



## **PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE**

### **SERVICE PERFORMANCE AND WLAM OUTCOME REPORT – CONSTRUCTION SERVICES**

#### **REPORT BY DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

##### **A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

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

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

##### **B. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Performance Committee:

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

##### **C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

I.	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunity; developing employees; making best use of our resources and working with other organisations
II.	Policy and Legal	The West Lothian Assessment Model programme is a key part of the council's Best Value Framework, ensuring that there is robust internal scrutiny and support for continuous improvement of services.
III.	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV.	Impact on performance and performance indicators	The report provides a summary of performance indicators from a council service to support effective elected member scrutiny.

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

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

### **D.1 Background**

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

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

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

### **D.2 Service Overview**

Head of Service: Donald Forrest, Head of Finance and Property Services

Service Manager: Marjory Mackie, Construction Services Manager

Construction Services provides multi-disciplinary professional and technical construction related services. The service reflects a strong corporate approach to the lifecycle management of the council's assets.

The Projects Team provides project management, design solutions, quantity surveying, contract procurement and on-site inspection and monitoring of live projects plus expert professional advice on construction projects.

The Maintenance and Asbestos Teams ensure the operational availability of all operational properties owned by the council, including statutory and legislative compliance relating to the Fire Scotland Act 2005 and the Control of Asbestos Regulations.

The Planned Improvements and Services Team delivers the council's planned improvement investment programmes and minor project works, and also ensures operational availability of all non-housing properties owned or managed by the council, as well as statutory and legislative compliance relating to Legionella, gas safety and electrical installations. The team

also manages the programme of condition surveys, bogus caller investigations, and provides building defect diagnosis and reports.

The main activities of the service are:

- Delivery of the capital programme of investment, including planned improvements, statutory compliance, property, housing and open space projects;
- Annual delivery of over 350 individual projects with a total annual average expenditure of £30 million;
- Ensuring operational availability of council premises through effective management of revenue maintenance budgets and implementing IT systems in support of this;
- Continued intensive management of statutory property compliance across council property;
- Provision of construction feasibility, option appraisal, cost and maintenance information that supports business case development and future investment decisions;
- Work on a number of modernisation and efficiencies projects.

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

### **D.3 Service Contribution to Corporate Priorities**

Construction Services is part of Finance and Property Services, which is focused on the delivery of key services that support effective governance, financial planning and asset management in the council.

The service is a vital part of the corporate approach to effective asset planning and management, ensuring that our resources and investment in those resources are aligned with the council's eight corporate priorities.

The service contributes directly to the development of the council's capital investment strategy through identification of planned improvements, projects and statutory compliance programmes. Successful delivery of property projects and planned improvements in support of this is at the centre of the work of the service and work streams such as the summer works programme ensure disruption to council services are kept to a minimum.

Key areas in which the service contributes to effective asset management are in statutory property compliance, condition and accessibility. The service has a strong emphasis on ensuring council properties are safe and accessible and this is demonstrated through a suite of indicators which are monitored monthly and include fire safety, asbestos, legionella and property helpdesk enquiries.

### **D.4 West Lothian Assessment Model**

The service went through the West Lothian Assessment Model process in November 2019, with a representative group of employees from the service critically evaluating the service effectiveness in the nine criterion parts of the assessment model.

The service scored a total of 555 (out of 1,000).

This was an improvement on the service score in the last programme (2014/17) and above the current council average. To date, a total of 33 services have been assessed in the council's rolling three-year programme.

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

Table 1: WLAM Scores (2008/10 to 2017/20)					
WLAM Criteria	2008/10	2011/13	2014/17	2017/20	Trend
1 Leadership	62	60	65	72	↑
2 Strategy	48	54	60	68	↑
3 People	52	56	60	71	↑
4 Partnerships and Resources	53	54	63	67	↑
5 Services and Processes	79	58	58	69	↓
6 Customer Results	103	41	50	60	↓
7 People Results	21	19	40	42	↑
8 Society Results**	6	20	40	50	↑
9 Business Results	56	30	47	58	↑
<b>Total score</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>483</b>	<b>555</b>	↑
WLC average total score	385	411	468	531*	

\* WLC Average to date (based on 33 assessments)

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

The scores show that the service has improved across the period (2008/10 to 2017/20) in most criteria. The service was above the current council average score in the nine criteria in the Model in the 2017/20 programme and the total WLAM. Relative strengths (to council average) are in Leadership, People, Services and Processes and higher scores in these criteria suggests that the service has a clear purpose and appropriately aligned structures and processes to achieve success in the key results.

To increase the WLAM score further, the service may consider reviewing the approach to customer engagement and feedback gathering to improve the integrity of Customer Results. Results overall could be improved through greater use of benchmarking with relevant comparators.

## D.5 Review Panel Outcome

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

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

Table 2: Review Panel Outcome		
Review Panel Cycle		
Cycle 1	The service will return to the panel within three years	✓
Cycle 2	The service will return a report to the Panel within 12 months, who will determine if the service are to move to Cycle 1 or 3	
Cycle 3	The service must return to the Review Panel no later than one year (12 months) from the date of the last report.9	

The service was placed on **Cycle 1** by the Review Panel in January 2020 and will return to the Panel in the next cycle (2020/23).

This service achieved this outcome as it was able to demonstrate strong performance and the Panel had confidence that the service has a robust approach to performance management.

#### Performance management

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

Table 3: Evaluation of Performance Management in the service	
Management standard	Service evaluation
Scope and relevance of performance data	The service has identified performance indicators to monitor progress in the key activities and outcomes/ priorities
Compliance with corporate requirements	The performance framework of the service exceeds the basic corporate requirements.
Approach	The service approach to managing performance is good and should be considered good practice in the council.
Management of data	Managers and team leaders positively engage with the performance and actively use the data to improve
Management of information	Performance is reported and communicated effectively to Elected Members, senior officers, employees and the public
Performance trends	The key performance indicators show sustained good performance and the Panel has confidence that this will continue to be sustained by the service.
Targets and thresholds	Targets and thresholds for performance indicators have a clear rationale and support good performance management and improvement.
Benchmarking	The service has comparative data for some of the key performance indicators (in relation to the priorities /key activities) and the service compares well.
WLAM score	The service achieved a score of over 500 in the WLAM process

The service will also continue to report key performance publicly and through agreed committee performance reporting arrangements.

## **D.6 Recommendations for Improvement**

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

The Review Panel recommendations for the service are:





1. The Panel recognised the improvements made under each criterion of the WLAM model resulting in a considerable increase in the overall service score.

2. The Panel recognised the positive performance in the employee satisfaction results (7a.1 to 7a.7).
3. The service should aim to improve customer engagement and encourage customer feedback to continue to seek opportunities to improve the service.
4. The Panel encouraged the service to review and refine the approach to contractor management, with the aim of improving performance in the key results.
5. The service should develop a more structured approach to capturing internal complaints, capturing these within the performance management system.
6. The Panel encouraged the service to improve performance and timescales with compliance issues, specifically fire risk assessments.
7. The service should introduce an in-month indicator measuring fire safety risk assessments.
8. The service should review performance targets and target setting rationale, ensuring targets aim for improved performance.

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

## D.7 Service Performance

The service has a total of **107** performance indicators on the council's performance management system (Pentana). At present, the status of the indicators is as follows:

Summary of Performance Indicator status (RAG)	
Status (against target)	Number of PIs
 Green	83
 Amber	8
 Red	16
 Unknown	0

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

## D.8 Service Benchmarking

The Local Government Benchmarking Framework contains the two indicators relating to the property asset management categories which are part of the Scottish Government Core Facts performance and performance across both is high with the council ranking first in the Corporate Asset category in 2018/19.

Construction Services feed directly into the management information within these indicators which relate to the condition and suitability of the buildings owned or managed by the council and these form part of the Scottish Government Core Facts performance information on the school estate and include condition and compliance, sufficiency and suitability.

LGBF Performance Indicators			
Council	2018/19 performance		
	West Lothian Council	Network peer group average	National average
% of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use	96.31	87.67	82.14
% of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition	99.64	91.71	87.21

In addition, the service benchmarks the hourly fee rates against private sector professional consultants with the rates charged for in-house staff through the existing consultant framework in place. These are reviewed annually in line with the pricing review from consultants. Fees are below private sector rates across all professional categories.

## E. CONCLUSION

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

The service achieved a total score of 555 and was placed on Cycle 1 by the Review Panel and will return to the Review Panel within three years.

## BACKGROUND REFERENCES

[West Lothian Council Corporate Plan 2018/23](#)  
[Asset Management Strategy 2018/23](#)

Appendices/Attachments: 2

Appendix 1\_Finance and Property Services Management Plan Extract  
Appendix 2\_Performance Indicator Report

Contact Person: Rebecca Kelly

E mail: [rebecca.kelly@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:rebecca.kelly@westlothian.gov.uk) Phone 01506 281891

**Graeme Struthers**  
**Depute Chief Executive**  
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