



West Lothian Council **corporate plan** 2007-2011 summary



fresh ideas

West Lothian Council delivers

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CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE



West Lothian
Council

West Lothian Council

We are a large organisation delivering about 100 services to the people, communities and businesses in West Lothian, with over 8200 employees.

These services include:

schools and nurseries; social care; housing; road maintenance; libraries; rubbish collection; business support; community centres; and processing Council Tax and non-domestic rates.

Our mission statement

'Striving for excellence - working with and for our communities'

This means that we aim to keep working to improve our services and organise them around the needs of people in our communities.

Our values

Our values form the basis of all our work.

- ▶ Focusing on our customers' needs
- ▶ Being honest, open and accountable (taking responsibility for our actions)
- ▶ Providing equality of opportunity
- ▶ Developing employees
- ▶ Making the best use of our resources
- ▶ Working with other organisations



Foreword

This is a summary of our four-year corporate plan. The plan sets out our aims and shows that we will work together with our partners to provide excellent services to West Lothian.

Our overall aim is to improve the quality of life of all those living and working in West Lothian by providing services that add value to our communities (public value) At the same time, we need to meet the challenges we face from the growing population, giving everyone equal opportunities and climate change. This plan sets out how we are going to meet these challenges over the next four years.



Peter Johnston,
Leader of West Lothian Council



Alex Linkston,
Chief Executive

We now need to build on our track record by making further improvements to how efficient our services are working more closely with local communities and other agencies and making sure that we focus on getting the results we want. Over the next four years our priorities will be:

- ▶ **improving opportunities for young people;**
- ▶ **making our economy stronger;**
- ▶ **improving the health and wellbeing of our communities;**
- ▶ **protecting our environment and communities;**
- ▶ **planning for population growth; and**
- ▶ **making our services as efficient as possible.**

This summary document provides the high level objectives with the plan explaining in more detail the priorities that all of us in West Lothian Council - councillors, employees and managers - will be working towards and the specific aims we are committed to achieving. We also look forward to working with our partners and the people of West Lothian in improving their quality of life overall.

**Leader and Chief Executive
of West Lothian Council**

Priority - Improving opportunities for young people

Improving opportunities for young people means developing their skills and helping them to become active in their communities, improving their quality of life. By focusing on young people we will provide the foundation for a stronger economy and improve the wellbeing of everyone in West Lothian in the future.

Our main challenges

We want to:

- ▶ create 'learning communities' within our schools, focused on increasing what young people achieve and involving them more in their communities, by getting pupils, parents, school staff and our partners to take part.
- ▶ support and challenge all our pupils and students, and the wider population of West Lothian, to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens, and to help them contribute effectively to society.

Priority - Making our economy stronger

West Lothian is a great place to live, work, visit and develop a business, and we want to build on that reputation. A wealthy community is one that can only be achieved through a varied and dynamic business base and a skilled and motivated workforce. We will work with our partners to create the conditions for our economy to grow, promoting West Lothian to attract and keep businesses and jobs, and we will deliver services and projects focused on contributing towards a successful economy.

Our main challenges

We want to:

- ▶ increase the number of jobs in the area from 73,300 to 78,000 by 2010;
- ▶ increase the number of businesses registered for VAT from 3,200 to 3,600 by 2010;
- ▶ improve the quality of jobs, measured by increasing wage levels towards the Scottish average by 2010;
- ▶ improve educational attainment and increase skills;
- ▶ make the economy more successful measured by the number of people in, or looking for work, as a percentage of the population who are of working age (we call this the local economic activity rate) against the leading areas in the UK; and
- ▶ improve the quality of life in West Lothian, measured by maintaining or increasing how satisfied people are with West Lothian as a place to live (using Citizens' Panel surveys).

Priority - Improving the health and wellbeing of our communities

A healthy community is one where people feel physically and emotionally well, safe and part of their local community. Positive life circumstances such as:

- ▶ a living income (enough money to live on to have a satisfactory standard of living);
- ▶ decent housing;
- ▶ achieving in education;
- ▶ an environment where people can develop;
- ▶ making healthy choices;
- ▶ good job prospects; and
- ▶ access to cultural activities;

all contribute to our health and wellbeing.

We take our responsibilities as a health-improvement organisation seriously and we are working to improve health and wellbeing through all of our services. One challenge for us in improving communities is how we tackle the needs of the most vulnerable people in our communities (A person or group is vulnerable when they need support to live independently and safely, in their community). In partnership with the health services through the Community Health and Care Partnership, we make sure that everyone with special needs can live full lives.

We are committed to providing local services for local people. Keeping services at St John's Hospital helps us achieve this approach, as does helping people continue to live independently in their own communities for as long as possible. We support keeping services at St John's, and adding to these services, based on the outcome of plans to change catchment areas for acute hospital services (the services available at a hospital).

We will work to stop more healthcare services being withdrawn from St John's Hospital and the West Lothian area, working in partnership with other relevant agencies. We will also make sure St John's Hospital has a future as an emergency acute hospital by promoting an open and honest debate where clinical staff and members of the public can take part.



Our main challenges

We want to:

- ▶ make sure all our partners support work that improves the health of everyone in West Lothian;
- ▶ help people, families and groups to make healthy choices, for example, by being more active, eating a varied diet, choosing to breastfeed their babies, stopping smoking, and reducing the use of drugs or alcohol;
- ▶ allow people who are dependent on others or whose need for care is increasing to live at home, or in their local community;
- ▶ develop more people-focused services and support people with disabilities, their families and carers, promoting greater opportunities for including them in society and their local community;
- ▶ use health and social work services to improve care services further; and
- ▶ make sure that everyone in West Lothian has access to the arts, heritage, parks, the countryside and open spaces, libraries and sports.

Priority - Protecting our environment and communities

A safer community is one where people can live their lives without fear for their own or other people's safety. Improving people's quality of life is one of our main aims and this is affected by how safe people feel in their communities and by the quality of their home and local environment.

Crime, antisocial behaviour, violence and abuse continue to have a negative effect on some people who live in West Lothian, as well as harm caused by fires, alcohol or drug misuse and accidents in the home. We will focus our resources on these priorities and tackle them by working with the voluntary sector, the health service, the police, the procurator fiscal and fire services.

Our main challenges

We want to:

- ▶ work with our partners and local communities to create safe homes and communities and a better environment for people to live in; and
- ▶ focus in particular on the needs of vulnerable people.

Priority - Planning for population growth

The West Lothian Local Plan was prepared in 2005 and it sets out how West Lothian should grow from now until 2020. The plan provides a framework for how West Lothian will grow which allows new houses to be built for the growing population, makes sure we put facilities in place for the new residents, helps the local economy to keep growing and help reduce the effect the growing population will have on the environment.

Altogether, 20,000 new houses are planned before 2020. Most of the new building will take place in five core development areas at Armadale, east Broxburn and Winchburgh, Gavieside (on the west side of Livingston) and Calderwood (on the east side of East Calder). Other growth areas include sites at Bathgate on the former Leyland site and Whitburn (on the former Polkemmet colliery).

Our main challenges

The main challenges we face in planning new and extended communities on this scale are to make sure that we:

- ▶ take full account of the effect these developments will have on generations of people in the future;
- ▶ put local facilities in place (such as schools, roads, community centres, shops and so on) before people move into the new houses;
- ▶ get funding for important facilities (such as schools, roads, community centres, shops and so on) through financial contributions from housing developers, and match this funding from our finances, where appropriate, and put systems in place to manage the risk of not having enough money to carry out development projects;
- ▶ have appropriate transport alternatives for people to use instead of their cars to help reduce greenhouse-gas emissions and traffic congestion;
- ▶ protect and improve the environment; and
- ▶ improve and maintain the quality of life for both our existing and new residents.

Priority - Making our services as efficient as possible

We will keep working to improve how we deliver and manage our services. We have developed evaluation techniques, important strategies and management systems to make sure that our services are effective and efficient and that we meet people's needs. We use technology to help people use our services in ways that will help us develop and work even more efficiently and effectively.

Our main challenges

We want to manage our resources efficiently and effectively while continuing to improve how we serve the community.

We will:

- ▶ use our quality-management system (the West Lothian Assessment Model, or WLAM) to deliver strong self-assessments that help us keep improving across the council and replace the burden of being inspected by other organisations;
- ▶ make sure we provide all our services in line with the Charter Mark;
- ▶ continue to develop a performance-management system that helps us to improve;
- ▶ achieve the aims of our customer-services strategy, improving access to and the quality of our services even further;
- ▶ improve how efficient our services and use of resources are;
- ▶ produce and maintain appropriate information on all our assets (property, open space, countryside, housing, roads and structures and so on) to manage how suitable they are to meet our current and future needs;
- ▶ make sure that our 'investment in people' improves how we work; and
- ▶ work to attract and keep staff.

Tell us what you think

We want to keep in touch with local people and get their views on our plans and services.

If you would like to give us your views or get more information on our corporate plan, or any of the plans and strategies we have mentioned in this plan, please contact:

West Lothian Council
West Lothian House
Almondvale Boulevard
Livingston
EH54 6QG.

Phone: 01506 777000

E-mail: customer.service@westlothian.gov.uk

You can find this and our other plans on our website at www.westlothian.gov.uk

Customers with special requirements

Information is available in Braille, tape, large print and community languages. Please contact the interpretation and translation service on **0131 242 8181**

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Prosimy o kontakt z Uslugami Tlumaczeniowymi pod numerem 0131 242 8181.

Text phones offer the opportunity for people with a hearing impairment to access the council. The text phone number is **01506 464427**. A loop system is also available in all offices.

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