data for West Lothian

YTD Incidents

Reduction of 'All accidental dwelling fires' per10000 head of population
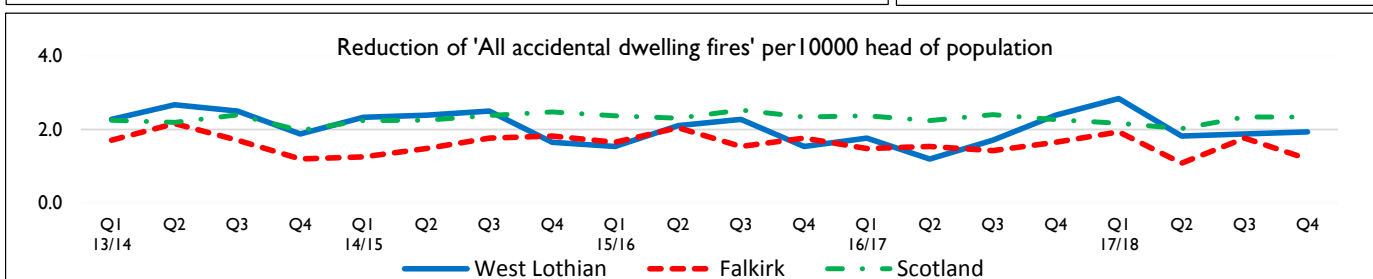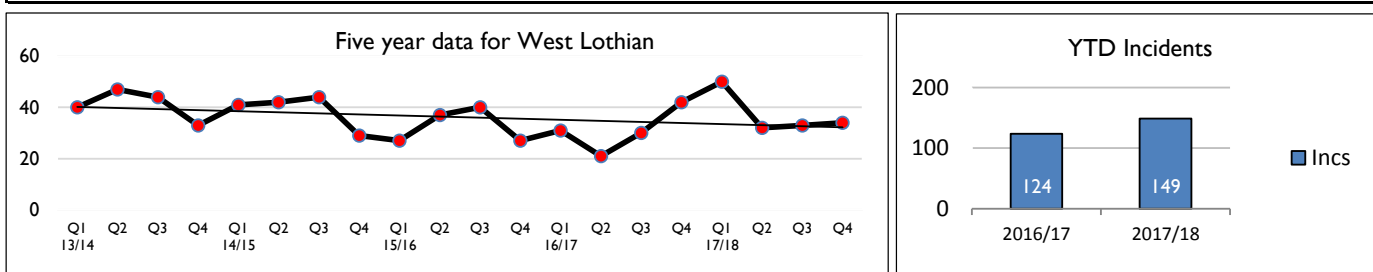
YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 17	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Sparklines
West Lothian	164	156	131	124	149	
Linlithgow	18	9	6	9	12	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	18	13	12	9	12	
Livingston North	14	14	18	12	17	
Livingston South	18	22	13	18	17	
East Livingston & East Calder	23	14	14	10	14	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	11	13	12	20	21	
Whitburn & Blackburn	31	35	24	19	24	
Bathgate	23	18	19	15	17	
Armadale & Blackridge	8	18	13	12	15	

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Reduction of 'All fire casualties (fatal & non-fatal (incl. p/c's))'

Fire casualty and fatality rates provide an indication of the amount of serious, life-threatening injuries that occur due to fire. This can indicate not only the success of SFRS in reducing the number of life risk fires through community fire safety and similar activities, but also their success in response activity in saving lives. SFRS aim to reduce Fire Casualties in West Lothian by 5% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target of reducing Fire Casualties by 5% per year, over a three-year rolling period.
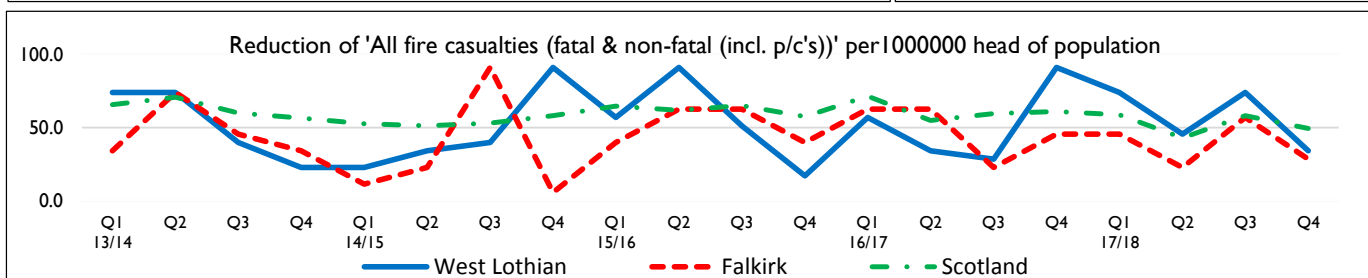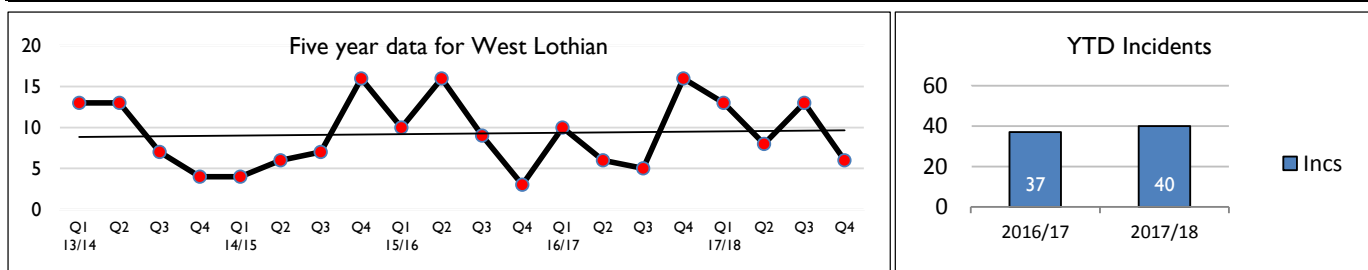
Results

There has been an 8% increase in fire casualties YTD 2017/18 when compared to the same period 2016/17. Q1 saw a casualty spike for the year of 13, with Q2 reducing to 8 and Q3 saw an increase to 13. The West Lothian five year trendline shows a very slight increase.

Reasons

Of 40 casualties 27 did not attend hospital, 9 attended with slight injuries and 2 attended with more serious injuries. 50% suffered slight smoke inhalation, 20% breathing difficulties other than smoke inhalation, 10% slight burns, 5% combination of burns and smoke inhalation with remainder being a combination of minor cuts, lacerations and shock. There have been no fire fatalities during the YTD reporting period in West Lothian.

Actions

Our Home Safety Visit (HSV) referrals and Post Domestic Incident Response (PDIR) programmes continue to provide the main platform for accessing homes to provide fire safety advice. Partner referrals facilitate SFRS access to the more vulnerable members of the community, where SFRS can provide life saving advice and install smoke detection within domestic premises.

Five year data for West Lothian

YTD Incidents

Reduction of 'All fire casualties (fatal & non-fatal (incl. p/c's))' per1000000 head of population

YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 4	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Sparklines
West Lothian	37	33	38	37	40	
Linlithgow	1	0	4	3	2	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	4	2	2	2	3	
Livingston North	1	3	4	1	6	
Livingston South	1	12	5	2	1	
East Livingston & East Calder	5	0	2	3	7	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	3	2	3	4	6	
Whitburn & Blackburn	10	6	4	8	4	
Bathgate	10	7	6	7	5	
Armadale & Blackridge	2	1	8	7	6	

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Reduction of 'All deliberate fires'

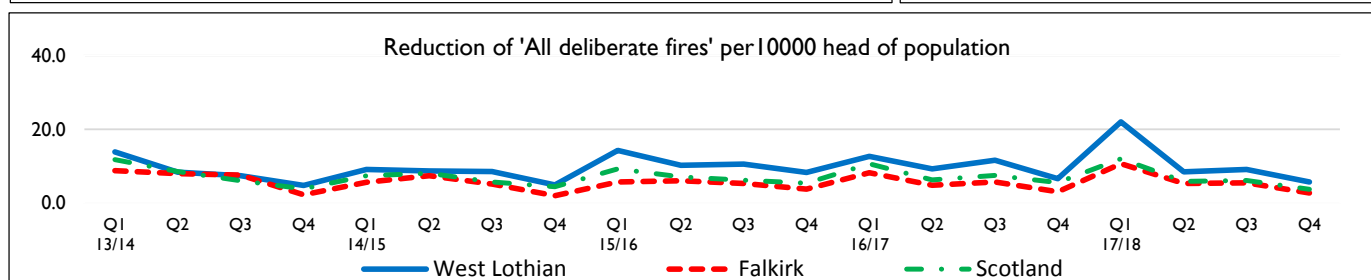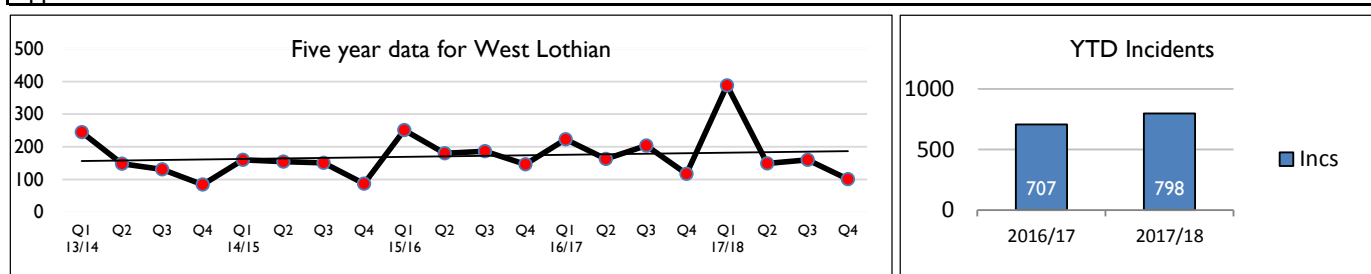| Deliberate fire setting is a significant problem for the SFRS and partners in West Lothian. In the main, deliberate fires are secondary fires categorised into either refuse, grassland or derelict buildings incidents. There is a close link between deliberate secondary fires and other forms of anti-social behaviour. Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_13 Number of deliberate fires per 10,000 population. |
|---|

Results

There has been an increase of 13% in deliberate fires YTD during 2017/18 when compared to the same reporting period in 2016/17 however there has been a marked reduction from a severe spike of 388 fires in Q1 to 149 fires in Q2, to160 fires in Q3 and finally 101 in Q4. The 5 year trendline for West Lothian shows a slight upward trajectory. This trendline based upon Deliberate Fire Setting /10,000 population is similar to the trend across Scotland. We will continue to seek out new opportunities to reduce the occurence of deliberate fires.

Reasons

Data analysis shows deliberate fires account for 22% of all incidents attended by SFRS in this reporting period. 284 (36%) of these fires involved woodland, trees, scrub and heathland, 123 (15%) involved loose and small refuse fires, 110 (14%) involved wheelie bins with the remainder being divided between a number of other outdoor fires together with a small number of structural fires. Once again, evidence suggests that much of the Deliberate Fire activity can be associated with young people involved in anti-social behaviour.

Actions

We use a range of methodologies and local initiatives as part of our Thematic Action Plans throughout the year. Knowledge input to schools plays a key part in reducing Deliberate Fire Setting and anti-social behaviour. Linking in with our partners on initiatives such as 'Pinpoint' will demonstrate a more targeted approach. SFRS are endeavouring to use social media to deliver community safety messages to augment messaging through GLOW. Further details of our continued efforts to reduce this priority is provided in Appendix 2.

Five year data for West Lothian

YTD Incidents

Reduction of 'All deliberate fires' per10000 head of population

— West Lothian — — — Falkirk — · — Scotland

YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 89	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Sparklines
West Lothian	608	552	763	707	798	
Linlithgow	23	13	16	8	22	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	30	58	125	71	70	
Livingston North	63	48	96	133	147	
Livingston South	109	122	141	116	112	
East Livingston & East Calder	106	92	108	95	109	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	73	63	83	86	87	
Whitburn & Blackburn	78	69	82	58	98	
Bathgate	67	38	46	93	90	
Armadale & Blackridge	59	49	66	47	63	

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Reduction of 'Non domestic fires'

Fires in Non-Domestic Property can have a detrimental effect on the built environment and the prosperity of the local area. Non-domestic fires are classed as fires which took place in buildings that are not domestic households. Reduction of Non Domestic Property contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_13 Number of deliberate fires per 10,000 population.
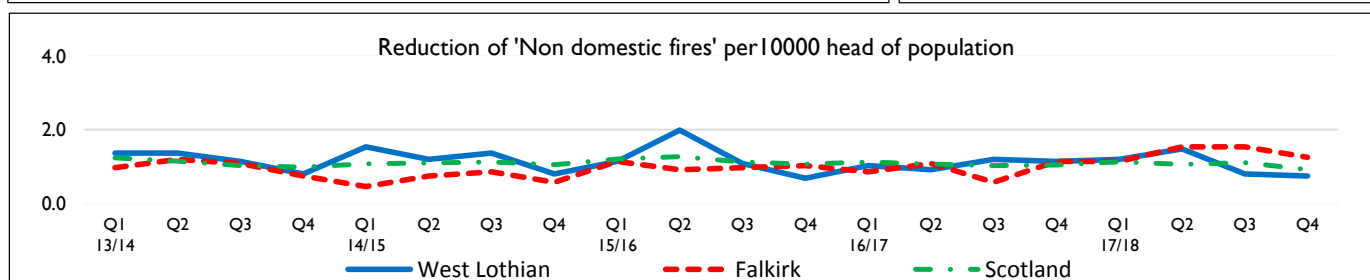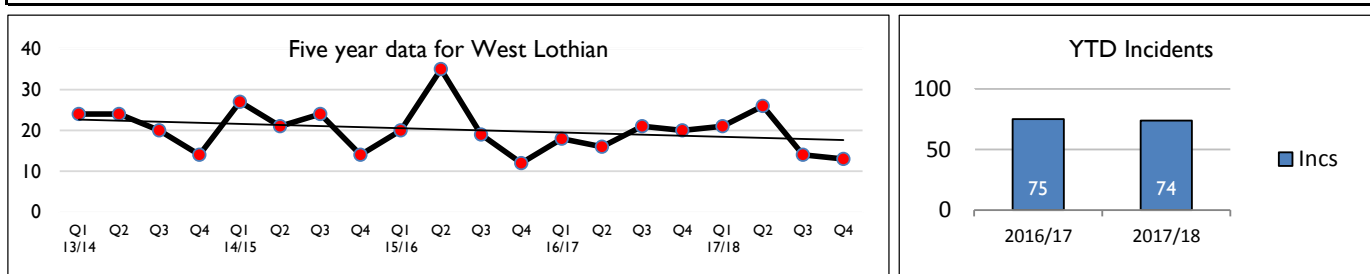
Results

There has been a very slight decrease in non domestic fires YTD 2017/18 compared to the same period 2016/17. The noticeable decrease from Q2 to Q3 has continued into Q4. There were no real trends showing here, the highest occurances were sheds with 8 fires (11%), 8 (11%) in secure accommodation with 5 (7%) in Medical facilities and 3 (4%) in residential care facilities. The long term trend for fires in Non-Domestic Property /10,000 population in West Lothian is showing a slight decline.

Reasons

The long term decrease in non domestic fires can be attributed SFRS Fire Safety Enforcement Officers supported by local crews providing education and advice to non domestic premises duty holders. It is noted that there has been a welcome decrease since Q2 and SFRS will work hard to keep reducing this moving forward.

Actions

SFRS engagement with duty holders is assisting in reducing incidents of this type. Appendix 3 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.

Five year data for West Lothian

YTD Incidents

Reduction of 'Non domestic fires' per10000 head of population

— West Lothian   - - - Falkirk   - · - Scotland

YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 8	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Sparklines
West Lothian	82	86	86	75	74	
Linlithgow	9	4	2	5	6	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	12	10	15	11	8	
Livingston North	3	5	8	4	4	
Livingston South	19	25	16	14	15	
East Livingston & East Calder	5	11	17	9	15	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	13	6	5	7	11	
Whitburn & Blackburn	7	9	14	6	5	
Bathgate	7	11	4	14	6	
Armadale & Blackridge	7	5	5	5	4	

9

Reduction of 'Special Service Casualties - All'

Whilst much of this risk is outwith the control of SFRS, responding to Non-Fire Emergencies is a key part of our intervention activities. The SFRS is committed to working with partners and other stakeholders to drive continuous improvement in this area. Reduction of Casualties from Non-Fire Emergencies contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_12 Number of People killed or seriously injured in road accidents.
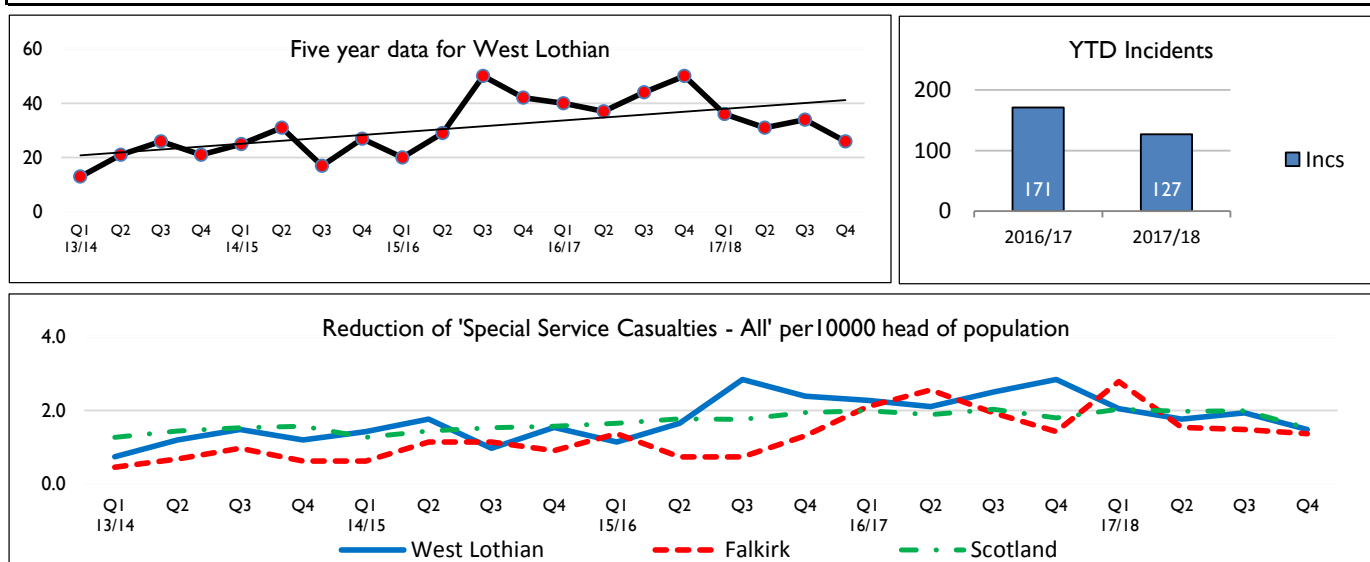
Results

The original aim was to reduce Casualties from Non-Fire Emergencies in West Lothian by 4% per year, however since that target was set SFRS commenced a pilot 'Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest' (OHCA) initiative. This target cannot now be achieved and will be reviewed in the new local plan. SFRS continues to work towards driving down casualties from RTCs and other special services. Due to OHCA the 5 year trendline for Special Service Casualty incident rate per 10,000 population in West Lothian depicts a sharp rise and is higher than other areas of Scotland which are not inviolved in the pilot.

Reasons

A high proportion of Special Service casualties were as a result of Road Traffic Collisons (RTC). We have had 61 RTC related casualties YTD 2017/18, 2 of which were fatalities, compared to 60 in the same reporting period in 2016/17. Other casualties of which there were 66, were categorised as effecting entry to properties to provide medical assistance, medical emergencies in support of SAS and medical emergencies as first responder.

Actions

Appendix 4 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.

Five year data for West Lothian

YTD Incidents

Reduction of 'Special Service Casualties - All' per10000 head of population

West Lothian — Falkirk - - - Scotland

YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 14	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Sparklines
West Lothian	81	100	141	171	127	
Linlithgow	7	10	21	18	17	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	9	8	18	17	5	
Livingston North	7	4	16	14	12	
Livingston South	7	10	5	12	11	
East Livingston & East Calder	15	7	22	15	9	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	8	11	9	20	12	
Whitburn & Blackburn	12	22	20	38	31	
Bathgate	12	11	19	29	23	
Armadale & Blackridge	4	17	11	8	7	

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Reduction of 'False Alarms - All'

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) are defined as incidents where an automated fire alarm system activates and results in the mobilisation of SFRS resources, where the reason for that alarm turns out to be something other than a fire. The SFRS is committed to working with partners and other stakeholders to reduce Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals. We aim to reduce UFAS in West Lothian by 5% per year
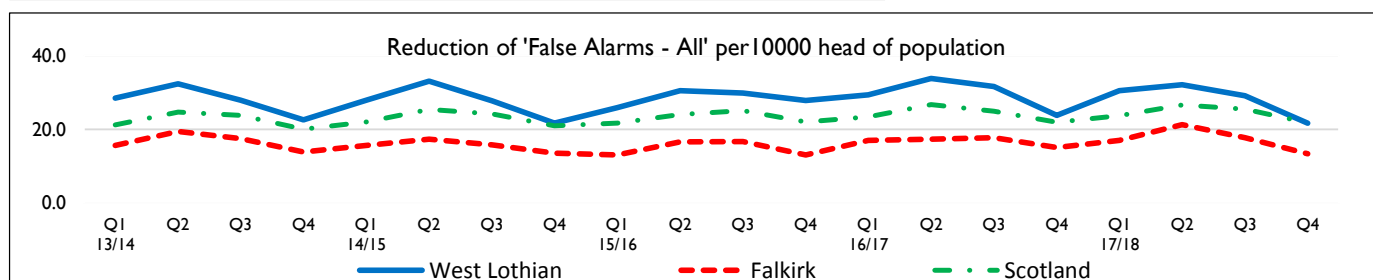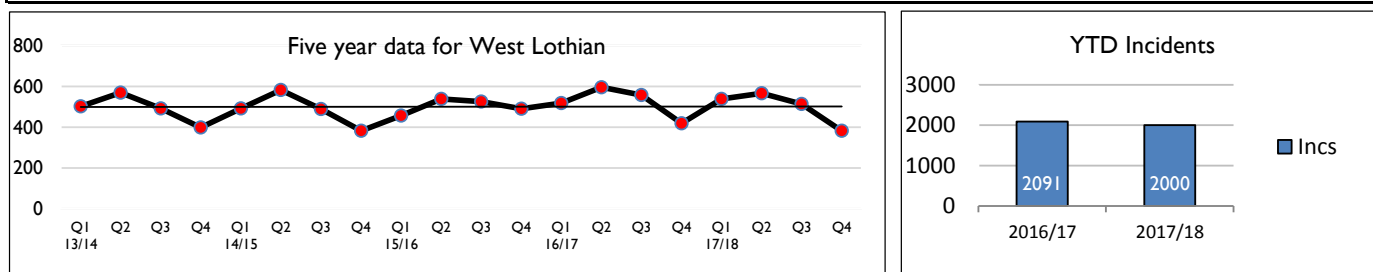
Results

YTD 2017/18, SFRS attended 2000 false alarms compared to 2091 in the same period 2016/17. This is a slight decrease of 4% in false alarms. Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) accounted for 1024 of these calls, which is 51% of False Alarms attended by SFRS. The five year trendline for West Lothian remains fairly static and is approaching the national average. Appendix 5 will provide greater detail in explaining this trend.

Reasons

Common UFAS causes are: Faulty apparatus (14%), careless or accidental activation (13%), contaminants (11%). The largest amount of UFAS instances were in Educational Establishments (13%), Warehouses (9%), and Offices (7%). SFRS have analysed the trends for UFAS and are engaging with duty holders to seek reductions. SFRS UFAS policy has been implemented appropriately. It is envisaged that the work done will be reflected in a reduction in the coming quarters.

Actions

SFRS continue to proactively monitor UFAS incidents and our Officers work closely with duty holders to reduce further UFAS incidents. This includes discussing logistics and educating duty holders in achieving technical, procedural and management solutions in order to reduce future UFAS incidents. Our Auditing officers engage with duty holders and alarm providers to determine cost effective solutions and this work is ongoing.

Five year data for West Lothian

YTD Incidents

Reduction of 'False Alarms - All' per10000 head of population

West Lothian — — — Falkirk — · — Scotland

YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 222	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Sparklines
West Lothian	1962	1947	2011	2091	2000	
Linlithgow	127	118	131	138	114	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	222	249	231	216	199	
Livingston North	188	195	192	215	185	
Livingston South	440	436	428	441	481	
East Livingston & East Calder	235	229	253	284	255	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	170	143	156	154	143	
Whitburn & Blackburn	275	281	315	265	251	
Bathgate	190	201	210	233	250	
Armadale & Blackridge	115	95	95	145	122	

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Appendix 1

Reduction of 'All accidental dwelling fires (ADFs)' & Reduction of 'All fire casualties (fatal & non-fatal incl. precautionary check-ups)'

A primary activity related to improving the safety of our communities is delivering Home Safety Visits. Evidence identifies that dwelling fires occur more frequently in those premises that are occupied by the more vulnerable members of our community such as the elderly and those with substance and alcohol dependencies.

SFRS continue to deliver HSV and continue to develop Information Sharing Protocols with partners and increase the safety of residents with all agencies making appropriate referrals.

Home Fire Safety Programme visits completed (Year to date).

Year to Date Activity 2017-18	Low	Medium	High	TOTAL
Total HSVs	506	771	623	1900

During this reporting period, SFRS continue to work with multi-agency partners including Social Work, Housing providers, Health etc. in order to target those most vulnerable within our communities, by seeking referrals.

SFRS frontline staff submitted a number of 'Adult Protection' forms to our partners within the Social Work Department to ensure appropriate support is delivered.

SFRS are expanding the HSV within the guidance set out in the Safer Communities Programme. This will see a further transition towards Home Safety Visits with fire crews submitting referrals for 'slips, trips and falls' and 'sensory impairment'. It is envisaged that whilst keeping vulnerable residents safe in their homes, it will reduce the likelihood of hospitalisation and ease the burden in the Health Sector.

The coming months will see an increase in knowledge input to partners in Housing Associations to identify vulnerable tenants. SFRS officers will deliver Hazard identification training to housing managers which will upskill them to identify persons at risk.

Whilst we seek to reduce Dwelling Fires even further, it should be noted that the severity of fires is often restricted to item first ignited or room of origin.

Appendix 2

Reduction of 'All deliberate fires'

Tasking and Coordinating Group

During this reporting period SFRS along with multi-agency partners, continue to attend 'Tasking and Co-ordinating Group'. The primary focus is on addressing tactical level issues using information sharing, problem profiling and the implementation of measures to reduce both fire related and other anti-social behaviour issues. This process greatly assists with addressing areas of high operational demand and with the proactive targeting of those most vulnerable within our communities.

This group has already delivered improved outcomes. It is envisaged that the information received within the meetings will create profiles of individuals responsible for anti-social behaviour. This will allow diversionary activity and youth engagement through 'Cooldown' (Fireskills) and 'Phoenix' (Fireskills modules) programmes.

Collaborative work with partners also attracts referrals for Home Safety Visits for the more vulnerable within our communities. There are ongoing case studies with interventions being discussed at present.

Youth Engagement

SFRS have developed a closer relationship with School Based Police Officers to ensure a more targeted approach in dealing with secondary fires and anti-social behaviour. SFRS Community Safety Advocates/Community Firefighters and Operational Firefighters, deliver an educational programme within schools to address any developing trends. The purpose of this is to deliver seasonal fire education with the focus on reducing fire related ASB and hoax calls. This will also reduce the financial impact on Local Authority Budgets and protects our built environment.

SFRS Crews pro-actively promote local diversionary activities. This provided opportunities for our frontline crews to engage with youths and reduce ASB.

Information sharing within the Task and Co-ordinating Group and effective multi-agency partnership working is focussed on reducing deliberate fire setting and fire related anti-social behaviour. This included initiatives aimed at preventing fires within derelict properties and fires involving refuse and wheelie-bins.

Wilful fire raising in wheelie disposal bins remains a problem and is being addressed at Task and Co-ordinating Groups with partners. Guidance has been given to partners and cascaded to residents to be more vigilant and to give consideration when they place bins out for uplift and to retrieve them asap thereafter.

The Fireskills - Cooldown and Fireskills - Phoenix programmes continue to assist our young people in West Lothian creating diversionary activities tailored to the reduction of fire related anti-social behaviour. SFRS has developed an accredited employability award and staff across West Lothian are working towards integrating this programme into local youth engagement projects.

Appendix 3

Reduction of 'All non-domestic fires'

Fire Safety Enforcement Activity

A Pre-Programmed Audit is an audit programmed at the commencement of the fiscal year, selected from premises held within the Service's database, based on a risk assessment as defined in the Service's Enforcement Framework.

A Non-Programmed Audit is an audit that can occur throughout the year. This type of audit would be undertaken as a result of the following: fire safety complaints, requests from partner agencies or joint initiatives with partners, following any fire within a relevant premises and the targeting of specific premises types in line with the Service's Enforcement Framework.

Our Programmed Audits schedule year ending 2017/18 is as follows:

FSEC Code	Premises Type	Number of premises in Local Authority area as of 30 June 2017	Number of premises subject to pre-planned audit 2017/18*	Number of premises audited Q1 – Q4 2017/18	% of Target Premises achieved YTD**
A	Hospital	6	6	08	133%
B	Care Home	46	46	53	115%
C	House of multiple occupation (HMO) Tenement	3	3	04	133%
E	Hostels	1	1	01	100%
F	Hotels	56	18	08	44%
H	Other sleeping accommodation	3	3	02	66%
J	Further Education	2	1	00	00%
K	Public Building	32	7	02	28%
L	Licenced Premises	307	10	16	160%
M	Schools	127	32	16	50%
N	Shops	1064	12	21	175%
P	Other premises open to public	167	6	17	283%
R	Factories & Warehouses	330	9	12	144%

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S	Offices	635	20	05	25%
T	Other Workplace	52	0	02	200%
	Total	**2862**	**174**	**167**	**96%**

*Pre-planned targets are only set for Hospitals, Care Homes, HMO's classed as 'high' risk or in line with licence renewals and other premises classed as 'high' or 'very high' risk.

**Where target is exceeded this is due to non-programmed auditing such as thematic auditing, fire safety complaints or post fire audits.

Enforcement/Prohibition Notices

No prohibition notices have been served within the WL area during this reporting period.

Thematic Auditing is being carried out in West Lothian based on trend analysis.

4 | P a g e

Appendix 4

Reduction of 'Special Service - casualties (fatal & non-fatal)'

SFRS will augment the learning outcomes of Road Safety initiative West Drive by implementing our "Make it or Break it programme" which is currently been rolled out in the school and prison environment. This will come in the form of offering tuition to young people on the hazards encountered on our roadways and educating them on safer driving and the consequences of losing concentration at the wheel.

Appendix 5

Reduction of 'False Alarm - Equipment failure'

A reduction in UFAS incidents has a number of benefits namely, reducing road risk, reducing SFRS carbon footprint and increasing business continuity. UFAS incidents fall into a range of categories that include. Malicious, Failure of Equipment and Good Intent. SFRS have developed a UFAS Policy to ensure that persistent UFAS incidents within premises are addressed appropriately. Engagement with key holders is key to reducing SFRS attendance. We have programmed engagement sessions with duty holders and alarm providers to discuss solutions to UFAS, with the most recent discussions taking place with West Lothian council. SFRS have a robust UFAS Policy, analysing trends and engaging appropriately with Duty Holders of relevant premises.

Glossary

Primary Fire

Primary fires include all fires in non-derelict buildings and outdoor structures or any fires involving casualties or rescues or any fires attended by five or more appliances.

Secondary Fires

Secondary fires are the majority of outdoor fires including grassland and refuse fires unless they involve casualties or rescues, property loss or if five or more appliances attend. They include fires in derelict buildings but not chimney fires.

Accidental Dwelling Fires

Building occupied by households, excluding hotels, hostels and residential institutions. In 2000, the definition of a dwelling was widened to include any non-permanent structure used solely as a dwelling, such as caravans, houseboats etc. Caravans, boats etc. not used as a permanent dwelling are shown according to the type of property. Accidental includes fires where the cause was not known or unspecified.

Fire Fatality

A person whose death is attributed to a fire is counted as a fatality even if the death occurred weeks or months later.

Fire Casualty

Non-fatal casualties, injured as a direct result of a fire attended by the service. Includes those who received first aid at the scene and those who were recommended to go for a precautionary check. Does not include injuries to fire service personnel.

Deliberate Fire

Fires where deliberate ignition is suspected

Special Services

Special Services are non-fire incidents requiring the attendance of an appliance or officer. The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 placed a statutory duty on FRS to attend fires and road traffic accidents. It also included an additional function order that covers non-fire incidents such as rescues from collapsed buildings or serious flooding

CPP

Community Planning Partnership.

SOA

Single Outcome Agreement.

Year to Date (YTD)

Year to date is calculated from 1st April on the reporting year

RTC

Road Traffic Collision

UFAS

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

Seasonal Community Safety Calendar

The seasonal calendar depicts a range of initiatives and activities that the SFRS and CPP partners will undertake throughout the year as part of our preventative strategies.

Seasonal Community Safety Calendar 2018

West Lothian Council

SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

PROPERTY TURNOVER JANUARY – MARCH 2018

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

A.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to inform the Panel of the property turnover for the Quarter **January to March 2018**.

B.   RECOMMENDATION

To note the current levels of activity relating to property turnover for the Fourth quarter of **2017/18** and in particular to note:

- That there has been an decrease in property lets compared to the same period last year
- That of the 47 communities in West Lothian, 10 had only 1 mainstream property to let and 13 had none

- That 63% of lets were allocated to people who were homeless or potentially homeless

C.   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

  I   Council Values

  II   Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)

  III   Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers

  IV   Impact on performance and performance Indicators

  V   Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement

  VI   Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)

  VII   Consideration at PDSP

1

D.   TERMS OF REPORT

Quarterly Turnover

The number of permanent lets for the period **1st January to 31st March 2018** was 203 compared to the same quarter last year when 325 properties were let.

Details of all lets and property numbers for the quarter are provided in Appendix 1 and Council Stock figures by Ward in Appendix 3. The main points are:

- Blackburn with 39 lets (19%), Broxburn with 27 lets (13%) and Armadale with 21 lets (10%) have the highest percentage of total lets.

- There were 9 sheltered housing properties let.

- Nine communities had only one mainstream property available to let (Addiewell,Breich,Greenrigg,Howden,Kirknewton,Uphall,West Calder,Westfield,Whiteside)

- Ten communities had between two and four properties available to let (Blackridge,Eliburn,Knightsridge,Linlithgow,Linlithgow-Bridge,Mid Calder,Polbeth,Pumpherston,Seafield,Winchburgh)

- The following thirteen communities had no properties becoming available:

Community	Number of properties remaining
Ballencrieff	5
Bellsquarry	4
Craigshill	33
Ecclesmachan	4
Eliburn Co-op	42
Newton	12
Philpstoun	25
Stoneyburn	243
Threemiletown	6
Torphichen	26
Uphall Station	113
The Riggs	142
Wilkieston	5

Applicants can choose from all 47 communities. However those who choose low turnover communities are advised that they may have a lengthy wait to be housed.

Type of property

The majority of properties that became available were Cottage at 73 (36%) followed by 4 in Block at 71 (35%). 48% of these were two bedroom properties, 34% were one bedroom properties and 15% were three bedroom properties and 3% were Four bedroom.

Applicants

2

The 203 properties let in this quarter were allocated in accordance with the Council's Allocations Policy and group plus points system.

Performance for the fourth quarter is as follows:

Group	Percentage Met
Homeless (HL)	63%
Unsatisfactory Housing (UH)	13%
General (GN)	0%
Transfer (TL)	22%
Outwith (OW)	0%

E.   **Conclusion -** The report provides information on the lets that took place in the Fourth quarter of this financial year. The report also highlights that there continues to be some communities where there is no movement in vacant properties at all.

F.   **Background References**

Appendices/Attachments: Appendix 1 – Lets excluding Assisted Moves

Appendix 2 – Assisted Move Lets

Appendix 3 – Total Housing Stock per area

Contact Person: annmarie.carr@westlothian.gov.uk – Tel No- 01506 281355

Alistair Shaw
HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

Date of Meeting: 8th May 2018

Lets October to December 2017 (excluding Assisted Moves)

Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms						
			1	2	3	4	5	Total	
Armadale	*Armadale*	Cottage	2	1	2	0	0	5	
		4 in Block	0	8	1	0	0	9	
		Maisonette	0	0	7	0	0	7	
	Armadale Total		**2**	**9**	**10**	**0**	**0**	**21**	
	Blackridge	Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1	
		Flat	1	0	0	0	0	1	
		4 in Block	1	0	0	0	0	1	
	Blackridge Total		**2**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3**	
	Torphichen	Cottage	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Torphichen Total		**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	
	Westfield	Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1	
	Westfield Total		**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	
	Ward Total		**4**	**11**	**10**	**0**	**0**	**25**	

Lets October to December 2017 (excluding Assisted Moves)

Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms						
			1	2	3	4	5	Total	
Bathgate	*Bathgate*	Cottage	0	4	0	0	0	4	
		4 in Block	2	3	0	0	0	5	
		Flat	2	0	0	0	0	2	
		Sheltered	4	0	0	0	0	4	
	Bathgate Total		8	7	0	0	0	15	
	Boghall	Cottage	0	2	0	0	0	2	
		Flat	1	5	0	0	0	6	
		Sheltered	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		4 in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1	
	Boghall Total		1	8	0	0	0	9	
	Whiteside	4 in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1	
		Cottage	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Whiteside Total		0	1	0	0	0	1	
	Ward Total		9	16	0	0	0	25	

Lets October to December 2017 (excluding Assisted Moves)

Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms						
			1	2	3	4	5	Total	
Breich Valley	Addiewell	4 in Block	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		Cottage	0	0	1	0	0	1	
	Addiewell Total		**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**	
	Breich	4 in Block	0	0	1	0	0	1	
		Cottage	0	0	0	0	0	1	
	Breich Total		**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**	
	Fauldhouse	4 in Block	1	3	0	0	0	4	
		Flat	1	0	1	0	0	2	
		Cottage	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		Maisonette	0	2	0	0	0	2	
	Fauldhouse Total		**2**	**5**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**8**	
	Stoneyburn	Cottage	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		4 in Block	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Stoneyburn Total		**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	
	West Calder	4 in Block	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		Cottage	1	0	0	0	0	1	
	West Calder Total		**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	
	Polbeth	4 in Block	0	0	1	0	0	1	
		Cottage	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		Flat	1	0	0	0	0	1	
	Polbeth Total		**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**	
	Ward Total		**4**	**5**	**4**	**0**	**0**	**13**	

Lets October to December 2017 (excluding Assisted Moves)

Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms						
			1	2	3	4	5	Total	
Broxburn	*Broxburn*	Cottage	2	2	4	0	0	8	
		4 in Block	5	8	0	0	0	13	
		Maisonette	0	1	0	0	0	1	
		Flat	3	2	0	0	0	5	
	Broxburn Total		**10**	**13**	**4**	**0**	**0**	**27**	
	Uphall	Flat	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		4 in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1	
		Cottage	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		Maisonette	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Uphall Total		**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	
	Winchburgh	Cottage	1	1	0	0	0	2	
		4 in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1	
		Maisonette	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Winchburgh Total		**1**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3**	
	Dechmont	Cottage	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Dechmont Total		**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	
	Ward Total		**11**	**16**	**4**	**0**	**0**	**31**	
East Livingston	*East Calder*	Cottage	0	2	1	1	0	4	
		4 in Block	0	3	0	0	0	3	
	East Calder Total		**0**	**5**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**7**	
	Mid Calder	Sheltered	4	0	0	0	0	4	
		Cottage	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Mid Calder Total		**4**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**4**	
	Kirknewton	4 in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1	
	Kirknewton Total		**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	
	Uphall Station	Cottage	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		4 in Block	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Uphall Station Total		**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	
	Pumpherston	Cottage	0	2	0	0	0	2	
	Pumpherston Total		**0**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2**	
	Ward Total		**4**	**8**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**14**	

Lets October to December 2017 (excluding Assisted Moves)

Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms						
			1	2	3	4	5	Total	
Linlithgow	*Bridgend*	Cottage	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		4 in Block	0	4	1	0	0	5	
	Bridgend Total		**0**	**4**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**5**	
	Linlithgow	Flat	1	0	0	0	0	1	
		4 in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1	
		Maisonette	0	0	0	0	0	1	
	Linlithgow Total		**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2**	
	Linlithgow Bridge	Flat	1	0	0	0	0	1	
		Cottage	0	0	1			1	
	Linlithgow Bridge Total		**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**	
	Ward Total		**2**	**5**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**9**	
North Livingston	*Deans*	Cottage	1	0	1	0	0	2	
		Flat	2	1	0	0	0	3	
		Maisonette	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Deans Total		**3**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**5**	
	Eliburn/Livingston Vill	Cottage	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		4 in Block	1	1	0	0	0	2	
		Flat	1	0	0	0	0	1	
	Eliburn/Livingston Village Total		**2**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3**	
	Knightsridge	Cottage	1	1	1	0	0	3	
		Flat	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Knightsridge Total		**1**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**3**	
	Ward Total		**6**	**3**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**11**	

Lets October to December 2017 (excluding Assisted Moves)

Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms						
			1	2	3	4	5	Total	
South Livingston	*Dedridge*	Cottage	3	0	0	1	0	4	
		Flat	1	0	0	0	0	1	
		Maisonette	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Dedridge Total		4	0	0	1	0	5	
	Ladywell	Maisonette	0	1	0	0	0	1	
		Flat	1	1	0	0	0	2	
		Cottage	1	2	2	0	0	5	
	Ladywell Total		2	4	2	0	0	8	
	Howden	4 in Block	1	0	0	0	0	1	
	Howden Total		1	0	0	0	0	1	
	Ward Total		7	4	2	1	0	14	
Whitburn	*Blackburn*	Cottage	3	10	1	4	0	18	
		4 in Block	12	0	2	0	0	14	
		Flat	0	4	0	0	0	4	
		Maisonette	0	3	0	0	0	3	
	Blackburn Total		15	17	3	4	0	39	
	East Whitburn	4 in Block	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	East Whitburn Total		0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Whitburn	Cottage	0	5	1	0	0	6	
		4 in Block	2	4	0	0	0	6	
		Flat	3	0	0	0	0	3	
		Maisonette	0	3	0	0	0	3	
		Sheltered	1	0	0	0	0	1	
	Whitburn Total		6	12	1	0	0	19	
	Greenrigg	Cottage	1	0	0	0	0	0	
	Greenrigg Total		1	0	0	0	0	1	
	Seafield	Cottage	0	1	1	0	0	2	
	Seafield Total		0	1	1	0	0	2	
	Ward Total		22	30	5	4	0	61	
	Total		69	98	30	6	0	203	

Lets October to December 2017 Assisted Moves

Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms						
			1	2	3	4	5	Total	
Armadale	Armadale	Cottage	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Armadale Total		0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Ward Total		0	0	0	0	0	0	
Bathgate	Bathgate	Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1	
	Boghall	Flat	0	1	0	0	0	1	
	Bathgate Total		0	2	0	0	0	2	
	Ward Total		0	2	0	0	0	2	
Fauldhouse/Breich	Fauldhouse	4 in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1	
	Polbeth	4 in Block	0	0	1	0	0	1	
	Addiewell	4 in Block	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Breich Total		0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Ward Total		0	1	1	0	0	2	
Broxburn	Broxburn	Flat	0	1	0	0	0	1	
		Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1	
	Broxburn Total	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	
	Winchburgh	Flat	0	0	0	0	0	0	
			0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Winchburgh Total		0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Ward Total		0	2	0	0	0	2	
Linlithgow	Linltighow Bridge	4 in Block	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Linlithgow Bridge Total		0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Linlithgow	4 in Block	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Linlithgow Total		0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Ward Total		0	0	0	0	0	0	

North Livingston	*Deans*	Flat	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Deans Total		**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**
	The Riggs	Cottage	0	0	1	0	0	1
	The Riggs Total		**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**
	Ward Total		**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**
South Livingston	*Dedridge*	Cottage	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Dedridge Total		**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**1**
	Ladywell	Flat	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Ladywell Total		**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	Ward Total		**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**1**
Whitburn	*Whitburn*	Maisonnette	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Blackburn	Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Whitburn Total		**0**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**
	Ward Total		**0**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**
	Total		**1**	**6**	**3**	**1**	**0**	**11**

Reasons for Assisted Moves

Harassment	5
Medical A	0
Overcrowding	2
Property not suitable	3
Neighbour problems	0
Care in the Community	1
Total	11

Council Stock Numbers				
Ward	Name	Number of properties		
1	BRIDGEND	222		
	LINLITHGOW	345		
	LINLITHGOW BRIDGE	85		
	NEWTON	12		
	PHILPSTOUN	25		
	THREEMILETOWN	6		
		695		
2	BROXBURN	894		
	CRAIGSHILL	33		
	DECHMONT	25		
	ECCLESMACHAN	4		
	UPHALL	216		
	WINCHBURGH	242		
		1,414		
5	EAST CALDER	299		
	KIRKNEWTON	39		
	MID CALDER	55		
	PUMPHERSTON	185		
	UPHALL STATION	113		
	WILKIESTON	5		
		696		
3	DEANS	576		
	ELIBURN CO-OP	42		
	ELIBURN KIRKTON	253		
	THE RIGGS	142		
	KNIGHTSRIDGE	507		
		1,520		
4	BELLSQUARRY	4		
	DEDRIDGE	745		
	LADYWELL	657		
	HOWDEN	21		
		1,427		
6	ADDIEWELL	282		
	BREICH	66		
	FAULDHOUSE	625		
	LONGRIDGE	89		
	POLBETH	324		
	STONEYBURN	243		
	WEST CALDER	154		
		1,783		
7	EAST WHITBURN	46		
	GREENRIGG	103		
	WHITBURN	1,521		
	BLACKBURN	920		
	SEAFIELD	110		
		2,700		
8	BALLENCRIEFF	5		
	BATHGATE	965		
	BOGHALL	674		
	WHITESIDE & BIRNIEHI	257		
		1,901		
9	ARMADALE	1,272		
	BLACKRIDGE	216		
	TORPHICHEN	26		
	WESTFIELD	69		
		1,583		
	Total stock	**13,719**		

1 of 1

West Lothian Council

SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION: REVIEW OF LANDLORD REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS AND FEES

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

A.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise the Panel of the Scottish Government consultation on a review of landlord registration applications and fees. To present a draft response to the consultation.

B.   RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Panel members note the Scottish Government consultation and provide comment on the draft council response prior to its submission to Council Executive in advance of the 7th June deadline.

C.   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; working in partnership.
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	The Anti-Social Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004 placed a duty on local authorities to maintain a public register of private landlords.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None.
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	None.
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	None.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	None.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	N/A
VIII	**Other consultations**	Legal Services Team; Environment Health Team; Community Safety Unit, Housing Need Team; Housing Strategy and Development.

1

D.   TERMS OF REPORT

Part 8 of the Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004 ("the 2004 Act") placed a duty on local authorities to prepare and maintain a public register of private landlords and registration commenced in April 2006. As at 31 January 2017 there were almost 268,000 entries on the register across Scotland, linked to 362,000 registered properties. Since the launch of a new IT system in February 2017, there have been a further 23,000 new applications.

The Scottish Government's Strategy for the Private Rented Sector in Scotland was published in May 2013 and outlines the purpose and aims in relation to landlord registration. Within this consultation the Scottish Government is seeking views on proposals for reviewing two specific aspects of landlord registration:

- Information that must be included in an application for registration; and
- Application fees.

Responses to the consultation will be used to inform the final policy and impact assessments that will be prepared in support of any Order to lay new regulations.

Officers have prepared a draft response based on collaborative input from services with involvement and experience in relation to the registration process. The draft response is attached as an appendix.

The consultation document can be accessed via the link below:

Consultation on a review of landlord registration applications and fees

It should be noted that the proposals outlined within the consultation, if implemented, would constitute minimal changes to existing processes in West Lothian and are considered to be manageable within existing council resources.

E.   Conclusion

The Scottish Government are consulting on a review of landlord registration applications and fees. Officers have produced a draft response to the consultation based on experience of the scheme locally. The deadline for response to the consultation is 7th June 2018.

F.   Background References

Scottish Government Private Rented Sector Strategy:
Strategy for the Private Rented Sector in Scotland

Appendices/Attachments: Consultation Answer Form

Contact Person: Kenny Selbie - 01506 281072 kenny.selbie@westlothian.gov.uk

Alistair Shaw
HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

Date of Meeting: 8th May 2018

2

Consultation on landlord registration applications and fees.

RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note this form **must** be completed and returned with your response.

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

☐ Individual

☒ Organisation

Full name or organisation's name

West Lothian Council

Phone number

01506 281252

Address

Civic Centre, Howden South Road, Livingston

Postcode

EH54 6FF

Email

landlordregistration@westlothian.gov.uk

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

☒ Publish response with name

☐ Publish response only (without name)

☐ Do not publish response

> **Information for organisations:**
>
> The option 'Publish response only (without name)' is available for individual respondents only. If this option is selected, the organisation name will still be published.
>
> If you choose the option 'Do not publish response', your organisation name may still be listed as having responded to the consultation in, for example, the analysis report.

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

☒ Yes

☐ No

1

Consultation Answer Form

Part 1 – Landlord registration: Prescribed information

Question 1a: Do you think that landlords should have to confirm whether they comply with each of the requirements specified above? Please explain your answer

Yes [x]   No [ ]   Unsure [ ]

Please tick only one box and explain your answer below.

The proposed additional requirements which are to be included are reasonable. We would view each of these specified requirements as mandatory. However, as far as possible, the requirements for landlords under each should be specific to make it clear what is required under each section. For example, the questions related to the Tolerable Standard and Repairing Standard should be separate, as should those relating to gas, electrical and carbon monoxide (although 'not applicable' options will be required for these).

Question 1b: If not, which requirement(s) do you think landlords should not have to confirm that they comply with and why?

Please explain your answer below?

N/A

Question 1c: Do you think that landlords should be required to provide evidence of compliance with any of the requirements specified above?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]   Unsure [x]

Please tick only one box and explain your answer below.

Some elements are easily proven by documentation, e.g. EPC, gas safety and electrical safety certificates, legionnaires' risk assessment. In these cases, these should be provided and will secure a degree of third party oversight of the property concerned. An alternative would be to recommend their provision, making it clear that absence may result in additional scrutiny of the application and consequent delays. A means of submitting these as electronic documents should be in place. Other matters, such as compliance with the Tolerable and Repairing Standards are more difficult to prove by documentary means and to do so would create additional costs and administrative burden on landlord

2

Question 2: What other questions, if any, do you think should be included in an application for landlord registration?

Please explain your answer below.

Some proposed additional questions:

"Are you aware of your obligations as a landlord regarding Antisocial Behaviour from your tenant?"

"Would you know how to deal with such behaviour and are you aware of the consequences of not dealing with such behaviour?"

"The landlord should be required to confirm that they own the property and that it is registered in their name with Registers of Scotland."

In order to ensure compliance with new GDPR data protection legislation, the following question should be considered:
"Are you happy with the Local Authority using your email address to provide you with changes in relevant legislation, update in the law, provide you with details of events via e-newsletter?"

Question 3 If a minimum energy efficiency standard linked to an EPC rating is introduced, do you think that landlords should be asked to provide the domestic EPC rating for property?

Yes [x]   No [ ]   Unsure [ ]

Please tick only one box and explain your answer below.

The form should make clear the requirements to have an EPC and (when applicable) the minimum required standard. The landlord should then be required to confirm the property's EPC rating. If below the minimum standard (when introduced), the landlord must provide information:

- Why the minimum standard cannot be attained; and
- What action has been taken to maximise the energy performance of the property. (i.e. just because it can't meet the minimum standard does not mean no action is necessary).

Question 4: Do you think that the applicants should only be required to provide a home address and a correspondence address?

Yes [x]   No [ ]   Unsure [ ]

Please tick only one box and explain your answer below.

The purpose of the proposed changes is to improve the standards of rented homes. To allow local authorities to make both formal and informal interventions to secure physical and management standards, it is essential that day to day operation contact details are provided. This will allow for informal, efficient, low cost initial intervention, ensuring that landlords can right problems quickly and without formal intervention.

3

Question 5: Do you think that applicants should be required to provide an email address, home and mobile phone number (if they have one)?

Yes ☒ No ☐ Unsure ☐

Please tick only one box and explain your answer below.

> Local authorities are endeavouring to reduce both incoming and outgoing printed mail costs. In addition, there is a drive towards electronic communication and interaction with services. Landlord e-mail and phone contact details should be required, where they exist. In addition, it permits early, rapid, low cost intervention, when required.

Part 2 – Landlord registration: Application fees

Question 6: Do you think it is reasonable to increase registration fees in line with inflation, to reflect the increased cost to local authorities?

Yes ☒ No ☐ Unsure ☐

Please tick only one box and explain your answer below.

> Registration Fees have remained at the same level since landlord registration was introduced in 2006. During this time the private rented sector has increased, leading led to a higher number of applications to local authorities and additional costs being deployed to manage applications.

Question 7: Do you think it is reasonable for local authorities to charge a lower additional fee, in cases where the maximum set fee exceeds the costs of the work undertaken to prompt a landlord to make an application?

Yes ☐ No ☒ Unsure ☐

Please tick only one box and explain your answer below.

> The additional fee should remain as a fixed fee for each landlord who fails to register after two requests have been issued by the local authority. Having a lower additional fee depending on the work carried out by a local authority may be seen as unfair for landlords who do not require support to renew or submit an application.

Question 8: Do you think that the 10% discount applied to on-line applications should be changed? If so, what should be changed?

Yes ☐ No ☒ Unsure ☐

Please tick only one box and explain your answer below.

> It remains a challenge for local authorities to encourage landlords to go online to amend or submit applications. The 10% discount acts as an incentive to support this.

4

Question 9: What are your views on including an amount in the application fee to cover the operating costs of the on-line registration service?

Please explain your answer below.

> The new system was launched to improve the landlord's journey and to make applying online a simpler process. Including a small percentage in the application could ensure that improvements to the system would continue. Landlords who are not computer literate could by provided with support by local authorities in relation to the online application process.

Question 10: Do you think that a local authority should receive an application fee when they carry out a fit and proper person test on a joint owner?

Yes ☐   No ☒   Unsure ☐

Please tick only one box and explain your answer below.

> If the local authority has doubts about the lead owners fit and proper person status both should be put through the test at the same time to reduce administrative costs to go back and undertake a further test on the joint owner.

Question 11: Do you think that each local authority should receive an application fee when a person applies to more than one local authority, and the fit and proper person assessment is required?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Unsure ☒

Please tick only one box and explain your answer below.

> If required information was not made available from other local authorities, then a fee should be applied as this will create extra work for the local authority. All local authorities have a different process for completing a Fit and Proper Person Assessment.

Question 12: Do you think that landlords should receive a 100% discount on the application fee for a letting agent who has applied to be registered with the Scottish Government?

Yes ☐   No ☒   Unsure ☐

Please tick only one box and explain your answer below.

> It is not always the case that the landlords who are using agents meet the Fit and Proper Person Policy. This then leads to local authorities having to put the landlord through assessment and ensuring their properties meet the legal requirements.

Question 13: What are your views on charging a fee for specific changes in circumstance to an existing registration?

Please explain your answer below.

> If there was evidence that the change is circumstance would result in a cost for the local authority a fee should be charged to a percentage of the cost.

5

Question 14: What are your views on offering incentives to landlords and agents to apply for registration and/or improve their practice?

Please explain your answer below.

> If landlords have undertaken a training course or a joint scheme to improve their practice, then granting a discount to the application fee seems reasonable. Our experience and feedback from landlords suggests that many feel that they do not receive anything in return for their fees. This would help to recognise and support those who are making efforts to be a good landlord.

Part 3 – Landlord Registration: Impact Assessments

Question 15: Are there any proposals in this consultation which impact or have implications on 'equality groups'? Choose from the following options:

Yes [ ]   No [x]   Unsure [ ]

Please tick only one box and explain your answer below.

> We recognise that in certain circumstances landlords with disabilities will require additional support in terms of the registration process. This is provided as required in individual circumstances at a local level by the registration team.

Question 16: Do any of the proposals in this consultation have any financial, regulatory or resource implications for you and/or your business
(If applicable)? Choose from the following options:

Yes [ ]   No [x]   Unsure [ ]

Please tick only one box and explain your answer below.

> Should any of the proposals outlined within this consultation be implemented, West Lothian Council consider that we would have the resources to manage these changes without undue financial or administrative concern.
>
> Consideration should be given as to whether the DWP can confirm that a landlord is registered under the scheme as part of the process for confirmation of rent costs for benefit provision. This would assist to ensure that benefit entitlement for housing costs are given to landlords that are registered.

6

![West Lothian Council logo]

SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

PERFORMANCE REPORTING

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

A.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report the current levels of performance for Housing, Customer and Building Services indicators that are the responsibility of the Services for the Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel.

B.   RECOMMENDATION

To note the current performance on Housing, Customer and Building Services key performance indicators and determine if further action or enquiry is necessary.

C.   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs;
		Being honest, open and accountable; and
		Making best use of our resources.
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	In compliance with the Code of Corporate Governance and the principles of Best Value.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None.
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	There is no impact but this report is part of the agreed process for performance reporting.
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	The key performance indicator that is relevant to the SOA is HQSPROP033.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	None.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	Yes.
VIII	**Other consultations**	Tenants Panel and service staff.

1

D. TERMS OF REPORT

Introduction

The performance of service activities or ongoing tasks is measured through the use of key performance indicators (KPIs). The key activities of the service are covered by KPIs, some of which are also specified performance indicators (SPIs). The council's performance management system, Pentana, uses a simple traffic light system to show if progress is on target (green), in danger of falling behind target (amber), or below target (red).

Each Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel is allocated areas of responsibility for overseeing performance within their remit. The information contained in Appendix 1 gives details on the Housing, Customer and Building Services indicators that fall within the remit of this PDSP.

Current Position

Of the eight performance indicators we are reporting, 5 are categorised as green , 1 is amber and 2 are red. This position for Q4 is a change from the last report for Q3 in February 2018 where 5 were green, 2 were amber and 1 was red. Each indicator in the appendix displays the latest note which offers an explanation from the service on current performance levels.

E. CONCLUSION

The summary chart at the front of Appendix 1 shows the status of the performance indicators which are the responsibility of this PDSP. The information contained in Appendix 1 will allow the Panel to note current performance levels and actions being taken to address where current performance is below target.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendices/Attachments: One

Contact Person: **kenny.selbie@westlothian.gov.uk** Tel No: 01506 281072.

ALISTAIR SHAW
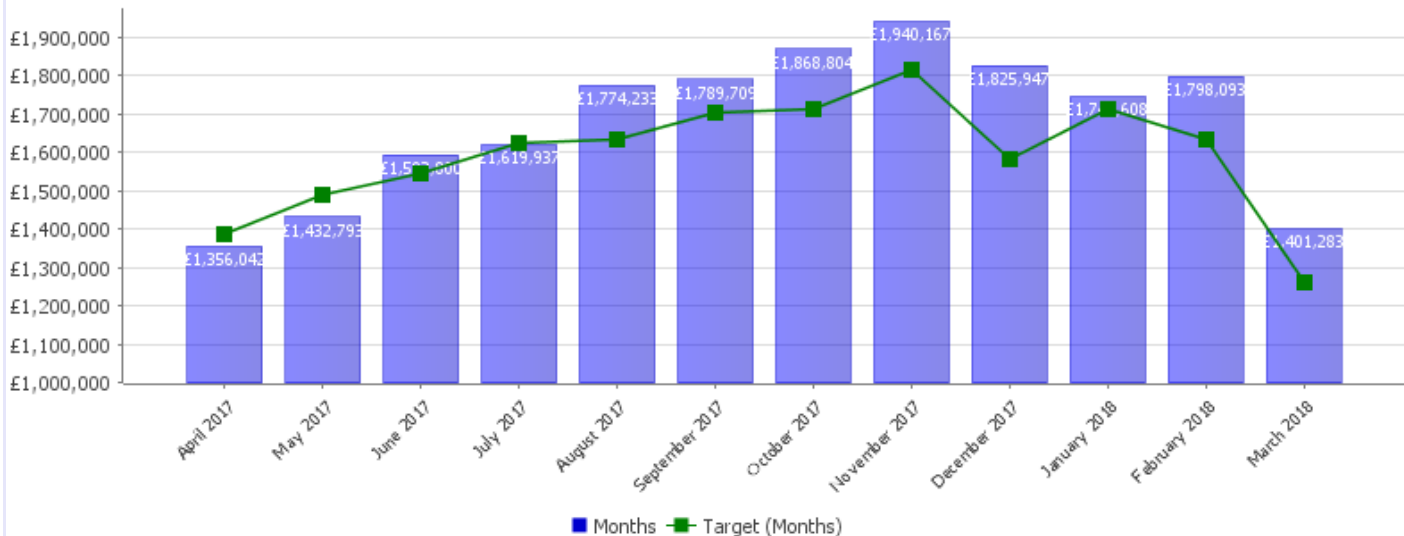
HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

Date of Meeting: 8th May 2018

2

Services for the Community PDSP

1

PI Code & Short Name	P:BUS002_6b.5 Percentage of Housing Repairs completed to timescale.		PI Owner	zBUS_PIAdmin; Grant Taylor
Description	This performance indicator information is taken from our repairs system. The system records all repair types and measures those jobs we have completed within the agreed timescales. The repair types include emergency, non-emergency repairs, gas repairs and the council's out of hours emergency service. Timescale can vary from 24 hours for an emergency repair to 15 days for a routine repair. Building Services has an expected Target of 95% for this performance indicator.		Data Collection Officer	Duncan MacPherson
Linked PIs			Gauge Format Type	Aim to Maximise
			Last Update	Q4 2017/18
			Traffic Light Icon	✓
			Current Value	96.4%
			Current Target	95%

Percentage of Housing Repairs completed to timescale.

Q1 2016/17: 97.36%
Q2 2016/17: 97.75%
Q3 2016/17: 98.06%
Q4 2016/17: 98.3%
Q1 2017/18: 97.48%
Q2 2017/18: 95.73%
Q3 2017/18: 95.02%
Q4 2017/18: 96.4%

■ Quarters ─■─ Target (Quarters)

Trend Chart Commentary:

The trend chart shows that the performance since quarter 1 in 2016/17 has exceeded target for each quarter. In quarter 3 2017/18 we reviewed the process for repairs as a result of a decline in performance over quarter 1 - 3 of 2017/18. The impact has been shown with an improved performance in quarter 4.

The target of 95% is derived from discussion with Buildings Services and the Tenant's Panel with adherence to the Building Services Management Plan. This target is reviewed on a yearly basis.

In 2016/17 the Scottish Housing Network (SHN) average for the year was 95.03% for similar sized Local Authorities of which we were placed 4th highest of the 8 providing data.

In 2015/16 the Scottish Housing Network (SHN) average for the year was 92.43% for similar sized Local Authorities of which we were placed 3rd highest of the 8 providing data.

Notes on Latest Data Entry

11-Apr-2018 The performance for quarter four has met target. In quarter four Building Services completed 10131 housing responsive repairs, 365 of these repairs were completed outside the service standards timescale. Overall four repair categories make up this indicator, with the exception of Routine Repairs achieving target. Continued analysis of routine repairs is underway to identify where improvements can be made.

Emergency repairs - quarter four 100% - target 97%
Routine repairs - quarter three 88.70% - target 95%
Gas repairs - quarter three 99.95% - target 97%
Standby repairs - quarter three 100.00% - target 97%

2

PI Code & Short Name	P:BUS005_6a.7 Percentage of customers who are satisfied with the overall housing repair service.	PI Owner	zBUS_PIAdmin; Grant Taylor
Description	This performance indicator reports on the percentage of customers who gave a positive response on their experience with the overall housing repair service they received. Customers are asked to complete a customer survey once the repair has been carried out. The survey information is captured by paper surveys, personal digital assistants PDA or a number of customers are contacted by our customer contact centre. This indicator is the number of respondents who chose 'a positive response, as in Very and Fairly satisfied, as a percentage of the overall responses. Measuring customer satisfaction helps ensure that we continue to provide an excellent repairs and maintenance service that meets tenants' expectations. The results are analysed to identify improvements to the way the service is delivered to customers. In 2013/14 as part of the introduction of Scottish Housing Charter Building Services now report customer satisfaction using the 5 point scale responses. The categories are, Very satisfied, Fairly Satisfied, Neither or, Fairly Dissatisfied, Very Dissatisfied.	Data Collection Officer	Duncan MacPherson

Percentage of customers who are satisfied with the overall housing repair service.

Q1 2016/17: 100%
Q2 2016/17: 100%
Q3 2016/17: 96.75%
Q4 2016/17: 97.51%
Q1 2017/18: 98.53%
Q2 2017/18: 98.09%
Q3 2017/18: 98.23%
Q4 2017/18: 98.03%

Legend: ■ Quarters — ■ Target (Quarters)

Last Update	Q4 2017/18
Traffic Light Icon	⚠
Current Value	98.03%
Current Target	99%

Trend Chart Commentary
The trend chart shows from quarter 3 2016/17 the target has not been met although since quarter 1 2017/18 the satisfaction has exceeded 98%.
The new Mobile System was introduced in Quarter 3 2016/17 which has meant that more Customer surveys are being recorded directly from the Customers during the repair process. The results have shown an increase from around 100 respondents prior to the new system to around 1500 respondents after the implementation. In addition there has been over 200 paper copy surveys returned by Tenants who have not wanted to complete the survey at the time of repair.
In 2016/17 the Scottish Housing Network average customer satisfaction figure for a comparable medium sized Local Authority was 84.1%. Surveys are being monitored to investigate negative responses to assess their relativity to the repairs processes. As a result the service has recently implemented new customer communication cards to assist with the improvements. The repair teams analyse all feedback and arrange to contact all customers who provide non positive responses to discuss ways of improving the service.
The target of 99% is derived from discussion with Buildings Services and the Tenant's Panel with adherence to the Building Services Management Plan. For 2018/19 the target has been agreed at 98% and is reviewed on a yearly basis.

Notes on Latest Data Entry	16-Apr-2018 In quarter four the performance did not meet target. 914 surveys were recorded for quarter four. 18 responses indicated that they were very dissatisfied, fairly dissatisfied or neither with the housing repairs service. The repair teams are continually monitoring the returns to improve the service delivery to our customers.

3

PI Code & Short Name	CP:HAS008_9b Number of new build social houses completed by Housing Association partners in West Lothian.	PI Owner	zHS_PIAdmin; Colin Miller
Description	This indicators provides information on the number of new social rented properties built by our partner landlords.	Data Collection Officer	Colin Miller
Linked PIs		Gauge Format Type	Aim to Maximise

Number of new build social houses completed by Housing Association partners in West Lothian.

	Last Update	2017/18
	Traffic Light Icon	✓
	Current Value	21
	Current Target	21

Trend Chart Commentary

The number of new build completions by registered social landlords (RSLs) varies from year to year and depends on the amount of Government subsidy available and how this is allocated between RSLs new build programmes and the council housing programme. Over the performance period, RSL completions increased from 2012/13 until 2013/14, but declined for the next two years as much of the Government funding was directed at the WLC new build programme. The number of completions in 2015/16 was below target as one development at Whitburn did not complete until April 2016.
The number of completions in 2016/17 rose to 61 and the target for the year was met.
The target of 21 RSL completions for 2017/18 was met.

An increase in RSL completions is forecast from 2018/19.

Notes on Latest Data Entry	03-Jan-2018 The target of 21 completed units for 2017/18 has been met. 9 units were completed at Forth Drive, Livingston and 12 units were completed at Fouldshields, Stoneyburn.

4

PI Code & Short Name	**HQSARR603_9b.1a The total amount of current tenant debt across all tenures**		PI Owner	zHQSARR_PIAdmin; Alison Smith
Description	This performance indicator monitors the total amount of rent arrears. This is the sum of mainstream, all temporary tenancies and garage arrears.		**Data Collection Officer**	HC&BS Housing Managers
Linked PIs			**Gauge Format Type**	Aim to Minimise

HQSARR603_9b.1a The total amount of current tenant debt across all tenures

Chart values:
- April 2017: £1,356,042
- May 2017: £1,432,793
- June 2017: £1,592,800
- July 2017: £1,619,937
- August 2017: £1,774,233
- September 2017: £1,789,709
- October 2017: £1,868,804
- November 2017: £1,940,167
- December 2017: £1,825,947
- January 2018: £1,744,608
- February 2018: £1,798,093
- March 2018: £1,401,283

Legend: ■ Months — Target (Months)

Last Update	March 2018
Traffic Light Icon	🔴
Current Value	£1,401,283
Current Target	£1,261,900

Trend Chart Commentary:
The level of rent arrears varies considerably through the year, but follows a similar pattern from one year to the next. Using the trend information from this chart, we see that arrears generally increase over the summer holiday months and after Christmas and decrease during the non charge rental weeks in December and March.

In March 2018 performance for current arrears across all tenures was £1,401,283 which is £396,810 below the previous month however is £139,383 over the set target. During April 2018 targets will be reviewed and set taking into consideration performance to date and the impact Universal Credit planned to be introduced in May 2018 will likely have on arrears levels.

In February 2018 performance for current arrears across all tenures was £1,798,093 which is up by £53,485 on previous month and is £161,976 over the target. Continued focused activity on income management as we work towards year end.

In January 2018 performance for current arrears across all tenures was £1,744,608 which is £32,412 over the target. Continued focus on income management monitoring and activity as we work towards year end.

Notes on Latest Data Entry

11-Apr-2018 The figure for March 2018 decreased by £396,810 on the February 2018 figure and above the set target by £139,383.

5

In December 2017 total amount of current arrears across all tenures was £1,825,947, which is £243,171 above target. Ongoing weekly monitoring continues as per the income and welfare reform activity and action plans.

In November 2017 the revised targets were put in place for this indicator. In this month the total amount of current arrears across all tenures was £1,940,167 which was £125,858 above target.

In October 2017 performance was £1,814,930 which was £100,547 above the set target.

In September 2017 performance was £1,819,228 which was £114,812 above the target set.

In August 2017 performance was £1,799,392 which was £163,692 above the target set.

In July 2017 performance was £1,650,222 which was £27,502 above the target set.

The June 2017 performance was £1,626,186. This is £80,240 above the target set.

The May 2017 performance was £1,477,163. This is an increase of £84,613 from the April 2017 figure.
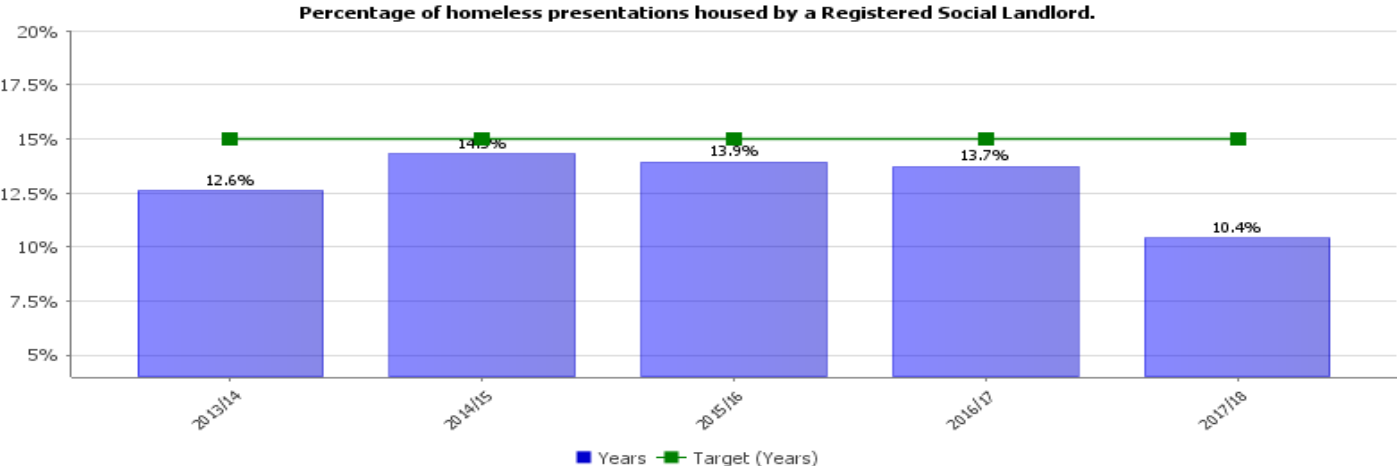
The target is set to vary throughout the year based of the previous year's performance and to reflect our understanding of the trend pattern. The targets have been set with the aim to reduce arrears. The targets were reviewed in September 2017 and revised targets were agreed from November 2017 onwards.

The percentage of tenants in serious arrears has increased which is reflective of the current economic downturn and the hardship our tenants are experiencing due to reduced income levels and welfare reform. Our focus is to sustain people in their homes by ensuring support and assistance is provided and where possible income is maximised. The service has a robust arrears process and this is why, despite our increase in arrears levels, according to the returns relating to arrears in the Scottish Social Housing Charter, we still compare favourably with other Registered Social Landlords.

6

PI Code & Short Name	P:HQSHOM031_9a2a Percentage of repeat homeless presentations.	PI Owner	zHQSHOM_PIAdmin; AnnMarie Carr; Laura Harris
Description	Percentage of same households who are assessed as homeless within 12 months of previously being assessed as homeless. This indicator includes both homeless households to whom we have a duty to provide permanent accommodation and those to whom we have a duty to provide temporary accommodation. This information is used to monitor the services levels of repeat applications and ensure it is seeking suitable appropriate sustainable outcomes.	Data Collection Officer	Iain Mclean
Linked PIs		Gauge Format Type	Aim to Minimise
		Last Update	2017/18
		Traffic Light Icon	✅
		Current Value	2.1%
		Current Target	3%

Percentage of repeat homeless presentations.

Year	Value
2013/14	1.5%
2014/15	2%
2015/16	1.4%
2016/17	1.7%
2017/18	2.1%

Target (Years): 3%

■ Years ─■─ Target (Years)

Trend Chart Commentary: (17/18 TCC to be confirmed)

In 2016/17 repeat applications rose to 1.7% this equates to 18 households. This is a reduction from previous year however remains under the target of 3% and compares favourably to the peer average of 5.2% and national average of 5.5%. Target will remain at 3%.
There has been a significant reduction in repeat homeless presentations from 2011/12 to 2015/16 due to the focussed work undertaken by the Housing Needs Service. Following verification from the Scottish Government, the 2015/16 figure identifies 1.4% repeat homeless presentations. This is an improvement of 0.6% on the previous year and has exceeded our target of 3%. This compares to the Scottish average of 5.8 % and 5.9% average for our Scotland housing network peer group.
The 2014/15 figure identifies a slight increase of 0.5% on the previous year with 22 cases where applications were accepted as repeat applications, having been assessed as having undergone a material change in circumstances. This compares to the Scottish average of 5.7% and 5.4% average for our Scotland housing network peer group.

The 2013/14 figure demonstrated an improvement on the 2012/13 figure with repeat applications reducing by 1.6%.

Notes on Latest Data Entry	

7

PI Code & Short Name	**P:HQSHOM034_9b The proportion of priority, unintentionally homeless applicants for whom permanent accommodation was secured.**	PI Owner	zHQSHOM_PIAdmin; AnnMarie Carr; Laura Harris
Description	This indicator measures the percentage of homeless cases that are found permanent accommodation that the service has a statutory duty to provide. The aim is to exceed the target and maximise the percentage of homeless cases that are found permanent accommodation.	Data Collection Officer	Iain Mclean
Linked PIs		Gauge Format Type	Aim to Maximise

Last Update	2017/18
Traffic Light Icon	✅
Current Value	78%
Current Target	69%

Trend Chart Commentary: (17/18 TCC to be confirmed)

In 2016/17, 708 customers were assessed as priority, unintentionally homeless and 608 secured permanent accommodation. The proportion of priority, unintentionally homeless applicants for whom permanent accommodation was secured was 77.3%, which was an increase of 4.95% from the previous year. The target of 69% was met. Given the achievement of the 2016/17 target the target for 17/18 has been increased to 77%

In 2015/16, 737 customers were assessed as priority, unintentionally homeless and 534 secured permanent accommodation. The proportion of priority, unintentionally homeless applicants for whom permanent accommodation was secured was 72.4%, which was a decrease of 4.5% from the previous year. However, we have continuously met our target for the past five years and remain above the Scottish national average in 2015/16 of 67%.

Notes on Latest Data Entry	18-Apr-2018 1053 outcomes recorded for those assessed as unintentionally homeless 823 of which accepted a scottish secure tenancy= 78%

8

Performance in 2014/15 increased from the previous year, to 76.9%. This upward trend is a continuation of improving trends over a five year period with increasing numbers of applicants securing and sustaining settled accommodation. This compares favourably with the Scottish national average of 73% (of all applications made where contact was maintained through to completion of case regardless of decision on application). This increasing trend where unintentional households have accepted council and RSL permanent accommodation offered is as a result of the councils policy of ensuring applicants are offered accommodation which meets their needs and is sustainable.		

9

PI Code & Short Name	**HQSHOM037_9b.1a Percentage of homeless presentations housed by a Registered Social Landlord.**	**PI Owner**	zHQSHOM_PIAdmin; AnnMarie Carr; Laura Harris
Description	Percentage of people who apply as homeless where the final outcome is that they are housed by a Housing Association. This indicator measures the number of homeless applicants where the outcome was RSL tenancy against number of total applications rather than those assessed as unintentionally homeless.	**Data Collection Officer**	Iain Mclean
Linked PIs		**Gauge Format Type**	Aim to Maximise

	Last Update	2017/18
	Traffic Light Icon	🔴
	Current Value	10.4%
	Current Target	15%

Trend Chart Commentary: (17/18 TCC to be confirmed) In 2016/17 performance reduced by 0.3%. 154 houses were allocated in 2016/17 and 153 in 2015/16 however there was a greater amount of cases closed in 2016/17. Peer group average is 16.1% and national average is 22.8%. The service aims to increase this indicator and reach the target but this is also dependant on the level of properties RSLs have available for let. Performance for previous years from 2012/13 through to 2015/16 has fluctuated from 13.5% - 13.9%. These continuing fluctuations are as a result of the changing numbers of properties RSL's have availability for let each year. **2016/17** 13.7% of 1126 cases received a Scottish Secure RSL tenancy (154) **2015/16** 13.9% of 1104 cases received a Scottish Secure RSL tenancy (153) **2014/15** 14.3% of 1403 cases received a Scottish Secure RSL tenancy (201) **2013/14** 12.6% of 1314 cases received a Scottish Secure RSL tenancy (166) **2012/13** 13.5% of 1397 cases received a Scottish Secure RSL tenancy (188) **Target 15%** **Peer group:** Aberdeenshire, Dundee, East Ayrshire, Falkirk, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, The Highlands, West Dunbartonshire.	**Notes on Latest Data Entry**	18-Apr-2018 1530 applications in 17/18 836 outcomes secured SST - of this 677 were LA SST 159 RSI SST. Therefore 10.4% of all applications resulted in an SST from a RSL

10

PI Code & Short Name	HQSLETS001_9b Average length of time taken to re-let mainstream properties		PI Owner	zHQSLETS_PIAdmin; Alison Smith
Description	This performance indicator calculates the average length of time, in calendar days, to re-let a mainstream property in West Lothian.		Data Collection Officer	HC&BS Housing Managers
Linked PIs	HQSLETS002_9b; HQSLETS003_9b		Gauge Format Type	Aim to Minimise

Average length of time taken to re-let mainstream properties

Values shown: March 2017 18.73, April 2017 18.8, May 2017 17.56, June 2017 21.06, July 2017 17.88, August 2017 21.63, September 2017 16.4, October 2017 17.9, November 2017 20.41, December 2017 21.47, January 2018 35.52, February 2018 25.39, March 2018 23.98

Legend: ■ Months ─■─ Target (Months)

Last Update	March 2018
Traffic Light Icon	✅
Current Value	23.98
Current Target	24

The 2017/18 target has been set at 24 days. This is based on an improvement on the previous year's performance, which was 25 days.

In March 2018 (23.98) is an improvement on the previous month in the number of days to let a property and is just under the set target of 24. The average time taken is currently showing 23 days however this will be confirmed once the year end reconciliation processes are completed. The target for 2018-19 will be reviewed and set thereafter.

In February 2018 (25.4) is an improvement on the previous month in the number of days to let a property however slightly above the set target of 24 and significantly higher than the (18.3) reported in February 2017. Service continues to closely monitor void performance and working with Building Services to have houses repaired and let as quickly as possible.

In January 2018 (35.5), significant increase in the average number of days to let a property from the previous month, and significantly higher than (30.1) reported in January 2017. On reviewing the void situation with area housing managers and Building Services manager the key reasons for the increase is attributed to no one single factor but key points highlighted are - an increase time this period for fabric surveys, refusal of properties and time to re- allocate, resources over December and festive period that

Notes on Latest Data Entry

11-Apr-2018 In March 2018 49 mainstream properties were re-let and these properties were empty for a total of 1175 days. Therefore it took 23.98 days to relet in this month. There has been an improvement on the previous month and is just under the set target of 24 days. Ongoing monitoring and joint working continues with colleagues in Construction Services, Building Services and Allocations.

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resulted in vacant houses taking longer to be dealt with under repair and to be let. January also saw a spell of poor weather conditions that restricted staff to progress with void activity. Joint meetings held to regularly review void position ongoing.

In December 2017 (21.4) slight increase however below target set.

In November 2017 (20.4) further increase on previous 2 months however performance continues to be acceptable and below set target

In October 2017 (17.9) slight increase however figure performing well against target.

In September 2017 (16.4) is the lowest figure reported since this performance indicator was established.

In August 2017 (21.6) saw a slight increase in the average number of lets but performance continues to be acceptable and below the set target.

In July 2017 (17.8) average number of days to let reduced on previous month and below set target

In June 2017 a slight increase in the number of days taken to let (21) however remains below set target

In May 2017 (17.5) reported being below the target set with housing teams and building services working together to have houses let as quickly as possible.

In April 2017, 54 mainstream properties were re-let. These properties were empty for a total of 1,015 days. It took an average of 18.8 days to re-let properties in April. This is 5.2 days below our monthly target.

In 2016/17, we performed well in this measure compared to other landlords. In this year we reported an average time of 25.55 days, compared to the Scottish average of 31.54 days and our Scotland's Housing Network Peer Group average of 40.48 days. The most recent benchmarking information is based on 2017/18 quarter 3 year-to-date performance - in which WLC has an average of 19.27 days and (based on the 4 landlords submitting performance) our Scotland's Housing Network Peer Group average of 27.73 days.

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SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES MANAGEMENT PLAN 2018/19

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER, AND BUILDING SERVICES

A.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report introduces the 2018/19 Management Plan for Housing, Customer, and Building Services, which is provided as an appendix.

B.   RECOMMENDATION

That the Panel considers the plan and provides comment as appropriate.

C.   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	• Focusing on our customers' needs; • Being honest, open and accountable; • Providing equality of opportunities; • Making best use of resources; • Developing our employees; and • Working in partnership.
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	None.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None.
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	The plan sets targets for high level performance indicators for 2018/19.
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	The activities within the Management Plan are closely linked to the overall Single Outcome Agreement and revised Corporate Plan.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	The Management Plan sets out the financial and staffing resources required to deliver the activities and objectives of Housing, Customer and Building Services in 2018/19.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	N/A
VIII	**Other consultations**	Service employees and senior management.

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D. TERMS OF REPORT

In accordance with council procedures, Housing, Customer, and Building Services have produced a service Management Plan for the forthcoming financial year. The Management Plan takes account of the Corporate Plan, the efficiency agenda, and the agreed level of budgetary provision.

The Management Plan sets out the work that the service will undertake in this role during the 2018/19 financial year. The plan also provides a summary of the work undertaken in previous years and the improvements achieved by the service. It will act as the control document against which the service will monitor progress during 2018/19.

Tenant representatives are consulted on the service performance targets and actions as part of our ongoing consultation and performance reporting arrangements.

E. CONCLUSION

The Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan enables focus for the work of the service during the year. Its delivery will ensure the service continues to deliver high quality, efficient services to our customers and will contribute to the strategic aims of the council, enabling the council to meet its obligations.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendices/Attachments: 1 - Housing, Building and Customer Services Management Plan 2018/19

Contact Person: **kenny.selbie@westlothian.gov.uk** 01506 281072

Alistair Shaw
HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

Date of Meeting: 8th May 2018

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transforming yourcouncil

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2018/19

West Lothian Council
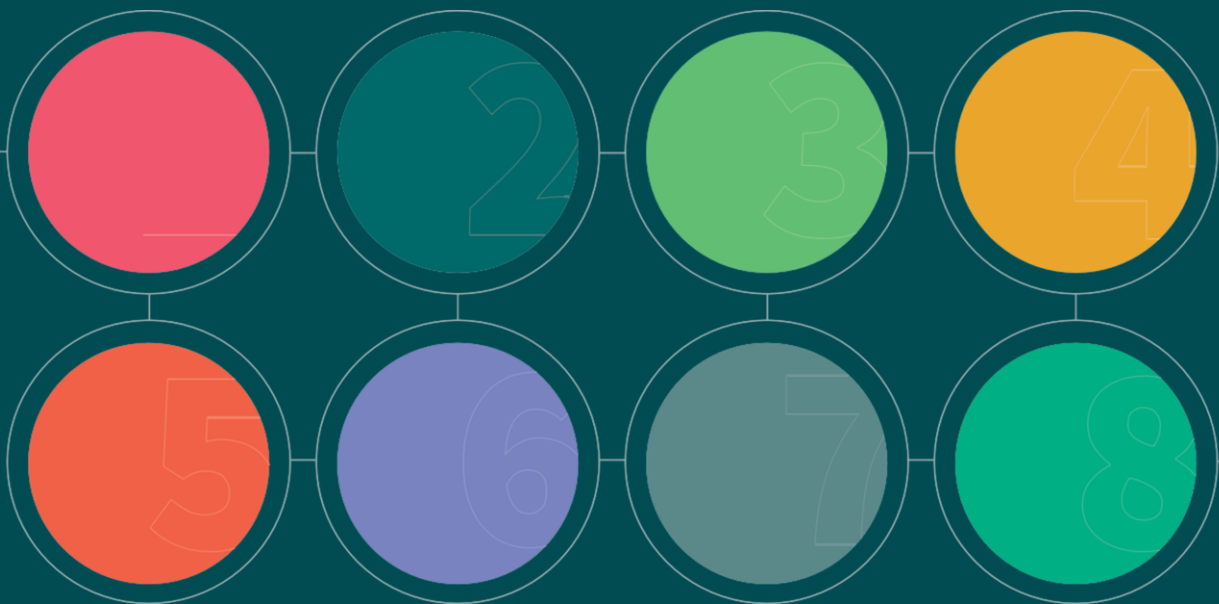
An introduction to the Management Plan from the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services

The Management Plan is a key planning document that will explain how the service will support in the delivery of the council's eight priorities in 2018/19

West Lothian Council is one of the top performing local authorities in Scotland, with a strong track record of delivering better outcomes for local people. Housing, Customer and Building Services play a key part in that performance, by developing and deploying corporate strategies aimed at improving the quality of life for people in West Lothian. Customer and Community Services form an integral part of our deployment through frontline service provision. With financial and demographic challenges ahead, the service will further integrate our services to create a seamless offering to customers, focusing on those most in need.

In Housing, Customer and Building Services we provide a wide range of services which contribute to positive outcomes in the eight corporate priorities (see below) through provision of operational housing management; strategy and development, repairs and maintenance, homelessness and housing need; customer contact and frontline services within the community.

Corporate Priorities 2018/23 | The council re-committed to eight ambitious priorities following a large public consultation in 2017/18. We believe these priorities will continue to support improvement in the quality of life for everyone living, working and learning in West Lothian and will be the focus for council services, resources and staff in the next five years.

1. IMPROVING ATTAINMENT AND POSITIVE DESTINATIONS
2. DELIVERING POSITIVE OUTCOMES AND EARLY INTERVENTIONS FOR EARLY YEARS
3. MINIMISING POVERTY, THE CYCLE OF DEPRIVATION AND PROMOTING EQUALITY
4. IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR OLDER PEOPLE
5. IMPROVING THE EMPLOYMENT POSITION IN WEST LOTHIAN
6. DELIVERING POSITIVE OUTCOMES ON HEALTH
7. REDUCING CRIME AND IMPROVING COMMUNITY SAFETY
8. PROTECTING THE BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

In support of the Corporate Plan 2018/23 and the eight priorities, we will continue to strive to improve the quality and value of our services.

Housing, Customer and Building Services will provide quality, sustainable housing and building functions as well as efficient and effective customer and community services. We will work with our customers and tenants, partners and with other council services to promote continuous improvement and transformation of our services.

This management plan fulfils a number of planning and improvement requirements and importantly, it sets out how the service will use its resources to deliver positive outcomes for West Lothian and deliver efficiencies of £2.528M over the next five years. It is the result of a detailed planning process to make sure that council services are well planned and managed. I hope that it will help our customers, employees and partners to understand how we will transform our services and continue to deliver for West Lothian.

Alistair Shaw
Head of Service

1

Our services

The services that we will deliver through collaboration with our partners in 2018/19

Housing, Customer and Building Services are a key player in developing and deploying corporate strategies aimed at improving the quality of life for all people in West Lothian. In the next five years the service will continue to support the delivery of the council's eight key priorities with value adding activities and will also assist in the delivery of the council's transformation programme through:

◆ Continuing to deliver on and prioritise our ambitious programme to Increase the supply of new affordable homes with the aim of delivering 3000 affordable homes over a 10 year period to 2022.

◆ Increasing the supply of new tenancies where individuals are supported to live sustainability, supporting improved outcomes.

◆ Delivering compliance with the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing by 2020 to improve council homes and help tackle fuel poverty.

◆ Continuing to reduce anti-social behaviour through a range of targeted, preventative, diversionary and educational interventions.

◆ Continuing to provide high quality customer services and facilities that are accessible and tailored to meet the needs and preferences of customers within our communities

◆ Continuing to provide high quality repairs and maintenance services to meet the needs of our tenants.

The key activities of the service are identified in the Management Plan.

2

Supporting the delivery of Council priorities

The service will support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities and strategies

The service will make a meaningful and measurable contribution to the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan 2018/23. The service's key processes are aligned to the Corporate Plan priorities/enablers and deliverables in the following table.

Alignment with Corporate Priorities / Enablers					
Council priority / enabler	Deliverable	Housing, Customer and Building Services key activities / processes	Indicator(s)	2017/18 Performance	2018/19 Target
3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	(P3.4) Increasing the supply of affordable housing through the New Build Council Housing Programme and working with Housing Association partners. By facilitating an increase of 3,000 affordable homes over a 10-year period to 2022, we will provide greater choice in communities where people want to live. HCBS also contributes to the wider anti-poverty activity of the council through: budgeting and tenancy support; homelessness activity; and community facilities and customer engagement.	◆ Work with partners to deliver new build and increased supply of social housing, implementing the Local Housing Strategy and Strategic Housing Investment Plan.	◆ HS014 - Cumulative Number of New Build Council Houses Completed.	305	350
7 Reducing crime and improving community safety	(P7.1) Through the Community Safety Unit (CSU), sharing intelligence and daily multi agency tasking, to allow smarter and earlier interventions, thereby preventing crimes and escalation of incidents within the communities. Dependent on future planning in terms of transformation and police plan review.	◆ Management and implementation of Community Safety Unit activities and processes to support early intervention. Future planning related to transformation and police plan review.	◆ CP:HQS080 - Number of active antisocial cases.	864	840

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Alignment with Corporate Priorities / Enablers

Council priority / enabler	Deliverable	Housing, Customer and Building Services key activities / processes	Indicator(s)	2017/18 Performance	2018/19 Target
7 Reducing crime and improving community safety	(P7.2) Reducing antisocial behaviour and hate crime within our communities and ensuring that violence within our communities is not tolerated through a range of targeted preventative, diversionary and educational interventions.	◆ Management of Community Safety Unit activities and processes to support preventative, diversionary and educational interventions. Future planning related to transformation and police plan review.	◆ CP:HQSARC19 - Percentage of anti-social behaviour cases which were resolved within locally agreed targets.	Available May 2018	75%
7 Reducing crime and improving community safety	(P7.3) Sharing information intelligence, joint tasking and coordinating resources to prevent instances of and target, disrupt and deter those involved in serious and organised crime.	◆ Management of Community Safety Unit activities and processes to support coordination and sharing of resources. Future planning related to transformation and police plan review.	◆ CSSP3ASBHC05 – Percentage of customers satisfied with Safer Neighbourhood Team involvement.	Available May 2018	75%
8 Protecting the built and natural environment	(P8.2) Helping people to access housing appropriate to their needs by supporting them to sustain their accommodation. Repairing, maintaining, improving energy efficiency to meet national standards and building social housing.	◆ Management action to reduce homelessness. Improve how we work with people with complex needs. Increase supply of temporary accommodation. Increase access to the range of permanent outcomes. ◆ Implement the five-year capital programme to 2022/23, ensuring compliance with the Energy Efficiency Standard for Scotland (EESSH).	◆ P:HQSHOM031 - Percentage of repeat homeless presentations. ◆ P:HQSARC25.10 - Average length of time (days) in temporary or emergency accommodation - All Types. ◆ SOA1308_21 – Percentage of West Lothian Council Housing stock compliant with Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH).	2.1% Available May 2018 Available May 2018	3% 65 days 60%

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Alignment with Corporate Priorities / Enablers

Council priority / enabler	Deliverable	Housing, Customer and Building Services key activities / processes	Indicator(s)	2017/18 Performance	2018/19 Target
8 Protecting the built and natural environment	(P8.3) Working with private landlords through the Private Sector Leasing Scheme to ensure that housing need can be met in a planned manner and that we maximise the supply of affordable housing.	◆ Management action to reduce homelessness. Improve how we work with people with complex needs. Increase supply of temporary accommodation. Increase access to the range of permanent outcomes.	◆ P:HQSHOM031 - Percentage of repeat homeless presentations. ◆ P:HQSARC25.105 - Average length of time in temporary or emergency accommodation - All Types.	2.1% Available May 2018	2% 65
8 Protecting the built and natural environment	(P8.6) Providing high quality customer services and community facilities that are accessible and tailored to meet the needs and preferences of customers.	◆ Delivery of Armadale, Blackburn, East Calder and Whitburn Partnership Centres including new library provision, ensuring customers have improved access to council and partner services in local communities.	◆ CuCS007a - Customer and Communities - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent.	99.3%	98%
Modernisation and improvement	(E3.1) Providing our local communities with excellent services, looking for new and innovative ways to improve the way we plan, manage and deliver services.	◆ Development, implementation and ongoing monitoring and reporting of the council's Customer Service Strategy. ◆ CSC – Implement the use of new technologies to enhance customer service.	◆ New suite of indicators will be included in updated Strategy. ◆ CSC059a - Customer Service Centre (CSC) - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent.	Available on publication of Customer Service Strategy July 2018 96.99%	A number of PIs measuring satisfaction, complaints, efficiency 97%

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Alignment with Corporate Priorities / Enablers

Council priority / enabler	Deliverable	Housing, Customer and Building Services key activities / processes	Indicator(s)	2017/18 Performance	2018/19 Target
Modernisation and improvement	(E3.2) Ensuring that service provision is designed and delivered to meet local needs and that service improvements are customer-led and outcome focused.	◆ Implementation of the Tenant Participation Strategy, jointly developed with council tenants to ensure the service is engaging with customers in service development and change. ◆ Development, implementation and ongoing monitoring and reporting of the council's Customer Service Strategy.	◆ HQSARC06 - Percentage of tenants that are satisfied with the opportunities given to them to participate in Housing and Building Services decisions making processes. ◆ New suite of indicators will be included in updated Strategy.	65.4% Available on publication of Customer Service Strategy July 2018	72% A number of PIs measuring satisfaction, complaints, efficiency
Modernisation and improvement	(E3.3) Giving our communities a voice in the shaping of services, helping to build a stronger, more responsive organisation.	◆ Implementation of the Tenant Participation Strategy, jointly developed with council tenants to ensure the service is engaging with customers in service development and change. ◆ Delivery of Armadale, Blackburn, East Calder and Whitburn Partnership Centres, ensuring customers have improved access to council and partner services in local communities.	◆ HQSARC06 - Percentage of tenants that are satisfied with the opportunities given to them to participate in Housing and Building Services decisions making processes. ◆ CuCS007a - Customer and Communities - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent.	Available April 2018 99.3%	Increase based on 17/18 result 98%

6

Transforming Your Council

How Housing, Customer and Building Services will transform in the next five years

The council will embark on an ambitious programme of transformation in order to support the delivery of services that are accessible, digital and efficient. The Transforming Your Council programme is intended to deliver over £65.3 million in savings and will fundamentally change the way that council services are delivered.

Digital transformation is a critical element going forward for the future structure and delivery of Housing, Customer and Building Services. As far as is possible, the Service aims to deliver efficient systems, automation, customer self-service and improved business intelligence solutions to maximise business efficiency and effectiveness. This will enhance the customer experience and consistency in day-to-day decisions and service provision, while enabling shift of focus for employee resources to complex cases and value adding service development and improvement activity. Projects designed to deliver budget savings are being developed to transform the way that we work in Housing, Customer and Building Services.

Transformation in the service will be grouped around three key themes.

Reviewing service activities	Digital transformation and new ways of working	Empowering Communities
There are opportunities to review and modernise antisocial behaviour activity to ensure we are more efficient and effective. By redesigning and integrating the work we deliver in partnership with others, we can ensure our priorities are targeted, and make best use of resources. We will also review the core taks and operational activity within our community facilities and Libraries and Information Service to ensure we continue to achieve value for money, efficiencies, and meet the changing demands of our service users and communities.	As far as is possible, the Service aims to deliver efficient systems, automation, customer self-service and improved business intelligence solutions to maximise business efficiency and effectiveness. This will enhance the customer experience and consistency in day-to-day decisions and service provision, while enabling shift of focus for employee resources to complex cases and value adding service development and improvement activity.	We will work together with management committees and community groups to enable them to take advantage of the opportunities available to them through the provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. This aim will see the service work in partnership with other services to build capacity, knowledge and resilience in our local communities to enable them to have greater control over community facilities and assets.

Engagement methods

Throughout the period of this plan, the Service will continue to engage and consult with customers, employees, partners and stakeholders on the effectiveness of the services that we provide and also, any changes that are proposed to the offering. Details of planned engagement and consultation methods will be provided in the annual update to the Management Plan.
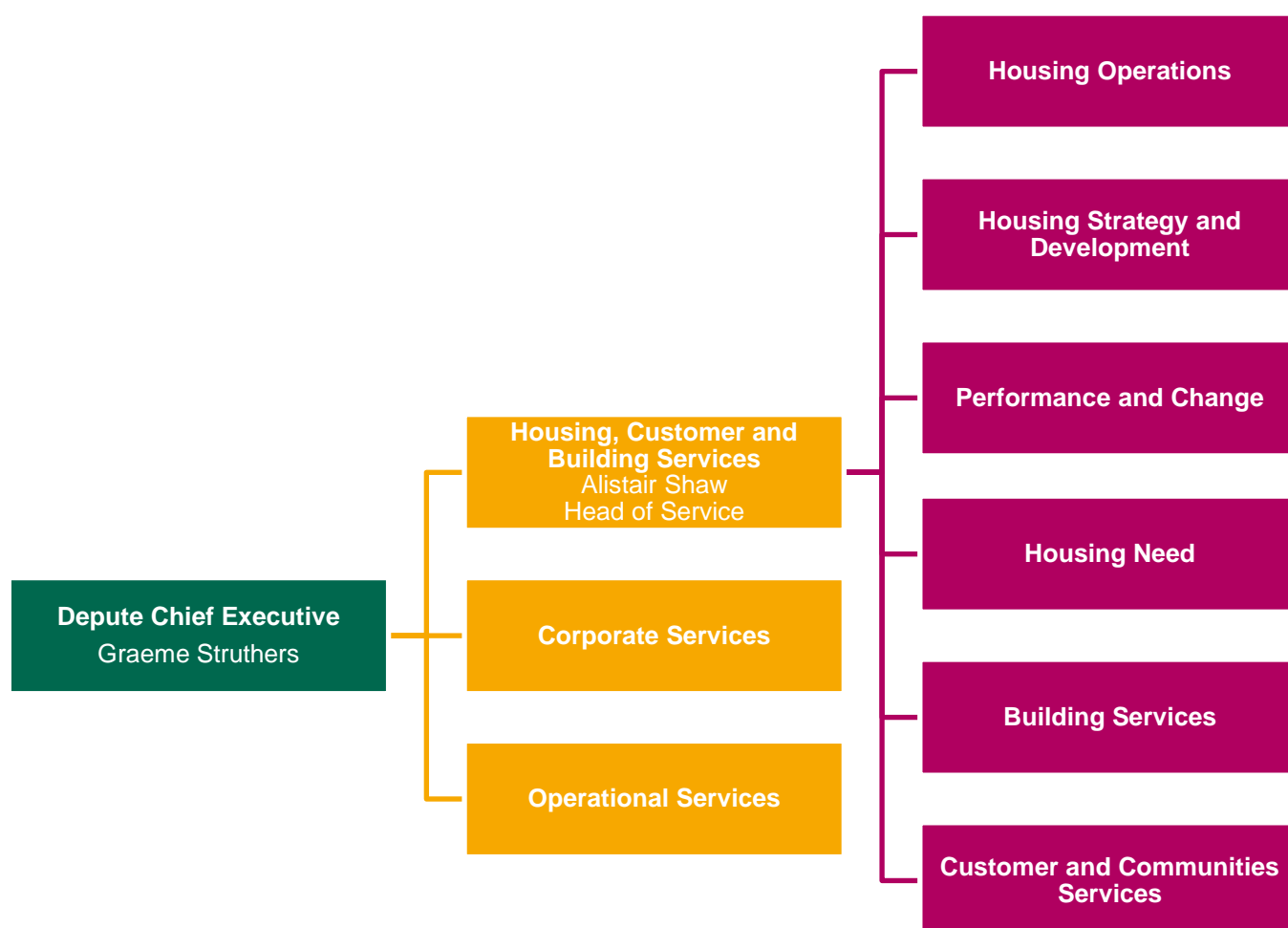
Housing, Customer and Building Services make the following commitments to customers, employees and partners:

◆ Involve and engage employees, customers and partners in service improvement and transformation activity through a range of appropriate methods;

◆ Ask customers about the quality and effectiveness of the services that we provide through regular consultation and surveys and use their views to inform decision making in the service.

7

Service Activity

The Corporate, Operational and Housing Services directorate is focused on the delivery of vital infrastructure services that will make West Lothian a better, more sustainable place to live.

This includes three large service areas delivering a wide array of council activities, such as; environmental and roads services, the frontline customer and community services, social housing services and the council's support services.

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Depute Chief Executive          Housing, Customer and        Housing Operations
Graeme Struthers                Building Services
                                Alistair Shaw                Housing Strategy and
                                Head of Service              Development

                                Corporate Services           Performance and Change

                                                             Housing Need
                                Operational Services
                                                             Building Services

                                                             Customer and Communities
                                                             Services
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Housing, Customer and Building Services comprises six services – known as West Lothian Assessment Model (WLAM) units, under the direction of the Head of Service. Due to overlapping priorities, Housing Operations, Housing Strategy and Development and Performance and Change are recognised as one WLAM unit for the purposes of corporate activity such as management planning and self-assessment. Customer and Communities Services, includes the Customer Service Centre but is split into two WLAM units to allow closer scrutiny of performance.

The following section provides more information on the activities and resources of each WLAM unit.

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Employee Engagement

Housing, Customer and Building Services has a total of **831.7** (full time equivalent) employees delivering our services.

Motivation and commitment are key drivers of employee performance and the service aims to effectively engage and develop employees through improved communication and increased participation. The service uses the council's employee engagement framework, ensuring that employees have access to the information and support they need to succeed, also that there is constructive, regular two-way communication throughout the service.

The schedule of engagement that will take place in each of our WLAM units is outlined in the table.

Employee Engagement Schedule			
Employee Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer
All employees	Email	Monthly	Service Manager
All employees	One-to-ones	Fortnightly / monthly	Service Manager and service management team
All employees	Team meetings/ briefings	Monthly	Service Manager and service management team
All employees	Team Briefings	Quarterly	Service Manager and service management team
All employees	Employee survey	Annually	Service Manager
All employees	Appraisal and Development Review (ADR)	Annually	Service Manager and service management team
Employee sample	Employee Focus Group	Annually	Service Manager
All employees	Management Plan Launch	Annually	Head of Service / Service Managers
All employees	Circulation of the Housing, Customer and Building Services CMT update report	Monthly	Service Manager
Service management team	Extended Management Team	Quarterly	Head of Service
Service management team	Directorate Managers meeting	Quarterly	Depute Chief Executive

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Housing Operations

Manager:	Alison Smith, Housing Management and Community Safety Manager Colin Miller, Housing Strategy and Development Manager Kenny Selbie, Performance and Change Manager
Number of Staff:	113.3 (full time equivalents)
Locations:	Civic Centre, six local housing offices (plus local surgeries)

Purpose

Housing Operations manages the council's housing stock and tenancies to ensure that this resource, which is in high demand, is used efficiently and effectively. The local housing teams ensure a customer focused service is delivered at the frontline and co-ordinate the implementation of Council policies and procedures in compliance with current legislation, regulation and good practice. The aim is to improve the quality of life for tenants, assist individual households and promote sustainable communities.

The Safer Neighbourhood Team is part of the Community Safety Unit (CSU) and is dedicated to preventing antisocial behaviour and crime ensuring a safer community where people can live their lives without fear for their own or other people's safety. The CSU is made up of council staff, Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and uses a robust intelligence-led approach to dealing with local antisocial behaviour issues and co-ordinates resources to deliver prevention, intervention and diversionary work.

The Housing Strategy and Development team undertakes strategic planning and development for housing in West Lothian. The team promote the development of new affordable housing and improvement of the condition of existing housing.

The service's activities are supported by a small specialist team in the Performance and Change Service to ensure that the outcomes and targets outlined in the Management Plan and the council's strategic priorities are achieved. Support is provided for the service across a range of improvement activities including, quality development, tenant participation, research and analysis, complaints management and systems administration and governance and compliance (e.g. FOIs, subject access requests).

Activities

The main activities of Housing Operations during the period of the Management Plan will be:

◆ Maximising housing rental income including arrears management, taking account of Universal Credit.
◆ Void management and lettings of council properties
◆ Managing tenancies to make the best use of the housing stock
◆ Sustaining tenancies and communities by working in partnership through a multi-agency approach
◆ Reducing antisocial behaviour in conjunction with other partners in the Community Safety Unit
◆ Providing housing information and advice
◆ Encouraging and promoting tenant participation

The main activities of Housing Strategy and Development during the period of the Management Plan will be:

◆ Planning and implementing the council house new build programme

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◆ Co-ordinating the Registered Social Landlord affordable housing new build through the Strategic Local Programme
◆ Co-ordinating and implementing the housing capital improvement programme investment in existing housing stock
◆ Development and maintenance of the Housing Asset Register
◆ Implementing and reviewing the Local Housing Strategy for West Lothian, including housing needs studies
◆ Administering Private Sector Improvement and Repair Grants through the published Scheme of Assistance
◆ Preparing and programming for compliance with EESSH – (Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing) the new legislated standard for all Social Landlords to meet by 2020.
◆ Home Energy Efficiency Programme (HEEPS) – develop programme using in-house staff to improve energy efficiency of our stock and to reduce fuel poverty and carbon emissions through maximising the funding awarded for HEEPS.
◆ Scotland's Energy Efficiency Programme (SEEP) – continue to develop programmes to improve the energy efficiency of our housing stock, as well as owner occupiers, in conjunction with non-domestic properties to reduce energy demand, carbon emissions and fuel poverty in the region.

The main activities of Performance and Change during the period of the Management Plan will be:

◆ Quality development including management planning, performance management and management of service complaints
◆ Service improvement, including facilitating the redesign and integration of services and efficient process management. Ensure compliance with statutory requirements and corporate and external accreditations through a programme of self-assessment and internal scrutiny
◆ Coordinate and monitor surveys and consultations across the service to ensure compliance, provide critical profile information of our customers whilst improving response rates and to ensure efficiency of our collection of customer data
◆ Continue to support the management of UK welfare reform impacts on the service and prepare and support for the implementation of further elements of reform going forward
◆ Delivery of processes and systems to enable service efficiency, continuous improvement and to support digitisation through the development of Open Housing, a diagnostic tool for management of repairs and the Tenants Portal
◆ Provision of ongoing support for new and existing tenants through the implementation of the Tenant Participation Strategy, with specific focus on supporting further service scrutiny through Tenant Led Inspections, and robust financial and performance scrutiny
◆ Administration and process development of the Private Landlord Registration Scheme to encourage a range of good quality, well managed, affordable housing options across all tenures in order to meet housing demand in West Lothian.

Key Partners

The service actively works with our partners to plan, design and deliver improved services for our customers. Our key partners include: other council services, Tenants and Residents, West Lothian Youth Action, Victim Support, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, West Lothian Drug and Alcohol Service (WLDAS), local equality groups, Shelter (Empty Homes Officer), Capita Software Solutions, Scottish Government, Scottish Housing Regulator, Scotland's Housing Network (SHN), Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Hallnet, Chartered Institute of Housing and other local Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).

Customer Participation

The service will actively engage customers and potential customers in the delivery and re-design of services to ensure that they are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.

Customer Consultation Schedule 2018/19				
Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
Tenant representatives	Tenants Panel Meeting	Monthly	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Tenants Panel minutes available
	Tenant Led Inspections	Annual	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Feedback session, Tenants News
	Tenant Participation Development Working Group	On-going	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Tenants News, Tenants Panel, Housing Networks
	Tenants Editorial Panel	As required	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Feedback to authors of published material on views, accessibility and suitability of presentation of information
	Housing Networks	Monthly	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Tenants News, Homeless Networks, Tenants Panel
	Registered Tenant Organisations	Monthly	Housing managers	Reported in Tenants News
Current Tenants	Local Tenants Information Events	Annual	Housing Management & Community Safety Manager	Tenants News, Housing Networks, Tenants Panel
	Annual Tenant Satisfaction survey	Bi-Annual	Performance and Change Manager	Results and what we will do to improve reported to tenant groups, in Tenants News and on the website
	Tenant Facebook Group	On-going	Performance and Change Manager	Tenant feedback to inform policies and initiatives
	Tenant Focus Groups	Annual	Performance and Change Manager	Tenant feedback on specific service issues and processes
New Tenants (lettings survey)	Survey completed during tenancy sign up	On-going	Housing managers	Reported in Tenants News and to tenant groups
Local Housing Strategy stakeholders (tenants, RSLs, private landlords, developers, service users, service providers)	• Quarterly meetings with developing landlords • Annual meetings with other RSLs • Bi-annual Private Sector Landlord's forum and steering group	Quarterly	Housing Strategy and Development Manager	Minutes and updated action plans

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Activity Budget 2018/19

Housing Operations (Housing Revenue Account)								
Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2018/19	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2018/19 £	Revenue Income Budget 2018/19 £	Net Revenue Budget 2018/19 £
Responsive Repairs - Sustaining council housing and communities	To provide repairs, gas servicing and estate management service to our customers that meets their needs	8 Protecting the built and natural environment	BUSMT020_Average cost of housing emergency repair Target: £70	WLAM	9.0	17,673,814	(17,673,814)	0
			BUSMT021_Average cost of housing non-emergency repair Target: £115	WLAM				
			BUS002_Percentage of Housing Repairs completed to timescale Target: 95%	Public				
Management of voids - Void Management and Letting	To improve letting and minimise loss of rental income.	8 Protecting the built and natural environment	SSHC Indicator 34_The percentage of void rent lost through properties being empty Target: 0.60%	Public	29.2	2,876,564	(2,876,564)	0
			HQSLETS001_Average length of time taken to re-let mainstream properties Target: 30 days	Public				

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Housing Operations (Housing Revenue Account)

Activity Name and Description	Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2018/19	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2018/19 £	Revenue Income Budget 2018/19 £	Net Revenue Budget 2018/19 £
Rent Collection & Arrears Management - Managing Tenancies including arrears	To maximise the collection rate for rental income and ensure that customers in difficulty are provided with appropriate support and advice.	SSHC Indicator 31_Gross rent arrears as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year Target: 5%	WLAM	23.4	3,794,028	(3,794,028)	0
		SSHC Indicator 24_Rent collected as a percentage of total rent due in the reporting year Target: 99%	High Level				
Tenant Participation - Encourage and promote tenant participation	To actively engage with tenants through tenant participation and identify new ways to involve tenants, particularly in hard to reach groups.	HQSFIN059_Unit cost of Managing Tenancies in the Housing Service Target: £250	WLAM	9.5	614,622	(614,622)	0
		HQSARC03_Percentage of tenants who feel their landlord is good at keeping them informed about their services and decisions of tenants Target: 86%	WLAM				
New Build Programme	To build new council houses for rent and work with development partners to invest in housing in West Lothian.	HAS011_Percentage of new build capital programme delivered against approved budget Target: 100%	High Level	5.6	13,008,979	(13,008,979)	0

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Housing Operations (Housing Revenue Account)

Activity Name and Description	Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2018/19	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2018/19 £	Revenue Income Budget 2018/19 £	Net Revenue Budget 2018/19 £
		HAS010_Number of new council houses built per programme Target: 559	High Level				
Other Housing Capital Investment Programme	To invest in our homes to make sure we comply with our statutory responsibilities as landlord and owner.	8. Protecting the built and natural environment	HAS009_Percentage of capital programme delivered against original budget Target: 90%	WLAM	8.0	9,896,028	(9,896,028)	0
		SSHC Indicator 23_ Average time to complete approved applications for medical adaptions in the reporting year Target: 24 days	WLAM				
Performance and Change activities	To provide back office support to the frontline Housing, Customer and Building Services.	Enabler Service - Modernisation and Improvement	HQSCOM012_ Percentage of Housing Operations complaints upheld/partially upheld. Target: 50%	WLAM	13.1	1,258,534	(1,258,534)	0
		HQSCOM013_Percentage of Housing Operations Stage 1 complaints resolved within 5 days Target: 85%	WLAM				
Total:				97.8	49,122,569	(49,122,569)	0

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Community Safety

Activity Name and Description	Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2018/19	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2018/19 £	Revenue Income Budget 2018/19 £	Net Revenue Budget 2018/19 £
Antisocial Behaviour	To reduce anti-social behaviour in West Lothian in conjunction with the Community Safety Unit and other community partners	SSHC Indicator 21 Percentage of anti-social behaviour cases reported which were resolved within locally agreed targets (3 months) Target: 90%	Public	11.6	732,829	(106,941)	625,888
		SSHC Indicator 17 Percentage of tenants satisfied with the management of the neighbourhood that they live in Target: 86%	Public				
Noise Related Complaint Service	To provide an efficient and effective response to deal with noise related complaints under Part V of the Antisocial Behaviour legislation	SSPi20a_The average time (hours) between the time of the complaint and attendance on site Target: 0.6 hours	High Level	2.9	134,176	0	134,176
		cspASP040_Number of visits made - monthly comparison with last year Target: 1,140	Public				

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Community Safety

Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2018/19	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2018/19 £	Revenue Income Budget 2018/19 £	Net Revenue Budget 2018/19 £
Landlord Registration	The administration, provision and maintenance of an up to date register of almost all Private Landlords within the authority area is a statutory function delivered by the service. This includes registration and application of checks to ensure applicants are fit and proper to let property. The activity also requires instigating enforcement action against unregistered or non-compliant landlords where required.	8. Protecting the built and natural environment	Number of registered private landlords Target: 1000 Satisfaction with the overall PSL service Target: 75%	Public Public	1.0	35,600	(35,600)	0
Total:					**15.5**	**902,605**	**(142,541)**	**760,064**

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Building Services

Manager:	Grant Taylor, Building Services Manager
Number of Staff:	468 (full time equivalents)
Location:	Kirkton Service Centre

Purpose

Building Services is the council's in-house building contractor, carrying out responsive repairs, maintenance and refurbishment of council properties. There are two teams; the Contracts Team who undertake project works associated with the Housing and General Services capital programmes, and the Repairs Team who carry out responsive repairs and maintenance to both housing and non-housing properties. Operatives cover all trades including:

◆ Plumber
◆ Joiner
◆ Builder
◆ Electrician
◆ Gas Engineer
◆ Blacksmith
◆ Glazier

Activities

The main activities of the unit during the period of the Management Plan will be:

◆ Responsive repairs and maintenance to housing and non-housing properties, including an emergency standby service
◆ Gas servicing and repairs
◆ Enhanced estates management to housing communal areas
◆ Project works associated with both Housing (90% of works) and General Services Capital Programmes (10% of works)
◆ 90% of Building Services work is for Housing with 10% for General Services

Key Partners

The unit actively works with our partners to plan, design and deliver improved services for our customers.

Our key partners include; other council services, local sub-contractors and trade suppliers, Health and Safety Executive (HSE), all relevant trade accreditation bodies, Gas Safe Register and National Inspection Council for Electrical Inspecting Contractors.

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Customer Participation

The unit will actively engage customers and potential customers in the delivery and re-design of services to ensure that they are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.

Customer Consultation Schedule 2018/19				
Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
Tenants representatives	Telephone survey of tenants who have recently had their gas servicing completed	On-going	Building Services Manager	Reported in Tenants News and to tenant groups
	Tenants asked to complete survey following repairs	On-going	Building Services Manager	Reported in Tenants News and to tenant groups
Non-housing repairs recipients (schools, community centres, etc.)	Face to face questionnaire, on completion of repair work	On-going	Building Services Manager	Reported on Intranet
Non-housing contracts recipient community (e.g. a school's head teacher and business manager)	Pre-start meetings	Quarterly	Building Services Manager	Site specific plans produced and circulated to all relevant parties

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Activity Budget 2018/19

Building Services								
Activity Name and Description	Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2018/19	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2018/19 £	Revenue Income Budget 2018/19 £	Net Revenue Budget 2018/19 £
Responsive repairs – housing repairs and enhanced estates management service	To provide a repairs service to our customers that meets their needs.	BUSMT015_Average length of time to complete emergency repair Target: 6 hours	Public	228.0	11,276,144	(11,276,144)	0
		BUSMT016_Average length of time to complete non-emergency repair Target: 7 days					
		BUS002_Percentage of Housing Repairs completed to timescale Target 95%	WLAM				
Gas servicing	To provide gas servicing to our customers that meets their needs.	BUSGAS103_Average cost of gas service Target: £54	WLAM	24.0	1,259,925	(1,259,925)	0
		BUSGAS106_Percentage of gas services completed within 12 months Target: 99%	Public				
Housing Capital Investment Programme	To invest in our homes to make sure we comply with our statutory responsibilities as landlord and owner.	BUSMT003_Percentage of Housing Capital Programme delivered of budget allocated to Building Services Target: 100%	WLAM	176.0	14,891,000	(14,891,000)	0

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Building Services

Activity Name and Description	Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2018/19	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2018/19 £	Revenue Income Budget 2018/19 £	Net Revenue Budget 2018/19 £
Non-housing repairs – education and general services Capital Investment Programme	To provide an excellent repair and maintenance service for internal council services and other partner agencies.	BUS014_Customer satisfaction with Capital Program Works Target: 99%	WLAM				
		BUS003_Percentage of non-housing repairs completed to timescale Target 90%	WLAM	40.0	1,435,000	(1,435,000)	0
		BUS007_Customer satisfaction satisfied with the non-housing repairs service Target: 99%	WLAM				
	Total:			**468.0**	**28,862,069**	**(28,862,069)**	**0**

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Housing Need

Manager:	Ann Marie Carr, Housing Need Manager
Number of Staff:	54 (full time equivalents)
Location:	Civic Centre and four emergency accommodation units

Purpose

The Housing Need Service is responsible for delivering the statutory function of homelessness, support and allocation of council properties.

The service takes a proactive, housing options approach to preventing homelessness occurring in the first place. When homelessness does happen, the objective of the service is to ensure the provision of appropriate emergency or temporary accommodation and re-housing into settled accommodation as soon as possible. Housing support is provided where required to help people sustain their accommodation.

The Allocations Team works in partnership with Common Housing Register Social Landlords and private sector landlords to let settled accommodation that meets the housing needs of all applicant groups.

Activities

The main activities of the service during the period of the Management Plan will be:

◆ Providing housing information and advice on housing options to help people access appropriate housing/sustain existing housing and prevent homelessness
◆ Assessing housing and support needs
◆ Delivering housing support services to vulnerable tenants, residents and homeless people
◆ Managing 24-hour emergency accommodation at three units
◆ Allocating temporary and permanent accommodation
◆ Managing and expanding membership of the Common Housing Register in partnership with local Registered Social Landlords
◆ Developing/managing private sector 'Homechoice', Rent Guarantee and Private Sector Leasing Scheme
◆ Encouraging and promoting participation from Housing Need service users
◆ Management, support and ongoing engagement to ensure the successful community integration of refugee families to the area.

Key Partners

The service actively works with our partners to plan, design and deliver improved services for our customers.

Our key partners include; other council services, Local Registered Social Landlords in West Lothian, private sector landlords in West Lothian, service users and partner agencies, local support service providers and the voluntary sector, NHS Lothian, Integration Joint Board and Police Scotland.

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Customer Participation

The service will actively engage customers and potential customers in the delivery and re-design of services to ensure that they are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.

Customer Consultation Schedule 2018/19				
Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
People who have presented as homeless	Phone survey	On-going	Housing Need Manager	Reported in Tenants News, on the website and to tenant groups
People living in temporary or emergency accommodation	Face to face survey in persons home	Annual	Housing Need Manager	Reported in Tenants News, on the website and to tenant groups
	Homeless Network	Monthly	Housing Need Manager	Reported in Tenants News
People who have received Housing Support Service	Telephone survey of tenants who have recently experienced the housing support service	Bi-Annual	Housing Need Manager	Reported in Tenants News
Homelessness stakeholders	Joint Strategy Group	Bi-Monthly	Housing Need Manager	Minutes and updated action plans

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Activity Budget 2018/19

Housing Need Service								
Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2018/19	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2018/19 £	Revenue Income Budget 2018/19 £	Net Revenue Budget 2018/19 £
Homelessness prevention and assessment	To improve our support services to prevent people from becoming homeless including providing mediation, counselling personal housing plans and rent deposits schemes. Enhance the role of the private sector and other partner agencies to promote sustainable outcomes.	3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	SOA1307_12 Number of applicants where homelessness is prevented Target: 260 households prevented	Public	19.4	755,821	(44,499)	711,322
			HQSHOM006_Number of households initially presenting as homeless or potentially homeless Target:150 per month	High Level				
Homelessness provision	To assess need and provide temporary and emergency accommodation.	3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	HQSARC25.1_Average length of time in temporary or emergency accommodation - Ordinary LA dwelling Target: 135	WLAM	8.8	2,991,109	(2,550,886)	440,223
			HQSARC25.10_Average length of time in temporary or emergency accommodation - All types Target: 65	High Level				

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Housing Need Service

Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2018/19	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2018/19 £	Revenue Income Budget 2018/19 £	Net Revenue Budget 2018/19 £
Housing support	To help vulnerable tenants sustain their tenancy and support vulnerable homeless people in securing a sustainable housing solution.	3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	SOA1307_13 Percentage of council tenancies that are sustained after 12 months for previously homeless people Target: 85%	Public	25.8	1,460,317	(47,499)	1,412,818
Total:					54.0	5,207,248	(2,642,884)	2,564,364

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Customer and Community Services

Manager:	Ralph Bell, Customer Services Manager
Number of Staff:	135.7 (full time equivalents)
Locations:	Operates from 52 buildings across West Lothian

Purpose

Customer and Community Services comprises five functions which, together, provide the frontline delivery of council services to all communities in West Lothian. These are: Customer Information Services, Library Services, Registration, Partnership Centres in Broxburn, Fauldhouse, Linlithgow and Bathgate and Community Centres. The service engages with customers on a transactional basis, that is, they do not build up long term relationships with customers, although they are very likely to refer customers to other services.

The service continues to work to increase the diversity of services that can be delivered by staff at the frontline, therefore creating a better customer journey and experience.

The service also works in partnership with the 37 local management committees who lease community centre facilities in West Lothian. This model encourages active citizenship and community capacity building through local people who programme the community centres and take ownership of the facilities on a day to day basis. We also work closely with our partners, stakeholders and the voluntary sector to help build a dynamic inclusive learning community which encourages customers to develop their potential to the full.

The service has corporate responsibility for developing and overseeing the delivery of the council's Customer Services Strategy.

Activities

The main activities of the service during the period of the Management Plan will be:

◆ Oversee the delivery of the council's Customer Services Strategy
◆ Provide customers with personal access to all council services and payment facilities through a network of local service centres
◆ Provide access to informal leisure and learning opportunities for individuals and groups in West Lothian through a comprehensive range of libraries and community centres
◆ Work with management committees to maximise the use of facilities through programmes which meet the needs of the community
◆ Maximise efficiency, effectiveness and promote 'best value', through resource management and energy management systems.

Key Partners

The service actively works with our partners to plan, design and deliver improved services for our customers.

Our key partners include; other council services, Management Committees, Community Councils, NHS Lothian, West Lothian Leisure, Jobcentreplus and Police Scotland.

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Customer Participation

The service will actively engage customers and potential customers in the delivery and re-design of services to ensure that they are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.

Customer Consultation Schedule 2018/19

Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
Library users	Focus groups and paper-based surveys	Quarterly / Monthly	Neighbourhood Manager	Notice boards and notes from meetings
Community groups with an interest in development of partnership centres	Meetings	Monthly	Project Manager	Notes from meetings and reports to committees
Community centre users and management committees	Meetings / paper-based surveys	Monthly	Neighbourhood Manager	Monthly meetings and notice board
Users of CIS or Registration services	Papers based surveys	Monthly	Team Managers	Monthly reports, quarterly newsletters

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Activity Budget 2018/19

Customer and Community Services							
Activity Name and Description	Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2018/19	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2018/19 £	Revenue Income Budget 2018/19 £	Net Revenue Budget 2018/19 £
Registration Service	To record all registrations for births, marriages and deaths accurately and issue extracts from the registers.	CuCS028_Unit cost of each registration activity Target: £15 CuCS515_Percentage accuracy for the registration of births, deaths and marriages Target: 97%	High Level WLAM	6.0	198,288	(290,000)	(91,712)
Neighbourhood Services	To provide customers with personal access to all council services and cash collection facility, access to informal learning opportunities, and access to a comprehensive range of lending and reference books through a network of local service centres.	CP:CuCS026_Percentage of CIS enquiries resolved at first point of contact Target: 81%	Public	129.0	3,735,624	(1,234,942)	2,500,682
Service support	Provision of management and administrative Support.	Enabler service – Corporate Governance and Risk	Support activities contribute towards the overall performance of the service. Performance is monitored through the indicators for front line activities.	0.7	55,658	0	55,658
Total:				135.7	3,989,570	(1,524,942)	2,464,628

Customer Service Centre

Manager:	Ralph Bell, Customer Services Manager
Number of Staff:	60.7 (full time equivalents)
Locations:	Civic Centre and various locations

Purpose

The council's centre for telephone, email and web contacts manages customer enquiries from the first point of contact. The service also includes Careline – the telephone support service for electronic care alarms used by older and vulnerable people in our community.

The service engages with customers on a transactional basis and is likely to refer customers to other services where specialist or professional support is required.

Activities

The main activities of the service during the period of the Management Plan will be:

◆ Providing customers with access to all council services and payment facilities through a centrally based contact centre
◆ Handling a range of customer enquiries through to resolution
◆ Providing 24 hour / 7 days a week support for older and vulnerable people through the electronic care alarm system (Careline).

Key Partners

The service actively works with our partners to plan, design and deliver improved services for our customers.

Our key partners include; other council services and the Health and Social Care Partnership.

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Customer Participation

The service will actively engage customers and potential customers in the delivery and re-design of services to ensure that they are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.

Customer Consultation Schedule 2018/19				
Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
Careline users	Paper based / electronic survey	Monthly	Customer Service Centre Co-ordinator	Results are published via the service's reported performance indicators
Customer Service Centre users	Phone surveys	Monthly	Customer Service Centre Co-ordinator	Results are published via the service's reported performance indicators

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Activity Budget 2018/19

Customer Service Centre

Activity Name and Description	Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2018/19	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2018/19 £	Revenue Income Budget 2018/19 £	Net Revenue Budget 2018/19 £
Telephone service	Provide customers with access to all council services through a centrally based telephone service	Enabler Service - Modernisation and Improvement	CSC150_Unit cost of each CSC call Target: £1.90	Public	44.6	1,391,303	(818,513)	572,790
			CSC201_Percentage of CSC calls resolved at first point of contact Target: 75%	Public				
Care Alarm system	Provide 24/7 support for older and vulnerable people through the electronic care alarm system	Enabler Service - Financial Planning	CSC151_Unit cost of each Careline customer contact Target: £2.18	Public	15.8	529,040	0	529,040
			CSC207_ Number of calls coming into Careline service Target 20,000	WLAM				
Service support	Provision of management and administrative Support.	Enabler Service - Corporate Governance and Risk	Support activities contribute towards the overall performance of the service. Performance is monitored through the indicators for front line activities.		0.3	23,854	0	23,854
	Total:				**60.7**	**1,944,197**	**(818,513)**	**1,125,684**

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Developing the Management Plan and reporting progress

The Management Plan was developed to support the delivery of the council's Corporate Plan and to take account of a range of factors that are likely to impact the delivery of council services in the next five years.

Context

The next five years will be a period of significant challenge for the council with ongoing spending constraints expected to continue. However, the council has clearly defined long term aims relating to the development of high quality services, designed to meet the needs of its customers. These long-term aims are captured in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, Community Plan and in the council's Corporate Plan and together these strategic plans determine the work of the council's services.

The development of the Corporate Plan 2018/23 has been directly influenced by the views of the people living and working in West Lothian, ensuring that all employees are focused on meeting the needs of a growing and vibrant community. The Corporate Plan sets the strategic priorities for the council up to 2022/23 and this will be the continued focus for all council services during the period.

This will help to ensure that we continue to tackle the most important issues for West Lothian. Also, that we invest in and prioritise the services which make the most significant contribution to the achievement of positive outcomes.

Influences

There will be many internal and external factors which will influence the work of Housing, Customer and Building Services during the period. The more prominent include: the ongoing economic challenges for communities; the implementation of Universal Credit and other welfare changes; continuing to meet the challenges of the Scottish Social Housing Charter; availability of Government grant funding for new homes and energy efficiency programmes and continuing implementation of relevant legislation, including the Housing Act 2014.

Planning Process

The Management Plan was developed by the Housing, Customer and Building Services Management team, using a range of information to ensure that services, activities and resources are aligned to:

◆ The council's Corporate Plan and the deliverables for which Housing, Customer and Building Services will be responsible for achieving or contributing to;
◆ Supporting the delivery of the council's transformation programme and Digital Transformation strategy;
◆ The requirements and standards set out within the Scottish Social Housing Charter; and
◆ The priorities of council employees, tenants, customers and partners.

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The process and timescales for the development and publication of the management plan is set out, including consultation with the appropriate stakeholders.

Corporate Plan	The Corporate Plan is approved by West Lothian Council, setting out the key priorities for all council services for the period 2018/19 to 2022/23.	February 2018
Housing, Customer and Building Services planning	The service management team develop the plan taking account of a range of factors, business requirements and customer needs.	February to March 2018
Executive Management Team approval	The council's executive management team (EMT) will review all service management plans to ensure they are sufficiently focused on corporate priorities. The EMT will also review the plans annually, scrutinising performance and progress in the stated outcomes and actions.	March 2018
PDSP consultation	The Management Plan is taken to the relevant Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel(s) for consultation, providing Panel members the opportunity to shape planning and resource allocation.	April to June 2018
Management Plan launch	The service cascades the plan to Housing, Customer and Building Services employees to ensure that they understand the key priorities and challenges ahead and how they will contribute to successful outcomes.	April to June 2018
WLC website	The Management Plan is published on the council's website to provide detailed information for the public and external stakeholders on council services, resource allocation and performance.	July 2018
Management Plan updates	The Management Plan progress is reviewed by the appropriate PDSP each year	April to June

Continuous Improvement

Housing, Customer and Building Services will continue to play a key role in the development and support of high quality customer services. Housing, Customer and Building Services will continue to engage with our customers to modernise structures and processes to ensure that they continue to provide the most efficient and effective model for service delivery. We will do this by:

◆ Continuing to deliver a programme of quality assurance and quality improvement review across Housing Operations, Strategy and Development, Building Services and Housing Need;
◆ Agreeing and implementing a programme of Tenant Led Inspections (TLIs) to enable customers to review key services and recommend improvements;
◆ Participate in corporate activities such as Citizen Led Inspections (CLIs) within customer and communities and Customer Service Centre as required;
◆ Implement and evaluate both employee and customer satisfaction surveys to learn and change as a result of feedback for the whole service; and
◆ Continue to analyse service complaints to understand key strengths and weaknesses within service processes and implement improvement measures as required.

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Housing, Customer and Building Services Action Plan

The service will undertake a range of actions to support delivery of corporate priorities and objectives, improve services and deliver transformation.

Housing, Customer and Building Services Actions 2018/19							
Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Local Housing Strategy	Implementation and ongoing monitoring and reporting of the strategy.	An effective strategy that will ensure the service is delivering on its strategic local housing development priorities.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager	October 2017	October 2022	Active	Annual update on the strategy will be reported to Services for the Community PDSP in third quarter 2018/19.
Customer Service Strategy	Development, implementation and ongoing monitoring and reporting of the council's corporate strategy.	An effective strategy that will support the development of digital council services.	Customer Services Manager	April 2018	June 2018	Active	The draft strategy will proceed to PR PDSP and Council Executive in the first quarter of 2018/19 for approval.
Tenant Participation Strategy	Implementation and ongoing monitoring and reporting of the strategy.	A joint strategy with council tenants that will ensure the service is engaging with customers in service development and change.	Housing Operations and Community Safety Manager	September 2017	September 2021	Active	Strategy progress monitored through the Tenants Participation Development Working Group.
Review of community safety unit – staffing and external awards	Review of community safety unit structure, design and delivery. Review of external funding within community safety unit.	To enable the council and service to deliver more effective, flexible and affordable services.	Housing Operations and Community Safety Manager	April 2018	March 2019	Planned	Project scope and plan defined.

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Housing, Customer and Building Services Actions 2018/19

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Modernised Library and Information Service	Rationalisation of customer and information services.	To enable the council and service to deliver more effective, flexible and affordable services.	Customer Services Manager	April 2018	March 2019	Planned	Project scope and plan defined.
Partnership Centres and reducing the number of community facilities	As the number of buildings required to deliver council services reduces, community groups will have the opportunity to request ownership of properties. With the partnership model, there is an opportunity to consolidate the number of community centres and village halls. Review the provision of facilities at community centres.	To enable the council and service to deliver more effective, flexible and affordable services.	Customer Services Manager	April 2018	March 2019	Planned	Project scope and plan defined.
Digital transformation projects	A programme of activity to ensure that the council is well placed to take advanced of opportunities offered in the digital age.	To deliver improved user-focused digital public services.	Head of Service	April 2018	March 2019	Planned	Project scope and plan defined.
Increased housing supply and new build social homes for rent.	Work with partners to deliver new build and increased supply of social housing, implementing the Local Housing Strategy and Strategic Housing Investment Plan.	Delivery of 3000 affordable homes for rent over ten years to 2022.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager	April 2018	March 2019	Active	Various new build sites completed or under development. Buy back policy ongoing. Partnerships with local RSLs under development.

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Housing, Customer and Building Services Actions 2018/19

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Housing Need management activities to reduce homelessness	Improve how we work with people with complex needs. Increase supply of temporary accommodation. Increase access to the range of permanent outcomes.	Improve housing options to prevent homelessness. Promote sustainability by ensuring housing need is met in a planned manner, where possible. Ensure access to range of housing support.	Housing Need Manager	April 2018	March 2019	Active	Developed draft policy proposals and process review. Approval and implementation to be progressed during 2018/19.
Income management	Process review in response to Universal Credit and implement various arrears reduction campaigns and initiatives.	Minimise impact of welfare reform on our customers and improve customer engagement and continue to reduce overall rent arrears debt.	Housing Operations and Community Safety Manager	April 2018	March 2019	Active	Development work defined and being implemented for Universal Credit Live Service May 2018.
Delivery of Capital Programme, Asset Management Plan and EESSH compliance.	Implement the five-year capital programme to 2022/23, ensuring compliance with the Energy Efficiency Standard for Scotland (EESSH).	Deliver a holistic approach to regeneration in partnership with other services to improve project planning, delivery, management information, customer satisfaction. 100% compliance with EESSH.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager	April 2018	March 2019	Planned	2018/19 to 2022/23 Capital Programme approved. Implementation of agreed programme to commence from April 2018.
Development of new Partnership Centre Delivery	Delivery of Armadale, Blackburn, East Calder and Whitburn Partnership Centres.	Customers have improved access to council and partner services in local communities.	Customer Services Manager	April 2018	March 2019	Active	Individual Centre project management arrangements in place and on schedule for delivery within agreed timescales.

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Housing, Customer and Building Services Actions 2018/19

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Review of Common Housing Register (CHR) Agreement and Models of Accommodation for Young People in Transition	Work with our partners to review the CHR membership. Meet statutory requirements regarding young people's accommodation standards.	Development of a common allocations approach with increased membership of the CHR and an area wide approach. Increase satisfaction with the quality of accommodation for young people in transition.	Housing Need Manager	April 2018	March 2019	Active	Development work for review and project initiatives have commenced, detailed proposed to be agreed and progressed.
Performance improvement against Regulator standards	Coordination and validation of return to Scottish Housing Regulator. Deliver improvement, audit and performance activity.	Improved performance within priority Housing Regulator indicators. Ensuring good governance, value for money and legislative compliance across HCBS.	Performance and Change Manager	April 2018	March 2019	Active	Timescales and project management arrangements developed for ongoing delivery of priority compliance and governance activity.
Health and Safety	Promote best practice across HCBS. Improve procedures and practice, sharing appropriate information with partners.	Ensure a safe workplace and that repair work is carried out to high standards of safety. Reduce violent behaviour towards staff.	Building Services Manager	April 2018	March 2019	Active	HCBS wide procedures and practices in place. Monitored at CMT and via Health and Safety Committee structures.
Building Services process efficiency	Implementation of priority process review actions in support of improved consistency and customer service.	To improve internal efficiency and increase customer satisfaction with Building Services.	Building Services Manager	April 2018	March 2019	Active	Priority process review activity currently ongoing, identifying action to be implemented within service.

The action plan focuses on high level or strategic actions during the period. Each WLAM unit will maintain more detailed action plans at a local level to address recommendations from improvement processes, external audits and assessments and service enhancements or changes in operations.

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Housing, Customer and Building Services Scorecard

The service will report on the following key measures of the success throughout the lifetime of our plan (short term trend arrows: 2017/18 performance exceeded the target = ⬆ / 2017/18 performance met the target = ▬ / 2017/18 performance was below the target = ⬇):

Indicators					
WLAM unit / service	PI Code and Short Name	2017/18 Performance	2017/18 Target	Performance against Target	2018/19 Target
Housing Operation	P:HQSARC01_6a.7 Percentage of tenants who are satisfied with the overall service from Housing and Building Services.	84.5%	88%	⬇	88%
	HQSCOM011a_6b.3 Housing Operations - Total number of complaints received by Housing Operations.	226	200	⬇	200
	P:HQSFIN059_9a Unit cost of Managing Tenancies in the Housing Service.	Available June 2018	£250		Available June 2018
	CP:HQSARC30_9b1a Rent collected as percentage of total rent due in the reporting year.	Available May 2018	99%		Available May 2018
Building Services	P:BUS005_6a.2 Percentage of customers who are satisfied with the housing repair service (yearly).	98.26%	99%	⬇	99%
	BUSMT020a_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by Building Services.	495	300	⬇	480
	BUSMT016_9a Building Services - Average cost of Housing Non-Emergency Repairs.	£87.36	£115.00	⬆	£106.00
	CP:HQSARC13_9b Percentage of housing repairs carried out in the last year completed 'Right First Time'.	92.09%	90%	⬆	90%
Housing Need Service	P:HQSARC28_6a Percentage of homeless households satisfied with the quality of temporary or emergency accommodation	89%	86%	⬆	90%
	HQSCOM016a_6b.3 Housing Needs - Total number of complaints received by Housing Needs	89	100	⬇	100
	P:HQSFIN058_9a1a Unit cost of Housing Needs Prevention and Assessment Service.	Available June 2018	£355		Available June 2018

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Indicators					
WLAM unit / service	PI Code and Short Name	2017/18 Performance	2017/18 Target	Performance against Target	2018/19 Target
	P:HQSHOM034_9b The proportion of priority, unintentionally homeless applicants for whom permanent accommodation was secured.	78%	69%	⬆	69%
Customer and Communities Service	CuCS007a_6a.7 Customer and Communities - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent.	99.3%	98%	⬆	98%
	CuCS010a_6b.3 Customer and Communities - Total number of complaints received by Customer and Community services.	61	48	⬇	48
	CuCS023_9a.1a Unit cost of each registration of a birth, marriage or death. This does not include handling requests for copies of birth, marriage and death certificates.	Available June 2018	£5.00		Available June 2018
	CP:CuCS026_9b.1a Percentage of Customer Information Service (CIS) enquiries resolved at first point of contact.	74.4%	75%	⬇	75%
Customer Service Centre	CSC059a_6a.9 Customer Service Centre (CSC) - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent.	96.99%	97%	⬇	97%
	CSC062a_6b.3 Total Number of Complaints against Customer Service Centre (CSC).	65	120	⬇	120
	P:CSC121_9a.1a Unit cost of each Customer Service Centre (CSC) call.	Available June 2018	£1.60		Available June 2018
	CSC101a_9b.1a Percentage of Customer Service Centre enquiries resolved at first point of contact.	72%	75%	⬇	75%

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Housing, Customer and Building Services

Management Plan 2018/19

May 2018

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SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

2017/18 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE – MONTH 12 MONITORING REPORT

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Panel with an update on the financial performance of the Services for the Community portfolio for the General Fund Revenue budget.

B.   RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel:

1. Notes the financial performance of the Services for the Community portfolio for 2017/18;
2. Notes that the Services for the Community portfolio 2017/18 budget and forecast spend position is part of an overall council budget position which will be reported to Council Executive in June 2018;
3. Notes any actions required to be taken by Heads of Service and budget holders to manage spend within available resources.

C.   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on customers' needs, being honest, open and accountable, making best use of resources, working in partnership.
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, Section 95; Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, section 1-14.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	No implications at this stage.
IV	**Impact on performance and performance indicators**	Effective budget management is an essential element of service performance. Additional financial reporting provides elected members with information to allow for proper scrutiny of performance of services.
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	The revenue budget provides resources necessary to help deliver the Single Outcome Agreement. Effective prioritisation of resources is essential to achieving key outcomes.
VI	**Resources – (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	The draft outturn for the Services for the Community portfolio revenue budget in 2017/18 is an overspend of £118,000. It is important to note that this draft outturn will form part of the overall

revenue budget position. A projected one-off underspend of £1.7 million was reported to Council Executive on 20 February 2018, although the final overall position will be reported to Council Executive in June 2018.

VII   Consideration at PDSP   A financial performance report will be presented to the PDSP twice yearly on an ongoing basis.

VIII   Other Consultations   Depute Chief Executives, Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services.

D.   TERMS OF REPORT

D.1   Introduction

This report sets out the 2017/18 general fund revenue financial performance information in respect of the Services for the Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) portfolio of services. It is important to note that the council's revenue budget is operationally managed at a Head of Service level, and the financial position included within this report is part of the overall council forecast upon which decisions have been approved by Council Executive. This report includes the position with the delivery of approved budget reduction measures relevant to the Services for the Community portfolio for 2017/18.

The budget monitoring process for 2017/18 has been undertaken in accordance with the council's budgetary control framework and procedures, which place particular focus on a risk based and pro-active approach to budget monitoring. The projected out-turn for 2017/18 reported to Council Executive on 20 February 2018 showed that the overall General Fund Revenue budget was forecasting a one-off underspend of £1.7 million. It was agreed that £290,000 of the £1.7 million one-off underspend would be used for time limited funding for buses in 2018/19, and that up to £1.2 million would be available for funding to West Lothian Leisure on a one-off basis. An outturn report for 2017/18 will be presented to Council Executive on 26 June 2018.

This report focuses on the financial performance of council services which further enhances the information presented to elected members to allow scrutiny of service and financial performance. The report contains links to key performance measures for service areas which are contained within Service Management Plans and referenced in the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF).

D.2   Financial Information for 2017/18 Outturn

The table below summarises the position in relation to service expenditure and provides an update on the draft outturn. The draft outturn position within this report excludes adjustments which are required as part of the year end exercise for technical accounting items including insurance, pension and capital financing charges.

	2017/18 Budget £'000	2017/18 Draft Outturn £'000	Variance £'000
HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES			
Community Safety Unit	1,431	1,347	(84)
Homelessness	2,509	2,711	202
TOTAL	**3,940**	**4,058**	**118**

The forecast overspend for the Services for the Community portfolio is £118,000. As part of the monitoring exercise, a number of key risks and service pressures have been identified and these are noted in the narrative for the relevant service area.

D.3   Summary of Main Issues in Service Expenditure Budgets and Impact on Performance

D.3.1   Housing, Customer and Building Services

Community Safety Unit

A net underspend of £84,000 is anticipated, due to a combination of savings in the Police Scotland recharge due to a vacant analyst post, staff savings within the unit and landlord registration income.

Performance information for the Community Safety Unit indicates that the number of active antisocial cases has dropped to within the target rate of 65 per month for the last four months of the year to March 2018, after being consistently higher at the beginning of the year.

Homelessness

Within homelessness, the projected overspend is £202,000, reflecting an increase in the numbers of people being accommodated within bed & breakfast establishments. Ring-fenced Scottish Government funding of £419,000 to address homelessness has been taken into account in the outturn position, and it has been confirmed that this funding will continue in 2018/19 and will increase by a further £78,000 in that year. Total expenditure on bed & breakfast accommodation of £839,000 is anticipated, with an overspend of £170,000 factored into the overall homelessness position. In the last two years, additional properties from mainstream council stock and from buying back former council houses have been identified to be used as temporary accommodation with the aim of limiting the use of bed & breakfast provision. Due to the increase in the overall level of temporary tenancy provision, overspends are also anticipated in property storage costs, council tax and voids losses. Officer discussions are continuing to develop a sustainable solution and to mitigate the social and financial impact on an ongoing basis, including the homelessness school transport pressures within Operational Services.

Performance information for the homeless area indicates that in 2017/18, the percentage of repeat homeless presentations, meaning the percentage of households who are assessed as being homeless within 12 months of previously being assessed as homeless, rose to 2.1%. The proportion of priority, unintentionally homeless applicants for whom permanent accommodation was secured was 77.3%, which was an increase of 4.95% from the previous year.

D.3.2   Monitoring of Approved Budget Reductions

A review of the delivery of budget reductions was completed by Heads of Service, and this has demonstrated that satisfactory progress is being made with the majority of savings having been delivered for 2017/18.

For the Services for the Community portfolio, there is a total of £52,000 of savings to be delivered. All of these have been assessed as green, meaning that they have been fully delivered in 2017/18.

E. SUMMARISED BUDGET POSITION FOR 2017/18

The forecast outturn position indicates an overspend of £118,000 within the general fund revenue budget for the Services for the Community portfolio. This report highlights overspends within the portfolio area where action is required to identify options to sustainably manage spend within budget resources available.

F. FUTURE BUDGET ISSUES AND RISKS

West Lothian Council approved savings of £41.281 million for the three year period 2018/19 to 2020/21 as part of the five year budget strategy on 13 February 2018. For 2018/19, there remain risks around the deliverability of very significant budget reductions. In addition, recurring pressures of £2.863 million across all council services will have an impact on the council being able to manage a break-even position. It is therefore essential that mitigating actions are taken to ensure these pressures are managed on a recurring basis.

There remain significant risks and uncertainties associated with the short, medium and long term financial assumptions in relation to the council's financial position. There are also a number of potential cost pressures that could impact on the council's ability to balance the five year revenue budget strategy and three year detailed revenue budgets. Whilst acknowledging that planning assumptions are subject to uncertainty due to the planning time horizon, some of the general risks and uncertainties include confirmation of local authority funding from the Scottish Government for one year only, Brexit, policy changes by the government without adequate funding, levels of pay award and demographic and inflationary pressures.

Specifically for the Services for the Community portfolio, there are ongoing key risks around levels of homelessness provision. The main issue facing the homeless service both in West Lothian and in Scotland is the level of demand for accommodation compared to the available supply. The council has seen a sustained period of increased demand for interim or temporary accommodation from homeless applicants and this has resulted in increased Bed & Breakfast accommodation costs in excess of budget and higher than planned allocations of mainstream stock to the homeless group.

In order to reduce the continuing financial and operational pressures, the service is developing a range of approaches in order to mitigate pressures and improve the position. The key areas for operational change include: closer engagement with Registered Social Landlords and Private Social Landlords to provide further accommodation, a review of the Allocations Policy, development of a new Emergency Accommodation Unit, a review of Bed & Breakfast accommodation in comparison to other local authorities, and a review of options for furniture storage.

With more new build council houses due for completion in 2018/19 and a firmer understanding of the demand levels for the service and supply of housing available, there is an opportunity to reduce the requirement to use hotels whilst developing partnership working and shifting the balance of homeless frontline operations to a more preventative approach. This would involve signposting those threatened with homelessness to the most appropriate group to meet their needs. This approach will be required in order to mitigate potential pressures from 2018/19 onwards.

G. CONCLUSION

A revenue overspend of £118,000 is forecast for the Services for the Community portfolio in 2017/18. Good progress is being made in the delivery of budget savings. As noted, the outturn forecast position for the Services for the Community portfolio will be part of the overall forecast position for the 2017/18 revenue budget to be reported to Council Executive in June 2018.

H. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

2017/18 General Fund Revenue Budget – Month 9 Monitoring – Report to Council Executive on 20 February 2018

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2017/18

Homelessness – Report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services to Services for the Community PDSP on 23 October 2017

Annual Audit Report 2016/17 - Report by Ernst and Young LLP to West Lothian Council on 26 September 2017

Scheme of Administration

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Donald Forrest
Head of Finance and Property Services
Date: 8 May 2018

		SftC PDSP – 8th May (1st May) - Q4 Performance		
1	Community Safety	Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012: Post-legislative Scrutiny	Once	Alistair Shaw
2	Community Safety	New Policing Model for West Lothian	Once	Liz McLeod
3	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Performance Update Report	¼	Michael Jaffray
4	Housing Need	Property Turnover Report	¼	AnnMarie Carr
5	HCBS Performance	Landlord Registration Consultation	Once	Kenny Selbie
6	HCBS Performance	Performance Update Report	¼	Kenny Selbie
7	HCBS Performance	Service Management Plan	Annual	Kenny Selbie
8	Finance & Property Services	2017/2018 Financial Performance Report- Month 12 Monitoring report	¼	Pamela Bell