# Delivering better outcomes your say westlothian.gov.uk/yoursay14 on council services

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Dear Citizen,

In October 2012 we asked for your help to develop our strategic plan and budget strategy for the period to 2018.

Citizens were asked to help us to identify our priorities for the five years to 2018 and suggest how we could save money to help balance our budget. There were over 17,000 individual comments and suggestions making it the largest consultation held by the council.

In the last two years we have

made significant progress in delivering the priorities and in reducing the budget gap, saving over £14 million through smarter, more efficient ways of working. From your suggestions we have also developed measures which we believe will allow us to make further savings over the next three years while

delivering what is important to

The economic environment remains very challenging and the council still faces considerable budget pressures. The demand for our services continues to rise and the level of funding we receive from the Government is not sufficient

to pay for these services. Therefore we need to continue to make changes to the way we provide services to meet a forecast budget gap of £30.4 million for the period to 2018. It is vital that the council and the citizens of West Lothian work together to address the challenges ahead. There are difficult but important decisions to be made about council services. This is why we are holding a second consultation to ask what you think of the

measures which we believe will deliver priority services and reduce spending in other areas. Your views are important and I would encourage every citizen, partner, employee and business to get involved and tell us what you think.

Yours faithfully

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Graham Hope Chief Executive West Lothian Council



## About the consultation

## Why are we consulting?

The council strongly believes in working with local communities. Our services have an impact on everyone living and working in West Lothian and we want to involve all citizens in the decisions which are made about services. We want to engage and work with all citizens to find a way to address the budget pressures faced by the council.

We have developed potential measures which would allow us to balance the budget over the next three years, but these will change council service provision and we want to know what you think about these measures.

### What are we consulting about?

This consultation focuses on measures which will help the council to reduce the budget gap in the next three years. The measures have been developed from the responses to the Delivering Better Outcomes Consultation in 2012. Many of these suggestions were extremely helpful and have assisted the council in saving around £14 million to date; they have also helped council officers to develop the new measures contained in this document.

## Who are we consulting with?

We are keen to consult with all those who have an interest in what the council does and we would like to receive responses from:

- People who live in West Lothian
- Organisations who represent groups in West Lothian
- Community councils
- Voluntary organisations
- Business organisations
- Our partners, such as health, police and fire who work with the council to deliver services
- People who work for the council
- Trade unions
- Parent councils
- Tenants' and residents' groups
- Religious groups
- Youth groups and pupil councils
- Management committees of community centres

If there are other people or groups with an interest in the council and they are not listed here, we would like to hear from them too.

## Our financial position

The council is required by law to set a balanced budget every year. In January 2013, the council agreed a Corporate Plan and a medium term financial strategy.

These plans will allow the council to deliver the services which communities need and to set realistic balanced budgets.

This year (2014/15) our budget is £375 million. Most of the council's funding comes from Scottish Government grant. The funding provided by the Scottish Government will not meet our increased budget pressures. Funding also comes from Council Tax. Our plan is to freeze the current rate of the Council Tax until 2017/18.

Costs are increasing because of inflation in the price of goods and services we buy and a greater demand for services in West Lothian because we have a growing and ageing population. More people in West Lothian will mean more demand for all

services, including waste collection, schools, community centres and support for older and vulnerable people in our communities.

We have identified measures that could balance the budget. These measures were developed using the detailed feedback received in the Delivering Better Outcomes consultation in 2012. The measures are the basis for this consultation exercise and broadly equal the total gap faced. If any measure is to be removed, alternative measures would have to be put forward to balance the budget.

## In summary:

- There is an estimated gap in funding of £30.4 million over the next three years
- Scottish Government funding will not meet our increasing costs
- Council Tax is likely to be frozen at the current rate until 2017/18
- Substantial savings are needed so that priorities are delivered and budgets balanced



To complete the Your Say consultation response online visit westlothian.gov.uk/yoursay14 or scan the QR code with your mobile device.







## Our priorities

The council's Corporate Plan (2013/17) identifies the outcomes which we aim to achieve for West Lothian. The Corporate Plan is directly influenced by the Delivering Better Outcomes consultation in 2012. You told us that the following were important.

Delivering positive outcomes and early interventions for early years:

Children and young people deserve the best possible start in life. Family circumstances of children in their earliest years will influence their future.

Improving the employment position in West Lothian:

Improving the employment position will impact positively on the quality of life and the overall well-being of residents in West Lothian.

Improving attainment and positive destinations for school children:

The council aims to improve educational attainment and qualifications in order to better support school children to develop the essential skills for work and to compete in a modern, integrated society.

Improving the quality of life for older people:

The council wants to improve the quality of life for older people by offering care and support which helps them to live well and have greater control, choice and independence.

Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality:

People living in poverty and deprivation have significantly worse life outcomes than those in average households, and this is often determined at a very early age by family circumstances.

The financial cost is significant also, with people having a greater reliance on public services throughout their lives.

Reducing crime and improving community safety:

Our residents should feel safe in their homes and on the streets of West Lothian, secure in the knowledge that they are living in strong and inclusive communities.

Delivering positive outcomes on health:

Promoting the health and wellbeing of West Lothian citizens and reducing inequalities of health across our communities are key priorities for the Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP).

Protecting the built and natural environment:

The council aims to build communities and services that are well designed and that protect the built and natural environment for current residents and future generations.

These priorities will not change. They were set by our community and we will continue to strive to deliver each one. We believe they can make a lasting and sustainable impact on the local area and improve the lives of residents in West Lothian. Within reducing resources we need to focus on these key priorities, and this means we need to change how we provide services, and which services we provide.

## Delivering our priorities - Investment in key services

The council will continue to prioritise investment in the services which meet the needs of West Lothian residents and deliver long term impacts in the above eight priority areas identified by the community. Budgets must also reflect inflationary and economic pressures. There are many examples of the council's commitment to invest in services:



- The increase in our elderly population will require significant year-on-year investment and we will increase spending in this area to address the changing care needs of our elderly population.
- The council will increase spending for adults with complex care needs.
- The projected increase in the number of school children will require investment in teachers and school facilities in order to ensure that educational capacity and standards are maintained.
- The council will continue to invest resources to ensure compliance with legislative changes and service developments.
- The council will make provision for inflation and indexation across a range of costs and payments incurred in the delivery of services.



## **Delivering our priorities – Potential Budget Measures**

The Delivering Better Outcomes consultation in 2012 set out workstreams that would contribute to delivering the council's priorities over the next five years. Within these we have identified a number of measures which would enable the council to balance its budget over the next three years. Details on the measures under each workstream are set out below.



## Modernising services and managing our workforce

Measures totalling £15.54 million over the next three years have been identified which would make council services more efficient, accessible and cost effective. Services with a limited contribution to the council's eight priorities may be reduced, and some services may no longer be provided, or provided in different ways. This may result in changes to how staff work. To comment on the measures below turn to page eight.



**Modernising council** support functions

> Estimated Saving: £3.26 million

The council operates a range of internal support functions, including Human Resources, Information Technology, Finance, Property, and Administrative Support.

These functions could be improved by centralising service provision to create economies of scale and remove duplication.

We would use technology to further increase efficiency and adopt more cost effective methods for cash collection and payments.



**Reducing printing** volumes and costs

## > Estimated Saving: £240,000

We would make savings in printing costs across council services and schools by reducing the volume of printing and photocopying, limiting colour printing, and introducing new ways of communicating with customers.



Review of primary and secondary school budgets

### > Estimated Saving: £2.86 million

This would be managed through a range of measures including greater use of technology to improve efficiency for teaching and administrative activities, changes to class sizes in some schools, and a review of administrative support functions in and across schools.



**Review of nursery school** provision

> Estimated Saving: £200,000

Council nursery places would be prioritised, reducing the number of places provided by partner providers, which would reduce costs and maximise the use of places available in council establishments.



**Redesign of instrumental** music service

> Estimated Saving: £280,000

Instrumental music classes would begin from primary 5 onwards and more group teaching would be used. There are no plans to introduce charging for instrumental music.



**Review of central** education support

Estimated Saving: £660,000

We would further rationalise central education support activities with more partnership working and a focus on key priorities.

Measures include the redesign of the remit of school area business support managers, the support provided for out of school care, moving the central music therapy resource into core special school provision and implementing a new quality improvement model in schools.



Modernising the council's facilities management

## > Estimated Saving: £780,000

The council spends £4.5million a year providing a cleaning service in its buildings.

We would review the frequency of cleaning, maintaining the cleaning requirements in key areas such as toilets, kitchens and sports facilities, and prioritising the cleaning of other areas.

This would enable the council to provide a revised level of service which continues to meet the requirements of building users.



**Changes to waste** services

> Estimated Saving: £1.04 million

The council has introduced a number of changes in recent years. Further changes, including the introduction of refuse collections over seven days a week, revised routes, a review of staff deployment and of the number of community recycling sites and opening hours, would enable the council to provide waste services more efficiently.



Changes to land and environmental services

## > Estimated Saving: £300,000

The council's Cleaner Communities team would change its approach to protecting the environment, focusing on prevention rather than enforcement.

The country parks service provision would also be reviewed and those services with low demand, or where income received does not fully cover the cost of delivery, would be reduced.



**Modernising social care** processes

### Estimated Saving: £930,000

The council would extend mobile and flexible working for social workers. The measure would increase the amount of time staff spend with clients and rationalise administrative support, improving the overall service delivered to customers.



**Modernising community** support functions

Estimated Saving: £640,000

Community regeneration activity would be reviewed and redesigned to focus on the services which have a direct impact on communities. Closer working with partners such as the voluntary sector would be a key feature of the redesigned service, and the support provided to areas such as community arts and sports development would be reduced accordingly.

Restructure of environmental health and trading standards and a review of economic development activities

### > Estimated Saving: £180,000

The Environmental Health and Trading Standards service would be redesigned to deliver more effective and efficient processes, through a revised management structure and clearer prioritisation of activity to support a more streamlined service. There would also be a review of the activities undertaken by the Economic Development service to make sure there continues to be a targeted approach to priority areas.



Review of public transport policy and service

> Estimated Saving: £1.49 million

The council currently supports around 20% of West Lothian's bus routes. A review of the public transport services supported by the council would focus on connecting communities and businesses in a way which is affordable and effective. The council would also explore alternative transport models, such as provision of transport based on individual's needs, to minimise the impact of service changes





## 1 Modernising services and managing our workforce - continued



Review of the concessionary rail scheme

### > Estimated Saving: £270,000

The council currently supports a concessionary rail scheme. The costs have been rising considerably year-on-year and the number of journeys is projected to increase significantly in the future.

There is no legal requirement to provide a concessionary rail scheme, with many councils not providing any rail concessions, and it is in addition to other schemes already in place. We would propose to maintain a scheme which complements existing national concessions; however users would pay more per journey.



Review of additional support needs pupil transport

### > Estimated Saving: £450,000

The council would review the way in which transport for additional support needs pupils is delivered to make sure the most appropriate transport option is provided.

This would be undertaken on a contract by contract basis along the same lines as a successful pilot completed at Burnhouse School, where changes enabled the council to achieve savings in transportation costs with no negative impact on service users.



**Reduction in internal** vehicle costs

### > Estimated Saving: £1.54 million

The council spends over £9 million a year in maintaining a fleet of over 1,000 vehicles which are required to deliver the full range of council services. Savings would be delivered through a 33% reduction in mileage, reducing insurance claims and improving the use of the fleet to reduce the number of vehicles. Savings would also be achieved through improvements to route planning, changes in business practices and a greater focus on alternative methods of transport.



**Review of noise** monitoring and enforcement

### > Estimated Saving: £230,000

The council would redesign existing noise monitoring and enforcement services in order to deliver a merged and improved customer service, which will realise savings through better partnership working.



Redesign of hearing impairment service for schools

### Estimated Saving: £150,000

The service would be redesigned on a more integrated basis in line with service requirements. Teachers who had been moved from class teaching to provide this service would return to teaching in the classroom.



Changes to fixed staff holidays

### > Estimated Saving: £40,000

The council currently observes seven fixed staff holidays each calendar year, and overtime is payable to staff who are required to work on these

We would propose to reduce the number of fixed staff holidays from seven to six, in exchange for an additional day's annual leave, to reduce the cost of overtime for fixed staff holiday working.

## 2 Working with partners to deliver outcomes

Measures totalling £3.66 million over the next three years have been identified which would enable the council to deliver more effective, flexible and affordable services. To comment on the measures below turn to page eight.



Working with health to deliver health and social care services

## > Estimated Saving: £1.2 million

The council has a strong partnership with NHS Lothian, and would continue to look at further ways to share resources, remove duplication and integrate services to enhance the quality of care and improve experiences for patients.



Review of cultural and leisure services

### Estimated Saving: £1.4 million

West Lothian has a trust model to deliver leisure services. This could be extended to other sports provision. This model could also include culture, local history and museum services. Such a model could provide access to funding and cost savings which would not otherwise be available to the council in the operation of these services.



**Modernising our** partnership with voluntary organisations

### > Estimated Saving: £695,000

The council currently works in partnership with voluntary organisations. Resources would be reviewed to focus on the most important areas that help to meet shared outcomes.

This could mean the removal or reduction of non-priority areas or areas where other programmes are more effective.



Review of support to the business community

### > Estimated Saving: £185,000

The council would review the support to the business community including Visit West Lothian, Town Centre Management and Chamber of Commerce.



**Providing services in** partnership with West **Lothian College** 

## > Estimated Saving: £180,000

Integration of support services in the council and the college could create savings through economies of scale, with the council providing the college with IT support, payroll, marketing and media functions. The council's management of staff learning and development would also be reviewed to consider how improved training can be delivered in partnership with the college.



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## 3 Preventing negative outcomes

Measures totalling £2.29 million over the next three years have been identified that would change the way we deliver services which change behaviours that can have a detrimental impact on lives at an early stage, and/or deal with issues before they reach a crisis stage. To comment on the measures below turn to page eight.



**Reshaping care for** families and young people

## > Estimated Saving: £850,000

A new model of working would allow more effective use of resources to create better outcomes for young people.

This would decrease the demand for residential school placements and reduce the use of care and education provision out-with the council.

More partnership working for homelessness activities and changes to care support in an education setting would reduce the numbers of staff needed to deliver the service.

Early years services would also be redesigned to focus on supporting families in their own homes and delivering parenting groups.

In addition, we would also reduce the funding to early intervention projects which no longer support the council's priorities.

**Reshaping care for older** 

### > Estimated Saving: £320,000

The reshaping care for older people programme aims to help older people to live independently in the community for as long as possible.

The greater use of home technology, care support and improving general health would help to reduce hospital admissions and care home placements.

The Older People's Challenge Fund will continue to fund the Food Train and Dementia Cafes, with a saving of £180,000 being used to fund core services for older people.

**Changing levels for access** to care services

### > Estimated Saving: £890,000

Growing numbers of people needing care services, combined with severe budget pressures, has resulted in many councils changing threshold levels for access to care services. It is proposed that threshold levels would be set at critical/substantial level for all new clients.

Access to care services would be based on an assessment process focusing on people's needs and risks to their independence.

This may mean, for example, that some new clients whose needs are not assessed as critical or substantial would have to pay for some aids and adaptations.

**Redesign of criminal** justice service

### > Estimated Saving: £130,000

We would make improvements and changes to the criminal justice service which would reduce the need for funding to be given to external providers.



Changes to the way the council buys care services for people under 65

### > Estimated Saving: £100,000

The buying of specialist care at home and care home services for adults under 65 would be reviewed.

Contracts for services would be standardised so that all providers have the same hourly rate and range of services.

The council would also change how it buys care home places for people with physical disabilities and make alterations to the existing local residential unit so that services are more adaptable to changing needs.



## 4 Managing our assets

Measures totalling £2.51 million over the next three years have been identified which would ensure that the council continues to have efficient and effectively managed assets to support service delivery. To comment on the measures below turn to page eight.



Review of the council's commercial property portfolio

## > Estimated Saving: £330,000

The council has a commercial property portfolio of over 700 shops, industrial units, warehouses, offices and other buildings and land. The properties are leased to tenants to generate income for the council and to promote economic development.

Rental income would be increased through rent reviews, lease renewals, review of management fees and other general fees and charges.



**Property modernisation** 

### > Estimated Saving: £1.39 million

Over the years the council has reduced significantly the number and cost of buildings. The opening of the Civic Centre and partnership centres has ensured that properties are used in the most effective way, supporting a more mobile and flexible workforce. The modernisation and rationalisation of properties will continue.

A review and redesign of the services delivered in the community would match building requirements to local needs, which may mean an overall reduction in opening hours of buildings. For community facilities the focus would be on coordinating the use of facilities locally rather than the closure of buildings.

Combining property management and maintenance activities

## > Estimated Saving: £410,000

The council has a five year programme for investing in its property and other related assets in order to support service delivery. This approach reduces the need for reactive maintenance work. Maintenance budgets would be reduced and framework contracts introduced for maintenance in order to improve efficiency and reduce ongoing expenditure.

The centralisation of property activities delivered throughout the council would also enable savings to be achieved through the streamlining of operations and the removal of duplication.



Managing the council's information technology infrastructure

## > Estimated Saving: £380,000

Effective information technology systems are key to delivering modern and accessible services.

The council would continue the roll-out of its internet based telephone system which will generate savings in reduced line rental and call charges and at the same time will review the use of mobile telephones across services.



## 5 Reviewing income and concessions

Measures totalling £2.95 million over the next three years have been identified from the development of a clear and fair pricing strategy and concession scheme which would ensure that fees and charges generate income to support services, in line with the council's Anti Poverty Strategy. To comment on the measures below turn to page eight.



**Charging for services** 

> Estimated Saving: £2.2 million

The council's standard practice is to increase charges by 3.5% each year for services, activities and non-housing rents. However the council has the lowest level of sales, fees and charges income per head of population of any council in Scotland. It is therefore proposed that the council sets all discretionary charges in line with Scottish averages, or in line with other local providers such as West Lothian Leisure. The council would also review income levels and budgets to reflect increased demand for services, actual levels of income currently being received and, in some cases, recover the full cost of services.



Introduction of a contributions policy for community care

> Estimated Saving: £750,000

Following legislative changes the council would introduce a policy where, subject to financial assessment on affordability, people who can afford to pay would be required to make a contribution for non-residential care services.

## 6 Delivering effective procurement

Measures totalling £1.44 million over the next three years have been identified by reviewing what we buy and making sure that we buy the appropriate quantity and quality of supplies and services, at the right price. To comment on the measures below turn to page eight.



Savings from the five year procurement plan

> Estimated Saving: £1.44 million

The council's five year procurement strategy was approved in June 2013 and provides a framework for all of the council's purchasing. We would continue to work in partnership with national procurement organisations and other local authority partners for purchasing decisions.

## 7 Reducing energy use

Measures totalling £920,000 over the next three years have been identified by reducing the demand for energy in council buildings to save money and help the environment. To comment on the measures below turn to page eight.

Reducing energy use

Estimated Saving: £920,000

The council has approved a number of renewable energy projects including new street lighting, biomass boilers and solar photovoltaic (PV) panels which will reduce energy consumption and generate additional income for the council. We would propose further energy efficiency measures with a focus on changes to building fabric and mechanical and electrical technology to reduce energy consumption. Savings would also be achieved through changing the behaviour of building users.



## 8 Managing our relationship with customers

Measures totalling £1.13 million over the next three years have been identified which will improve the quality and accessibility of customer services in the council, resulting in more cost effective customer contact. To comment on the measures below turn to page eight.



Increased use of electronic and customer service centre access channels

### > Estimated Saving: £410,000

Investment in online and self-service systems which enhance access and choice would allow the council to deliver more efficient services that are designed to meet users' needs at a lower cost. Transferring more customer telephone and email enquiries to the council's Customer Service Centre would be achieved through a greater integration of council systems. These changes would enable the council to deliver more automated and centralised processes.



**Rationalising frontline** service delivery and management structures

## > Estimated Saving: £720,000

The partnership centre model successfully developed in Bathgate, Broxburn and Fauldhouse would be extended across West Lothian with the staff in the partnership centres offering a more comprehensive service targeting resources on the areas of greatest need. This would be accompanied by more streamlined services in local offices, with a review of opening hours and the range of services available to reflect the demand within communities.





To complete the Your Say consultation response online visit westlothian.gov.uk/yoursay14 or scan the QR code with your mobile device.







## **Summary**

- The council faces budget pressures as a result of Scottish Government funding restrictions and rising demand for services in West Lothian.
- In the Delivering Better Outcomes consultation in 2012, citizens of West Lothian set eight priorities for the council from 2013 to 2018 and put forward many suggestions for making savings and increasing council income to address the budget pressures.
- This consultation sets out the measures which have been developed from those suggestions, explaining how much each proposal would save and the likely impact on services.
- Although the council faces a £30.4 million budget gap as a result of funding restrictions

- and spending pressures, the overall budget for delivering council services will still be substantial in 2017/18. This budget will be used to deliver services that are important to local communities and support the council's eight agreed priorities.
- The council wants to hear from everyone who has an interest in what the council does, what they think of the measures and any other suggestions that they may have to reduce the budget gap.
- Respondents are encouraged to complete the consultation response form online by going to: westlothian.gov.uk/yoursay14 by the closing date Friday 21 November 2014.

You can complete this form and hand it in to any Customer Information Service (CIS) centre, your local housing office, library, West Lothian Civic Centre, community or partnership centre or parents/carers can hand it in at their child's school. Or you can post your completed form to:

West Lothian Council Yoursay 14 FREEPOST SCO7633 Livingston EH54 6BR

Please note: Photocopies will not be accepted.



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## Please complete the details below.

This page must be returned so the information provided by you can be used to assist us to monitor our effectiveness at engaging members of different groups in this consultation.

I am responding as An	ndividual:	An employee of West Name of service area:		On behalf of Name of orga	a Group / Organisation anisation:
If you are responding as an individu	ual or an emplo	yee of the council, pleas	e complete the fol	lowing informati	on:
Age: Gender - Male: Mearest town/village:	Female:	Do you have caring and/or p responsibilities for a child, ch else (e.g. a family member, f	nildren or for anyone		en under 18)
The Equality Act 2010 defines a disability as a mental impairment, which has a substantial adverse effect on a person's ability to carry of tasks."  Do you consider yourself to have a disability under this definition?  YES [ NO [	and long-term	If you consider that you ha of the following conditions A learning disability A longstanding illness or of health condition A mental health condition	:	A physical impairs A sensory impairs Other condition Prefer not to say	
What is your ethnic group - Choose	one section fror	n A to E, then tick ONE box	k which best descri	bes your ethnic gr	roup or background
A White  Scottish British English Irish Welsh Gypsy/Traveller Northern Irish Polish Any other White ethnic group, please write in  B Mixed or multiple ethnic groups Any mixed or multiple ethnic groups please write in	Pakis or Pa India India India Bang Scott Britis Chine Chine	tani, Pakistani Scottish kistani British n, Indian Scottish or n British ladeshi, Bangladeshi ish or Bangladeshi hese, Chinese Scottish or ese British r, please write in	D African, Caribb  African, Africa African Britisl  Caribbean, Ca Scottish or Ca British  Black, Black S Black British  Other, please	an Scottish or n aribbean aribbean cottish or	E Other ethnic group  Arab Other, please write in



Provide your comments here (please include the budget measure reference, for example: 1b)
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