

# Bulletin



Issue no.83 | Winter 2017

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## transforming your council

[www.westlothian.gov.uk/transforming](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/transforming)

West Lothian Council has to make £73million of savings over the next five years. The savings will result in changes to services which will impact upon our communities.

### We're consulting on:

- 1 The council's priorities over the next five years
- 2 Budget proposals that will result in changes to services
- 3 Proposals to raise Council Tax to help protect council services

Consultation inside 



# Countdown

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## Contact West Lothian Council



### For general enquiries:

The council's Customer Information Services (CIS) centres offer face-to-face advice, information and assistance on council services, including: council tax and benefits; housing; concessionary travel; and waste and recycling.

CIS centres in Armadale, Bathgate, Broxburn, Carmondean Connected (self-service kiosk only), Livingston Arrochar House and Whitburn also offer payment facilities for rent, council tax and service accounts.

The council's Customer Service Centre (CSC) lines are open from Monday - Friday, 8am to 10.30pm. Thereafter a number of staff are on-site to deal with emergency calls. The CSC lines are also open from 10.30pm on Friday to 8am on Monday for emergency calls relating to noise, homelessness, repairs to council houses, roads, street lighting and environmental health.

Call the CSC on: **01506 280000**

customer.service@westlothian.gov.uk

www.westlothian.gov.uk

### There are other direct numbers for specialised services as follows:

- > Antisocial Behaviour **01506 282000** or contact the Police on **101**
- > Gas servicing **01506 280000**
- > NETS and Land Services **0800 616446**
- > Pupil Placement **01506 280000**, select option 4
- > Council Tax and Benefits **01506 280000**, select option 2
- > Social Care Emergency Team (SCET) **01506 281028** or **281029**
- > Crisis Care Team **01506 418784**
- > Textphone for hard of hearing **01506 454427**
- > Homelessness **0800 0323 450**

If you have an emergency, and need to contact the council outwith normal business hours (between 10.30pm and 8am) then please dial **01506 280000**.

### Other useful contacts:

West Lothian Advice Shop, Bathgate Partnership Centre

01506 283000

advice.shop@westlothian.gov.uk

www.westlothian.gov.uk/advice-shop

### Citizens Advice Bureau

Advice Line **01506 432977**, Appointment Line: **01506 435132**,

enquiries@cabwestlothian.org.uk

www.cabwestlothian.org.uk

### West Lothian Credit Union

01506 436666

info@westlothiancreditunion.co.uk

www.westlothiancreditunion.co.uk

Information is available in Braille, tape, large print and community languages. Please contact the interpretation and translation service on **01506 280000**.

Text phones offer the opportunity for people with a hearing impairment to access the council. The text phone number is **01506 591652**. A loop system is also available in all offices.

## Feedback:



We welcome feedback from readers. If you wish to comment on Bulletin please email: [bulletin@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:bulletin@westlothian.gov.uk) or call **01506 282006**. Alternatively, write to Bulletin, Corporate Communications, West Lothian Civic Centre, Howden South Road, Livingston, EH54 6FF.

## Countdown to new West Calder High School



There's less than a year to go until the new state-of-the-art £32 million West Calder High School opens its doors.

The project is West Lothian's largest ever single investment in education, and is on track to welcome pupils from August 2018.

Executive councillor for education David Dodds was joined by school pupils and invited guests for a special ceremony to mark the anniversary.

The new 1,100 capacity West Calder High School has been specifically designed with pupil experience at the core, and will include a swimming pool, floodlit 3G sports pitch, and sports facilities for school and community use.

Councillor Dodds said: "The new West Calder High School will give a real boost to learning when it opens in a year's time, and I'm delighted to see the good progress being made.

"Providing the best possible environment for education can make a real difference to our young people, and the new West Calder High School's innovative design will help pupils to achieve their full potential.

"West Lothian already has one of the best school estates in the country, and we are investing over £100 million in education infrastructure projects to provide the right platform for learning for our young people."

The project for the new school is being delivered for West Lothian Council through Hub South East Scotland, with Morrison Construction appointed to build the new school. Funding for the development is being provided by West Lothian Council and the Scottish Futures Trust's Schools for the Future programme.

Construction work on the new West Calder High School is progressing well with the steel frame of the building and installation of concrete floor slabs and roof lights now fully completed.

Roof cladding is progressing well and much of the building is now weathertight, allowing internal partition wall work and electrical and mechanical installation work to begin.

## Festive recycling and waste collection changes

Check [www.westlothian.gov.uk/festivebins](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/festivebins) in December 2017 for detail of recycling and refuse arrangements over the Christmas and New Year period.



Householders are advised to make sure they find out when their bins and caddies will be collected over the festive period.

The holiday period means collections are liable to change from Monday 18 December onwards.

Changes will be advertised on the council website at [www.westlothian.gov.uk/festivebins](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/festivebins) in December as well as on the council's social media channels and in the local press.

Householders are advised to look out for the changes and set a reminder, such as marking a calendar, to make sure they don't miss any collections.

Collections times could also differ from usual, so residents are also reminded that bins and food

waste caddies should be put out by 7am on the morning of collection and kept out until they are emptied.

Recycling and refuse can also be taken to West Lothian's six Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) in Blackburn, Broxburn, Linlithgow, Deans and Oakbank in Livingston and Whitburn between 10am and 5pm, with last entry at 4.45pm.

Bulky uplifts and brown bins will be temporarily suspended over the Festive period to give priority to householders' wheeled bin and food waste caddy collections.

Details of the winter brown bin collection in January for real Christmas trees and other green waste will also be available in December at [www.westlothian.gov.uk/festivebins](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/festivebins).

## BULLETIN SPECIAL OFFERS



### NEW HOPETOUN GARDENS

ORDER AND PAY FOR YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE BEFORE THE END OF NOVEMBER AND WE WILL DELIVER IT FREE ANYWHERE IN WEST LOTHIAN IN DECEMBER.

Valid until 30 Nov 2017

Present this voucher at the tills. Photocopies will not be accepted. New Hopetoun Gardens:  
Tel: 01506 834 433. Email: [info@newhopetoungardens.co.uk](mailto:info@newhopetoungardens.co.uk)  
[www.newhopetoungardens.co.uk](http://www.newhopetoungardens.co.uk)



### ALMOND VALLEY HERITAGE CENTRE

1 FREE CHILD WHEN ACCOMPANIED BY A PAYING ADULT.



Enjoy a fun-filled day for all the family at Almond Valley Heritage Centre. Meet the animals, enjoy some adventure and play or visit the fantastic Shale Museum.

Almond Valley Heritage Centre, Millfield, Livingston, EH54 7AR  
01506 414957 / [www.almondvalley.co.uk](http://www.almondvalley.co.uk)

Child must be accompanied by a paying adult. Voucher valid until the 30th November. Photocopies will not be accepted.



### LINLITHGOW ARTS GUILD

EXCELLENCE IN LIVE ARTS SINCE 1969

Come to a top class professional classical music concert in Linlithgow and collect your free programme for the evening. All events are at venues in Linlithgow at 7.30pm on selected Saturdays.

Tickets and information at: [www.LinlithgowArtsGuild.co.uk](http://www.LinlithgowArtsGuild.co.uk)  
Text or phone 07731 614179 Tickets U26 £6 and adults £12

Voucher must be presented upon arrival. Photocopies will not be accepted.  
Offer valid for 1 event in the period October to December 2017 subject to availability.  
Linlithgow Arts Guild, [www.linlithgowartsguild.co.uk](http://www.linlithgowartsguild.co.uk),  
Email: [info@linlithgowartsguild.org.uk](mailto:info@linlithgowartsguild.org.uk), Tel: 07731 614179



### Enjoy half price ice creams

for you and family or friends when you come along to Howden Park Centre's magical new Christmas pantomime, Beauty and the Beast.

Box Office 01506 777666 | [howdenparkcentre.co.uk](http://howdenparkcentre.co.uk)

Running from 11-28 December, Beauty and the Beast is a fresh take on the classic tale, full of jokes and winter fun for all the family! Maximum 4 ice creams per voucher, please present when placing order. Photocopies will not be accepted.

Valid until 28th December 2017.



# 20 new foster families are needed urgently



## We care ... .. could you?

West Lothian children are waiting for caring and committed people to foster them. We have primary and secondary children who need long and short-term foster families. The lengths of placements can also vary.

The children who need foster families are the same as other children, they go to school, they like the cinema, they like to play, make friends, listen to music and take part in clubs.

However, they will often have experienced troubled or disrupted family lives, or they could have experienced separation, loss or abuse.

Fostering is a way of offering these children and young people a safe, stable, family environment while their own families are unable to look after them.

### Who can foster?

We welcome single people and couples regardless of your gender, sexuality or ethnic background.

### Are smokers allowed to foster?

If you are a smoker, we will only approve you to foster children aged 5-years and over.

### How much space do I need?

You must have a spare room and enough space for the children you foster.

### What happens if I have a pet?

Pets are welcome and can bring many positive experiences. Your pet will be assessed as part of the process.

### Are there age restrictions?

Yes, you must be aged 21-years or over.

### What about training?

All prospective foster carers must be available for assessment, and must attend the pre-approval training course. Once you are a foster carer you will receive on-going support.

### More information

[www.westlothianchcp.org.uk/lovefostering](http://www.westlothianchcp.org.uk/lovefostering) 01506 775677

[fostercare@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:fostercare@westlothian.gov.uk)



# OPENING DOORS TO YOUR CAREER

Open doors to your career and study up to Degree level at West Lothian College, the only Scottish College to score 100% for student satisfaction in the National Student Survey.

We offer a variety of full- and part-time courses in a wide range of subjects including:

- Business & Creative
- Childhood Practice, Sport & Fitness
- Computing & Engineering
- Construction & Motor Vehicle
- Hospitality, Travel & Tourism
- Hairdressing & Beauty Therapy
- Health & Social Care
- Science & Social Science

96% of students who completed their course in 2015 - 16 were in further study or employment six months after finishing their course. **Full time courses open for applications from mid-December!**

For students staying on at school, there are a variety of **Foundation Apprenticeship courses available** for 5th and 6th year students. These qualifications provide you with hands on work experience, are the same level as a Higher, and can be studied alongside your other school subjects.



For more information visit: [www.west-lothian.ac.uk](http://www.west-lothian.ac.uk)

Almondvale Crescent, Livingston,  
West Lothian, EH54 7EP. T: 01506 418181  
E: [enquiries@west-lothian.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@west-lothian.ac.uk)



# transforming your council

www.westlothian.gov.uk/transforming

It is expected that West Lothian Council will have to make estimated savings of £73 million over the next five years, resulting in changes to local services.



## What **you** need to know

The estimated budget gap of £73 million is based on the assumption that Scottish Government grant funding will not be enough to meet the increasing costs of providing existing council services

**£73 million**

Funding constraints are combined with rising costs, which include growing pupil numbers and an increasing number of older people with care needs



The council needs to make substantial savings across those services it is not required to deliver by law (known as non-statutory), including highly-valued services that communities have become accustomed to

The council is going through a period of huge change and the future will likely see a council that has fewer staff operating from fewer offices, providing fewer direct services, but in a more joined up and cost-effective way

Council officers have published a number of budget proposals which represent reductions and changes in services. If all these proposals are agreed the council will be able to balance its budget – something it is legally required to do

Given that the council has already made £92 million worth of savings since 2007, it is now extremely challenging to identify savings for the next five years that will not impact upon communities

Please read this document carefully and provide feedback on three areas:



What do you think:

- 1 West Lothian Council should **focus its resources** on over the next five years?
- 2 of the **budget proposals** that will result in changes to services?
- 3 of the proposals to **raise Council Tax** to help protect local services?

## Why we are consulting



Throughout the last ten years, the council consulted with West Lothian residents over changes to services.

The council believes strongly in working with local communities and is committed to working with customers, staff and community planning partners in every aspect of work.

Council officers have developed proposed budget measures which will allow the council to address an estimated £73 million budget gap. However they will significantly change some council services and the council want to know what you think about these measures. In particular the council is keen to hear from you if you think that there are alternatives to the proposals that we should consider. If any measure is to be removed, alternative measures would have to be put forward to balance the budget.

Council services have an impact on everyone in West Lothian and the council want to involve everyone in our budget consultation. The council will work with all citizens to find a way to address the budget pressures.

## Dear citizen

West Lothian Council must change the way in which services are delivered in the years ahead.

Change is not a new concept to us. Since 2007 the council has had to make savings of £92 million, but the economic environment remains very challenging and the council still faces considerable budget pressures.

Over the past ten years, the council has consulted with citizens on changes to services. The feedback received has always helped shape local services whilst delivering the services that we know are important to you – your priorities. However, changes in demographics mean that demand for council services continues to rise and the level of funding we receive from the Scottish Government continues to be insufficient to pay for the services we provide.

The council by law has to balance its budget and the council must therefore reduce the amount of money we spend on local services. Given the reductions in our budget since 2007, it is now extremely challenging to identify where savings can be made over the next five years that will not impact upon communities and highly-valued services.

Five years from now, the council will be a different organisation.

The council has no choice but to reduce spending. However we do have a choice of how we reduce spending. It is vital that the council and the citizens of West Lothian continue to work together to address the challenges ahead. There are difficult but important decisions to be made about council services.

Council officers have developed a wide-ranging set of budget proposals which, if approved, would allow the council to reduce spending and balance the budget. They would also still ensure that the council could fulfil our legal obligation to

provide statutory services to local people. We are consulting with you to help us address the challenges we face over the next five years.

We are looking for feedback on three main areas: what are your priorities over the next five years; what are your views on the officer budget proposals contained within this document; and what are your views on Council Tax, which is used to help fund local services.

Your views are important and I would encourage every citizen, community planning partner and business to get involved.

Graham Hope, Chief Executive, West Lothian Council

The council will be working with you to agree our priorities and to consult on budget proposals.



Turn over to find out more

# Our journey so far



West Lothian Council has been delivering public services since 1996 and is one of Scotland's leading local authorities.

The council is West Lothian's largest employer with over 8,000 staff members delivering a wide-range of services including: care for the elderly, schools, community facilities and libraries, roads, parks, waste services, council housing and much more. Over the years the council has continually sought to improve the lives of West Lothian's residents. The council has delivered a number of key achievements.

- The council has improved literacy and numeracy for children and young people
- In 2017 the best ever school exam results were recorded in West Lothian
- The council has supported and created employment in West Lothian
- The council has invested significantly in school buildings, community facilities and parks and have one of the best school estates in Scotland
- The council has created hugely successful and popular Partnership Centres across West Lothian
- The council is caring for more older people in their community
- The council is a Living Wage employer
- The council is one of the country's best-performing councils in terms of building new council homes and improving existing council homes
- The council is delivering positive outcomes on health and have built successful partnerships with Community Planning Partners

- The council has the best A class roads in Scotland and one of the best road networks in Scotland
- The council has significantly increased recycling rates and reduced West Lothian's carbon footprint

Over the years changes in demographics and the availability of new technologies mean that the council continually adapt to an ever changing landscape.

However a significant amount of change has been necessary over the past ten years as a result of budget pressures. The council has had to contend with rising costs and insufficient funding which has resulted in the council having to make over £92million of savings since 2007.

In order for the council to balance its budget, a significant programme of change has been ongoing since 2007. A wide-range of budget measures and new ways of working have been introduced to increase efficiency and focus services on our priority areas.

The council has also taken huge steps to ensure that services meet the needs of changing customer demands whilst using technology more effectively – this is often referred to as modernisation.

Throughout the last ten years, the council has consulted residents about changes to services. Despite all this, it is expected that West Lothian Council will have to make a further £73 million of savings over the next five years, resulting in more significant changes to local services. The impact of these future budget restrictions will transform local authorities and local services across Scotland.

## Why do we need to change further?

West Lothian is experiencing a period of regeneration, expansion and development.

Our growth and aspirations are set against a backdrop of significant budget reductions and increased cost pressures.

### Key points:

- The majority of the council's funding is received directly from the Scottish Government and Government funding is expected to be far less than the level needed to deliver existing services.
- Inadequate funding is combined with increasing rising costs. Not only do we have a growing elderly population but, unlike most areas of Scotland, we also have an increasing younger population. This means that there are increasing pressures on the council to provide more services such as schools, care for the elderly, care for adults

with complex needs, roads and housing, and increasing costs for goods, services and staffing.

- Public expectations and demands are increasing – customers expect a faster more efficient service, often 24/7.
- New technology provides the council with an opportunity to deliver services in more effective ways.
- The council must, by law, deliver many statutory services such as care facilities, maintaining roads and education for young people.
- The council must focus resources on prevention and prioritise services that matter most to our communities.

What might West Lothian Council look like in five years?



**£165 MILLION** It is estimated that the council will have **£73 million** less to spend over the next five years. By the end of this period, the council will have saved **£165 million** over a fifteen-year period

More focus on **providing care** for the elderly and vulnerable adults as the number of people aged over 75 will have increased by 25%

**Technology** will continue to play an increasing role in our day-to-day lives. More services will be accessible online with less need for face-to-face interaction with council staff

**An increase in the amount of care provided to West Lothian's population** due to health conditions, disability or problems relating to old age

West Lothian's total population will be approximately 190,000, **an increase of 10,000** on the current population resulting in an increasing demand for council services

**More people using our roads, paths and parks** - increased pressure on the council to allow West Lothian to grow and prosper

**1,200 more primary school children (an increase of 8%) and 1,400 more secondary school children (an increase of 13%).**

More emphasis on providing school facilities, both in terms of new schools and improving existing facilities

**The number of people living alone is likely to increase.** More support and investment in technology will allow people to remain in their home and live safely

# What may change

West Lothian Council delivers a vast range of services to people living and working in our communities.



We provide many public services that help to enhance and protect West Lothian and importantly, provide vital support to those most in need. These include schools and nurseries for children, social care for older and vulnerable people, social housing and environmental services, such as recycling, land and roads management services. Our services have a positive impact on the local infrastructure and economy and contribute to improving outcomes in education attainment and the health and quality of life of local people.

Many council services are statutory – which means that the council is legally required to continue to provide these services. The council also provides some non-statutory services that offer additional support to the community.

In the years ahead we will continue to prioritise and deliver those services that have the greatest positive impact on improving the quality of life for people in West Lothian. However, the way in which services are provided will change. Because of the financial pressures that the council will face, some services will have to be delivered in a different way, or at a different cost and some services will have to be stopped altogether.

## Key points

- At this stage the council is consulting on officer budget proposals. Decisions on what will change will not be made by councillors until after the consultation is complete.
- Financial pressures and the increasing levels of demand mean that services can no longer be provided in the same way.
- It is anticipated that in the future the council will have fewer staff and there will be a further reduction in the number of council offices and buildings.
- Some services may be delivered or accessed in different ways in future years, with a greater number delivered through automated, self-service or online methods.
- In the future the council may not deliver all of the services it currently provides.
- Some services currently delivered by the council may in the future be delivered by partners, communities or other organisations.
- The council will continue to prioritise our resources and ensure that we have the right people, partners and assets to deliver positive outcomes for West Lothian and address needs.
- We will continue to focus resources on those in our community who are most in need, such as children, older and vulnerable people.

## Budget proposals

Council officers have developed proposals under seven themes (See pages 6 to 10):

**1** Modernising services and managing our workforce



**2** Modernising Social Care



**3** Managing our relationships with customers



**4** Working with partners to deliver outcomes



**5** Managing our assets and reducing energy



**6** Reviewing income and concessions



**7** Environment



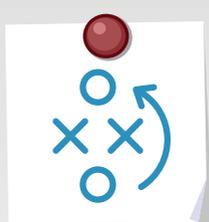
## How will we meet the challenges ahead?



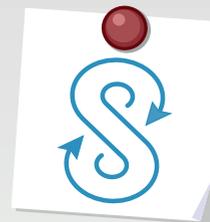
**Develop a Financial Plan** that sets out the council's priorities and plan ahead for the next five years



**Consult** with residents, Community Planning Partners and local organisations on the choices that lie ahead



**Agree our Financial Plan** and our **Corporate Plan** including priorities, following consultation



**Introduce a programme of transformation** over the next five years that will radically change how some services are delivered

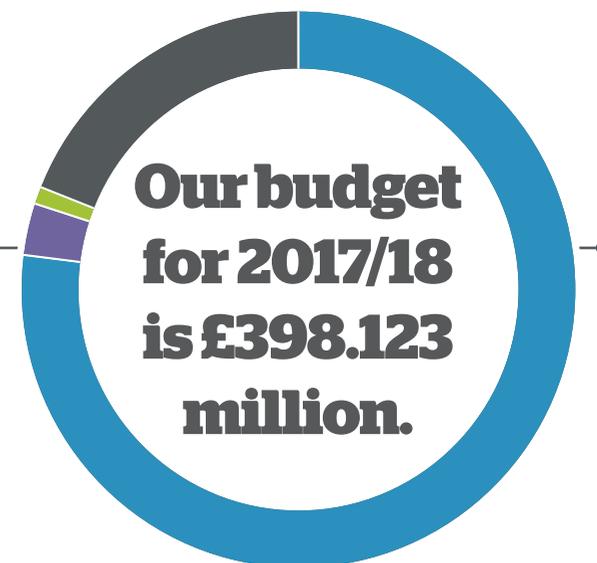
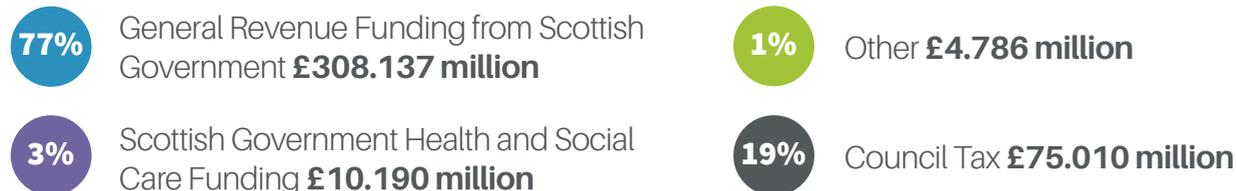


**Ensure the local community** is consulted throughout

**At all times seek to prioritise, deliver and improve local services**

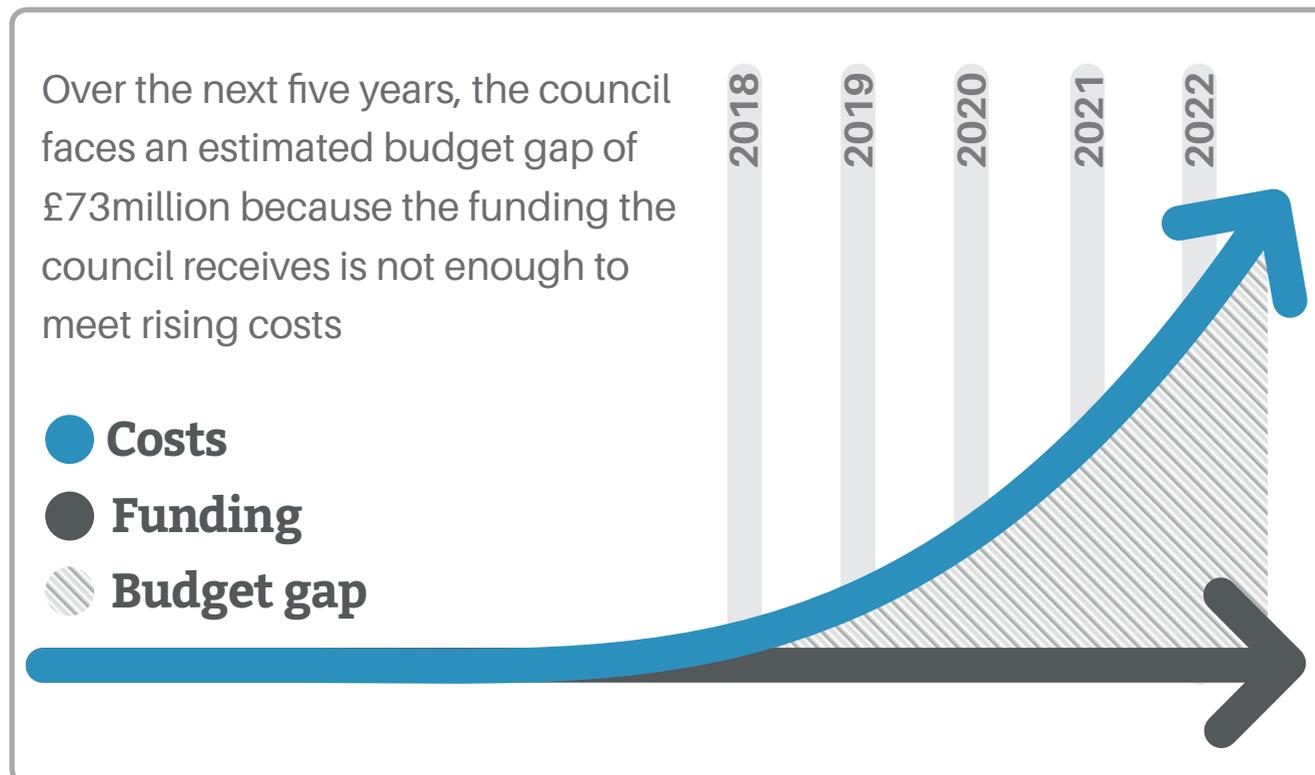
# How the council is funded

West Lothian Council receives its funding from several sources.



## Here are some examples of where we will spend the 2017/18 budget

<p><b>£69.6 million</b> on Primary School education <b>£54.7 million</b> on Secondary School education</p>	<p><b>£11.3 million</b> on Additional Education Support Needs</p>	<p><b>£7.6 million</b> on Early Learning and Childcare</p>	<p><b>£42.6 million</b> on services for older people</p>	<p><b>£31.3 million</b> is spent on social work services for children and families <b>£26.8 million</b> on services for vulnerable adults</p>
<p><b>£7 million</b> on country parks/open spaces, play areas, street cleaning and cemeteries</p>	<p><b>£10.1 million</b> on waste management and recycling</p>	<p><b>£10.3 million</b> on footpaths, street lighting, roads, winter maintenance, structures and flood prevention</p>	<p><b>£4.5 million</b> on planning, economic development, trading standards and environmental health</p>	
<p><b>£9.5 million</b> on public (including school transport) and community transport including bus subsidies for privately owned bus providers <b>£12 million</b> on facilities management, including school meals, cleaning council buildings, janitorial staff and street crossing patrol guides</p>	<p><b>£6.7 million</b> on the council's fleet and community transport service</p>	<p><b>£3.5 million</b> on homelessness services and community safety</p>	<p><b>£6.6 million</b> on culture, sports services and adult learning <b>£4.5 million</b> on partnership centres, including libraries, registration services, community centres, and customer care</p>	



### Financial planning

West Lothian Council is taking a robust approach to financial planning and is looking to agree a five year Financial Plan for 2018/19 to 2022/23.

This will allow us to identify where savings need to be made and where investment is needed. This approach is endorsed by Audit Scotland – the independent body which gives independent assurance to the people of Scotland that public money is spent properly, efficiently and effectively.

The council aims to agree a five year Financial Plan in early 2018.

# Our priorities

In 2012 the council set eight priorities for West Lothian in a consultation with the local community, partners, stakeholders and our staff.

These priorities set challenging targets for improving the quality of life in West Lothian and the council has been striving to improve and deliver in each priority, targeting resources for the last four years.



The council believes that the eight priorities below are still the right priorities to make a better West Lothian. Are these still the priorities that matter most to you?

**1**

**Delivering positive outcomes and early intervention for early years**

Supporting children and young people to get the best possible start in life.

**2**

**Improving the employment position in West Lothian**

Supporting business and economic growth in West Lothian and helping people into employment.

**3**

**Improving attainment and positive destinations for school children**

Improving the quality of learning and teaching in our schools and helping young people to succeed.

**4**

**Improving the quality of life for older people**

Supporting older people by offering care and support that helps them to live well and have greater control, choice and independence.

**5**

**Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality**

Helping people living in poverty and deprivation, through housing, money advice and employability schemes.

**6**

**Reducing crime and improving community safety**

Reducing crime, reoffending, antisocial behaviour and protecting the most vulnerable people in our community.

**7**

**Delivering positive outcomes on health**

Working collaboratively with our partners in health to improve the health and wellbeing of local people.

**8**

**Protecting the built and natural environment**

Building strong, sustainable communities and protecting the local environment.

## We are seeing meaningful change and improvement:

- The quality of education and attainment results are improving in our schools, with the best exam results ever in 2017
- We are building more council housing in West Lothian than any other area in Scotland
- Older people and vulnerable people are living longer and healthier lives with a range of options for support and care in their communities
- There has been significant investment in improving our roads, parks and open spaces, making West Lothian a more attractive place to live, work and visit.

Are these still the priorities that matter most to you?  
Turn to page 11 to take part in our consultation

## 1

# Modernising services and managing our workforce

Measures totalling £25.3 million over the next five 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.



## 1a Service Redesign, Integration & Modernisation

**Estimated Saving: £4 million**

The council has a range of internal functions that provide management, business and financial support to council services and support statutory requirements. These functions, and the units which provide them, could be improved through redesign, integration and further use of technology to increase efficiency and effectiveness. This would include consolidating and reducing management and administrative support functions, as well as continuing to generate savings in systems costs. There will also be changes to how the council works with partner organisations providing services.

## 1b Rationalisation of Central Support to Schools

**Estimated Saving: £2.5 million**

With an increased focus at a national level on giving schools and Head Teachers responsibility for attainment and more direct control over funding, a number of changes to central support are proposed. This will include the restructure, redesign and reduction in central educational services such as business support provision and quality assurance activities, an advisory approach to educational psychology, and integrating a reduced instrumental music provision into the mainstream curriculum. The overall aim is to embed teaching resources, processes and activities within schools.

## 1c Redesign Scheme of Devolved School Management

**Estimated Saving: £3.6 million**

Following the publication of the national review of devolved school management (DSM), there is an opportunity for the council to review its own DSM scheme to ensure that it is fit for purpose. The review will include greater use of existing resources for service delivery, including further use of technology. Revised staffing models will also be introduced that will make changes to management, administrative and support staffing arrangements.

There is a need to review current service provision to make sure that it is providing the best and most efficient service.

The council believes changes can be made in management restructures and support arrangements, a revised DSM funding model and review provision by third party providers to maximise efficiency whilst continuing to protect service provision.

## 1d Redesign of Early Learning & Childcare

**Estimated Saving: £1.5 million**

The national commitment to deliver 1,140 hours of early learning and childcare provides an opportunity to review and change how we deliver services to children and their families. The council will make sure that all resources available for early learning and childcare are appropriately used to support service delivery. The focus will be on consistency of service delivery,

both with the national commitments but also across all nursery provision in West Lothian with nurseries being managed by Head Teachers at associated primary schools.

## 1e Service Restructure of Adult Learning & Youth Services

**Estimated Saving: £1.6 million**

A review of youth services has shown that the service makes its greatest impact through More Choices, More Chances (MCMC) – a programme that aims to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training.

The focus will be on MCMC, with other initiatives and work supported through closer working between schools and community learning partners. The council will continue to deliver statutory adult learning and English as a Second Language through a smaller team.

## 1f Rationalisation of Support to Parents & Carers

**Estimated Saving: £300,000**

The council's pupil placement team and education customer care team will be consolidated into one team with more rationalisation and streamlining of activities.

## 1g Workforce Arrangements

**Estimated Saving: £1.4 million**

Staffing costs represent the largest proportion of the council's budget. Faced with a substantial budget gap, a review of terms and conditions is proposed, including pay enhancements and allowances, to make savings in staffing costs. The focus will be on changes to overtime arrangements and allowances that meet service requirements whilst also demonstrating value for money.

## 1h General Balance of Savings to be Identified

**Estimated Saving: £10.4 million**

The nature of medium to long-term financial planning means that it becomes increasingly difficult to identify with certainty expenditure, income and savings. As the five year programme progresses, the council will develop specific measures to meet the estimated remaining budget gap.

This will include looking at the scope to work with other councils and public authorities to deliver shared services.

Given that the majority of the council's budget is staffing costs, it is highly likely that the balance will be met by changes to service delivery and staffing levels across the council's workforce.

## 2

## Modernising Social Care

Measures totalling £20.6 million over the next five years have been identified that would change the way we deliver services. These alter behaviours and factors that can have a detrimental impact on lives at an early stage, and/or deal with issues before they reach a crisis stage.

The West Lothian Integration Joint Board (IJB) is responsible for a wide range of health and social care functions in West Lothian. They include adult and elderly social care services. They are legally delegated to the IJB. The council operationally delivers those services in accordance with the IJB's strategic plan and directions. This consultation includes saving proposals which have been identified by council officers and relate to adult and elderly care services and those are included below.



### 2a Care for Children

**Estimated Saving: £5.2 million**

Proposed changes to reshaping care for families and young people will allow more effective use of resources to create better outcomes for young people.

The council will modernise internal teams and processes to focus on highest risk cases and early intervention and prevention, with family support being undertaken on an outreach basis.

Changes will be made to residential placements to make greater use of council provision and allow children with disabilities to remain in their local community, focusing on keeping young people in West Lothian.

### 2b Adult and Older People Assessment

**Estimated Saving: £8.8 million**

The council is faced with growing numbers of people needing care services, combined with severe budget pressures. Many local authorities have already changed their assessment criteria with access to care based on people's needs and risks to independence.

The council is proposing that the threshold levels would be set at critical/substantial for all new clients for care, respite provision and private adaptation grants. Social Work resources would be focused on supporting those most in need and short care visits would be reviewed to identify if more appropriate interventions are required.

The council would also expand on the successful use of technology to support care at home provision.

### 2c Care for Adults

**Estimated Saving: £2.5 million**

The introduction of self-directed support, where individuals can make choices regarding their care packages, has seen a change in the nature of services requested. Incorporating the change in demand, there is a greater need for outreach interventions therefore it is proposed that day care facilities currently provided at three different locations are combined into one at Pathways, in Livingston.

Local solutions will be developed to allow people to stay in supported accommodation in their communities rather than other residential facilities.

Changes to the sleepover model, including greater use of technology and sharing resources with other providers, are also proposed.

### 2d Commissioned Services

**Estimated Saving: £2.1 million**

How the council buys care services will be reviewed to ensure services delivered by external partners meet people's needs.

The care services bought by the council will reduce as the proposals in this document are implemented. Although support will continue to be given to those providers who deliver services to the most vulnerable in our communities.

This will include reducing the council's contribution over and above the level of external funding received for initiatives such as the Alcohol and Drug Partnership Service.

### 2e Building Based Care

**Estimated Saving: £800,000**

The council provides a number of care services in purpose built buildings.

Council owned day centres for older people would close with the service continuing to be delivered by existing external partners. Following the opening of Rosemount Gardens in Bathgate, and reflecting the changes in client choice following the introduction of self-directed support, a more flexible model for housing with care for older people would be adopted throughout West Lothian.

### 2f Social Policy Management and Support

**Estimated Saving: £1.2 million**

Taking into account the changes to social care services proposed by the council, there is an opportunity to review and reduce management and administrative requirements.

As well as streamlining and consolidating internal processes to make efficiency savings, opportunities to integrate further with partners will be progressed.



## 3 Managing our relationship with customers



Measures totalling £1.4 million over the next five years have been identified, which will improve the quality and accessibility of customer services in the council, resulting in more cost effective customer contact.

### 3a Channel Shift and Digital Transformation

**Estimated Saving: £600,000**

The council has the opportunity to look at how customers access services, introducing digital solutions to meet demand. A transformational change programme will be developed based on a **digital by choice** ethos and more online and self-service solutions will be introduced to support council employees in delivering services. This would allow the council to continue to provide support whilst delivering a more efficient service at a lower cost.

### 3b Modernised Library and Information Service

**Estimated Saving: £200,000**

The council has successfully developed the partnership model over the last five years, allowing staff to provide services to customers in one location. Provision in Library and Customer Information Services (CIS) would be rationalised.

### 3c Integrated Anti-Poverty Service

**Estimated Saving: £600,000**

Given the recent welfare changes, and the increasing demands from communities for advice and support, all anti-poverty related financial support, which would include the Advice Shop and Benefits Team would be combined into one team to allow a more targeted and focused advice service. This team would provide a joined up service for the public, giving those in most need an improved service whilst also generating efficiency savings through removal of duplication.

## 4 Working with partners to deliver outcomes

Measures totalling £3.6 million over the next five years have been identified which would enable the council to deliver more effective, flexible and affordable services.



record of working successfully with our partners to provide services that are effective, flexible and affordable. There are opportunities to further explore the integration of services, resources and activities removing duplication and sharing best practice.

### 4a Review Approach to Delivery of Culture & Sports

**Estimated Saving: £1.5 million**

Based on the proposed priorities, some arts and sports activities will no longer be provided. The council will focus on Youth Music Initiative, Active Schools, developer funded public art and arts programming at Howden Park Centre in partnership with West Lothian Leisure. Reflecting the council's reduced income, the funding provided to West Lothian Leisure will be reduced.

### 4b Support for Community Groups & Organisations

**Estimated Saving: £600,000**

The council currently works in partnership with a number of voluntary community groups and organisations. The council's financial contributions to these groups would be reviewed to focus on priority areas, meaning the removal of support for non-priority areas or where alternative programmes are more effective. Reflecting the change in funding, the team which delivers support to these groups would also be reviewed.

### 4c Support to Business Improvement Districts (BIDS)

**Estimated Saving: £200,000**

As BIDS are not a statutory function, and should become sustainable without council support after the initial set-up period, it is proposed that support for BIDS would be reviewed.

### 4d Working in Partnership

**Estimated Saving: £600,000**

The council has an excellent track

### 4e Review of External Funding for Police

**Estimated Saving: £700,000**

The council currently provides Police Scotland with funding for 21 police officers, vehicles and analyst support. Few local authorities in Scotland provide funding for additional police officers. The Scottish Government has given a commitment that Police Scotland's budget is to be protected. No such commitment has been given for council budgets. Given that the provision of adequate levels of policing is the responsibility of Police Scotland, it is proposed that this funding is removed.

## 5

## Managing our assets and reducing energy

Measures totalling £3.5 million over the next five years have been identified, which would ensure that the council continues to have efficient and effectively managed assets to support service delivery.



### 5a Empowering Communities & Reducing the Number of Community Facilities

**Estimated Saving: £600,000**

Over the years the council has significantly reduced the number and cost of buildings and the council will continue to modernise and rationalise all properties across the estate. As the number of buildings required to deliver council services reduces, community groups will have the opportunity to request ownership of properties through the provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. As the council has moved to the partnership model, there is an opportunity to consolidate the number of community centres and village halls. It is proposed to review the provision of facilities at community centres.

### 5b Revised Property Requirements from Service Proposals

**Estimated Saving: £700,000**

As the proposals contained within this consultation are implemented, and changes are made to service provision and delivery, there will be a reduced need for specific properties. Any surplus properties will be available for asset transfer or disposal, creating property related savings.

### 5c Efficiencies from Improved Use & Management of Council Properties

**Estimated Saving: £1 million**

The council is developing a ten year programme for investing in its assets to

support service delivery. This approach reduces the need for reactive maintenance work, improving how the council invests in property assets. Following the success of previous energy efficiency initiatives, the council will continue to reduce energy consumption and related costs through new energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

### 5d Treasury and Insurance Savings

**Estimated Saving: £800,000**

The council has a long history of effective and efficient financial management. Continued successful and proactive management of the council's insurance and treasury management budgets will generate more savings in these areas of the council's budget.

### 5e Reducing Carbon Emissions & Improving Energy Efficiency

**Estimated Saving: £400,000**

The council's previous street lighting conversion project has been very successful with substantial financial and carbon emissions reductions being achieved. It is proposed that these works are continued, with more street lights converted to LED technology to generate further savings.

## 6

## Reviewing Income and Concessions

The council has one of the lowest levels of income through sales, fees and charges per head of population in Scotland. The council established an approach to income and concessions in 2015 where all discretionary charges are benchmarked with Scottish averages or other local providers. Measures totalling £5.4 million over the next five years have been identified, which would raise additional income.



It is proposed that all opportunities for discretionary charging will be reviewed and benchmarked in addition to a standard inflationary increase being applied in line with existing practice.

This would include an assumed increase in non housing rents of 3% subject to a separate consultation on rent levels with tenants.

Areas where the council could investigate opportunities for additional sources of income include:

- Introduction of administrative charge of £20 for blue badges
- Introduction of charging for council car parks

- Maximising the rental income from the council's commercial property portfolio

- Introduction of a charge for transport services reflecting greater use of outreach services

With an ageing population, and increasing demand for services, the council must ensure that appropriate fees and charges

are considered. It is proposed that a contributions policy for non-residential care services is introduced subject to the financial assessment of affordability. This would mean that only those who could afford to pay would be required to make a contribution and older people would continue to be eligible for free personal and free nursing care.

# 7 Environment

Measures totalling £13.2 million over the next five years have been identified that would change the services we provide to improve the local environment and infrastructure. This will include new standards and delivery models that will ensure we continue to protect the built and natural environment in West Lothian more cost effectively.



## 7a Revised Catering & Cleaning Models & Standards

**Estimated Saving: £700,000**

The council will continue to provide a school meal service, reviewing how meals are prepared and delivered to make sure that the service meets both statutory requirements and is affordable. This will involve reviewing transportation methods, menu options and other efficiency improvements. The council is also proposing further changes to cleaning specifications in buildings, focusing more on the education and awareness of building users whilst meeting statutory cleaning requirements.

## 7b Revised Facilities Management in Schools

**Estimated Saving: £300,000**

It is proposed that the facilities management service will be reviewed to seek better scheduling of activities and revised cover arrangements and opening hours.

## 7c Revised Service Standards & Delivery Models - Waste Services

**Estimated Saving: £2.6 million**

There is a requirement to review all service provision and standards to make sure that the service is delivered in an effective and efficient way whilst meeting council priorities. Changes will be made to the waste collection service including consideration of revised recycling models, scheduling of routes and working arrangements. It is proposed to introduce charges for bulky uplifts and use of brown bins. In addition, the review would include removal of the commercial waste service and closure of three community recycling sites to focus on key sites in West Lothian.

## 7d Reprioritised Passenger Transport Strategy

**Estimated Saving: £3.9 million**

The council currently subsidises around 20% of bus routes as well as providing a number of other services such as school transport and concessionary transport schemes. A public transport review is proposed to focus on connecting communities and businesses in a way which is affordable and effective. This will include ceasing some services and

exploring alternative transport models. An updated transport strategy would focus on statutory minimum mileage limits for school transport, use of concessionary bus, Handicabs and Dial-a-Ride schemes, and removal of subsidies for bus routes that are not commercially available or viable.

## 7e Green Fleet & Travel

**Estimated Saving: £500,000**

The council has delivered substantial savings in internal vehicle costs over the last five years. There are opportunities to achieve more savings and changes are proposed to council services which will have an impact on the type and number of vehicles. In addition, the council is looking to achieve a further 20% reduction in business mileage and to reduce the mileage rate payable to staff using their own vehicles for business.

## 7f Revised Service Standards & Delivery Models - NETs, Land & Countryside

**Estimated Saving: £2.7 million**

There is a requirement to review all service provision and standards to make sure that the service is delivered in an effective and efficient way whilst meeting council

priorities. Focusing grounds maintenance on a priority basis in line with the council's Open Space Strategy, service delivery will be reviewed with maintenance, enforcement and management activities integrated and consolidated. Generic working will be introduced to ensure resources are utilised effectively to support service delivery.

## 7g Revised Service Standards and Delivery Models - Roads & Transportation

**Estimated Savings: £2.5 million**

There is a requirement to review all service provision and standards to make sure that the service is delivered in an effective and efficient way whilst meeting council priorities.

All service delivery, including winter maintenance, will be changed to focus on statutory requirements with an updated approach to asset management. This will mean some services, such as festive lighting, will no longer be provided by the council.

Where it is cost effective, contractors will be used for capital investment works and for services which need specialist equipment to deliver services.





# Winter Ready

## WEST Lothian 2017/18

## Please plan ahead and be Winter Ready

This special Bulletin supplement provides you with an overview of how West Lothian Council has prepared for winter.

West Lothian Council plans to have 30,000 tonnes of salt in stock at the beginning of November 2017. This represents three times the amount that is needed for a 'normal' winter.

In addition, we have pre-arranged contracts with suppliers if we need them in periods of prolonged snowfall. It is not possible for support to be provided everywhere at the same time. Please note our priority system for clearing roads, residential areas and footpaths, which can be found at [www.westlothian.gov.uk/winter](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/winter)

[www.westlothian.gov.uk/winter](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/winter) [twitter.com/lovewestlothian](https://twitter.com/lovewestlothian) [www.facebook.com/westlothiancouncil](https://www.facebook.com/westlothiancouncil)

### Roads and footpaths

An extreme weather event will be considered to be where continuous snow is forecast and likely to give significant accumulations in excess of 10cm over a substantial proportion of the council area. The snow will also be expected to remain in untreated areas for a prolonged period due to low temperatures before a natural thaw.

During periods of extreme weather, priority will be given to primary carriageway routes and primary footpath routes or 'snow routes'.

Gritters and footpath resources will be deployed on these specified 'snow routes' continuously until satisfactory snow clearance has been achieved before resources are deployed to any secondary routes, to maintain access to key facilities and other transport needs.

**With 1,039km of roads and around 1,300 km of footways it is not possible to give all routes equal priority.**

### Preparing your home

Don't leave it too late to prepare your home for winter; start preparing now.

Check that your pipes are lagged and where you turn off the water supply in an emergency. Severe drops in temperatures can cause extensive issues with icicles. You have a legal responsibility to make your property safe. Know how to switch off your water supply in case a pipe bursts, switch off the electricity and open all the taps to drain down the system.

**Council tenants should telephone 01506 280000 for assistance.**

### Schools

Safety is a top priority for West Lothian Council and the decision to close a school or nursery to pupils is one which is not made lightly.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for undertaking a risk assessment in the event of severe weather or building difficulties. There are several factors which may impact on this decision, which is made in consultation with an education manager.

West Lothian Council will provide as much notice as possible of any school closure so that you can make alternative arrangements for your children. We will contact you via Group Call, provide information to local radio stations, and update the council's website and social media channels. Many schools can also contact parents/carers by email.

### Travelling to school

In extreme weather conditions, parents/carers should assess whether they consider it safe for their child to travel or walk to school, and alert the school of their decision at the earliest possible opportunity.

**Please check that your child knows how to access the online education community GLOW, where pupils can access educational material online.**

### Winter colds and prescriptions

Please ensure your medicine cabinet is sufficiently stocked with over-the-counter remedies so that if you become unwell you are prepared.

GP Surgeries will be closed for four consecutive days both at Christmas and New Year.

This is due to two public holidays and weekend closure.

Please give yourself plenty of time to prepare for the closure, by ordering medication to cover both Christmas and New Year holiday breaks. Regular repeat medications can be obtained in an emergency via your local pharmacy.

### Grit bin policy

In times of an extreme weather event it is not always possible to service and replenish grit bins due to their location and the deployment of resources in higher priority areas.

In the event that the grit bin service is suspended, the council will provide temporary grit bags and grit heaps at locations across the area for use by the public. The locations will be advertised on the council's website and social media pages.

**Many shops also sell salt/grit for domestic use.**

### Salt conservation

West Lothian Council buys salt supplies for use on the whole of the public carriageway and footway network (not motorways) during the winter period.

We will have 30,000 tonnes of salt available for the winter period 2017/18.

In periods of extreme weather, it may be necessary to restrict the use of salt to 'snow routes' only. West Lothian Council reaches a minimum stock level when there is only enough salt for six continuous days.

**Please note: Salt is less effective at minus six degrees and has minimal impact on ice**

**and snow below minus 10 degrees. Heavy rain following a treatment of salt can wash the salt from the road.**

### Norovirus

Also known as the winter vomiting bug, norovirus causes sickness and diarrhoea. There is no cure so please stay at home until you are better, and maintain good hygiene such as handwashing. Children should be kept off school until 48 hours after symptoms have stopped.

### Severe weather volunteer service

The service to help vulnerable members of the community is ready to be activated should this winter prove to be challenging. If this happens information will be shared via the local media, the council's website, social media channels and the email information service.

### Waste collections

During the winter, please continue to present your bin as usual. Please ensure snow has been removed from the lid. The council will only suspend the household waste collection service in extreme situations. For example, where there is widespread heavy snow which makes it impossible for the bin lorries to enter residential areas.

If the service is suspended, updates will be provided via local press and the council's website and social media channels.

**Continue to recycle as usual – please don't use your recycling bins for landfill waste.**



**94 Council vehicles which help keep the county moving during winter**



**We will have 30,000 tonnes of salt available for the winter period 2017/18**



**1,850 Grit bins provided by west lothian council**

### How can you help

- Consider the steps you can take to protect your home and business.
- Living with severe weather is frustrating – please don't abuse council staff who are trying to help.
- Consider volunteering.
- Keep an eye on your neighbours and share information.
- Sign up for the email alert: [www.westlothian.gov.uk/email](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/email)

- Make sure that your child's school has up-to-date contact details for you.
- Follow the council's social media channels for updates.

#### Clearing snow:

There is no law preventing members of the public and businesses from clearing the snow and ice from public roads and footways outside their property. However, please take care when attempting to

undertake any snow clearing so you don't create any further hazards.

#### Park sensibly:

Abandoned cars hamper access for snowploughs and diggers, emergency vehicles, bin lorries and other road users.

#### Travel:

Check your travel arrangements before starting out and leave extra time for your journey. Prepare your car for winter now.



### West lothian council's vehicles which help keep the county moving

- 22 large gritters
- 12 multi-purpose gritters
- 29 mini tractors
- 29 skid steers with ploughs and snow buckets
- 2 multihogs with ploughs and snow blowers

# Benefit payments are changing

## Are you prepared?



### Universal Credit

Universal Credit is a new benefit introduced by the Department for Work and Pensions. Universal Credit will replace means tested, working age, benefits and tax credits. At the moment Universal Credit can only be claimed in very limited circumstances. From February 2018 all new claims will be made through Universal Credit.

Universal Credit is for working age individuals, which means anyone from the age of 16-64 who is thinking of

claiming Income Related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Related Job Seekers Allowance, Tax Credits, Housing Benefit or Income Support. Working age includes lone parents and those who are not able to work due to ill health. You can claim Universal Credit whether you have a job or not and it can

be paid either to replace earnings whilst you are out of work or to top up earnings if you are on a low income.

It will be a big change for you and your family's finances, so make sure you are prepared for the switch over. Below are some tips to get yourself ready.

For more help and information, please visit [www.westlothian.gov.uk/adviceshop](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/adviceshop) or phone 01506 283000 option 1

### Monthly Payments

You will get one monthly payment, this will include an amount for your housing costs. Think about how best to manage this. You may want to think about setting up direct debits or look into online payment options for your rent and other bills.



### How Payments Work



Universal Credit will be paid directly into a bank or building society account. Post Office card accounts can be used, however the preferred method is a bank or building society account.

The amount you get could be different every month, as Universal Credit payments are worked out based on your income and circumstances during your assessment period.

### Rent and Council Tax



If you qualify for Housing Benefit, this will be included in your Universal Credit monthly lump sum. It will not automatically be paid directly to your landlord. Council Tax reduction is not included in your Universal Credit payments.

You must apply for this separately. Speak with your housing officer to make sure you keep up with your payments.

### Managing your Claim



Universal Credit is claimed and managed online. You will have to log into your Universal Credit account regularly to check messages and update your records.

If you don't have a computer or internet access at home, you can get access at your local library and you can also get help and support with learning.

### Making a Claim and Assessment Period

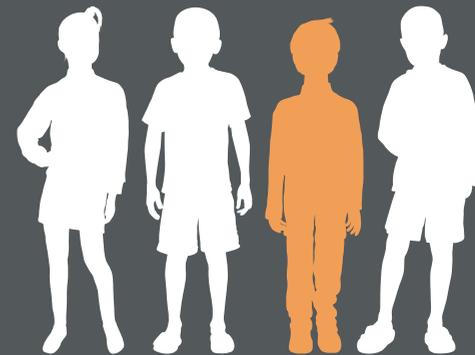


When you first make a claim you will have to wait at least six weeks until your first payment.

You can ask for a short-term benefit advance when you are waiting for your first payment but remember this will need to be paid back.

### Supporting Low Income Homes Training Available

**Did you know: 23% of children in West Lothian are living in poverty**



**THAT'S ALMOST 1 IN 4**

Struggling to make ends meet is a worry for more households than people would imagine. Financial worries aren't always visible and can impact on households in many different ways.

West Lothian Council is running free workshops to help raise awareness about the challenges faced by households living on a low income and who can help.

**For further information on the workshops available and to book a place, please phone the Advice Shop on 01506 283000 option 4**

### Tackling Poverty – We are listening and want to hear your views

#### Can you help?

What is important to you when it comes to tackling poverty? West Lothian Council and its partners are refreshing the Anti-Poverty Strategy and would like to hear from you; come along and find out the facts and tell us what would make a difference to you and your family. If you are struggling to get by, or know and/or work with households who are facing challenges then come and talk to us.

**If you would like to be involved please contact the Advice Shop on 01506 283000 option 4.**

## Special event recognises the work of DEEP

A special event was held at the Lanthorn Community Centre to celebrate the achievements of a local community group and its commitment to improving the environment for their community for the last decade.



The Dedridge Environment Ecology Project (DEEP) is winding up its activities as many of its key members feel that they have accomplished what they set out to achieve.

To mark the event and the contribution of the group, a special plaque made of recycled wood was unveiled at the Lanthorn Community Centre in Livingston.

During the last 10-years the group has been instrumental in progressing and completing several major environmental improvements to the Dedridge corridor between the A71 and its confluence with the River Almond:

- Dedridge Burn Plantation woodland improvement works
- Dedridge Pond restoration project
- Lanthorn Pond restoration and

construction of overflow to reduce flood risk

- Wave Pond (now Jubilee Pond) restoration and environmental improvements
- Livingston South Blue Green Network, a joint project with groups from Bellsquarry and Murieston
- New Life for the Lanthorn Park project

The group also worked in partnership with groups in Bellsquarry and Murieston on wide-ranging improvements at Bankton Mains, Bellsquarry and Murieston Greenway under the Livingston South Blue Green Network Project. The group also has been supported by a number of council services.

Executive councillor for the environment Tom Conn commented:

“On behalf of West Lothian Council and the local community I would like to thank everyone who has been involved with the DEEP’s environmental improvements over the years.

“The group has worked tirelessly to improve the environment for people living in Dedridge by pushing forward major improvement projects; to accomplish these they also secured significant funding and motivated and inspired the local community.

“In recognising the work of this fantastic group I would like to highlight two particular people, Roley Walton and Wilma Shearer, who have been the driving force of the group since it was established. Roley and Wilma have been inspirational members of our community.”



## New homes at Raw Holdings

Tenants received the keys to their new council homes in East Calder recently.

West Lothian Council is currently building 1,000 new homes across all nine council ward areas as part of a £111 million investment in housing.

The Raw Holdings development includes twelve cottage flats, two bungalows and one two-bedroom house. Local residents Mr and Mrs Armstrong currently live nearby at Langton Road and are downsizing into a smaller council home.

Mr Armstrong said “We absolutely love our new home and can’t wait to get in, we have high hopes that it will be a welcoming and friendly place to live.”

George Paul, Executive councillor for services for

the community said “We are delighted that work on the new council homes in Raw Holdings is nearing completion. The quality and appearance of the new homes are outstanding and we hope that the new tenants will be happy with the end result.

“Affordable housing is in high demand throughout Scotland and West Lothian is no different in that respect. The new housing in East Calder will deliver affordable and conveniently located homes for West Lothian residents.”

*Pictured above: Cllr Paul presented Mr and Mrs Armstrong with a house warming gift prior to them receiving the keys to their new council home.*

## LINLITHGOW BURGH HALLS



### HAVE YOUR SPECIAL DAY IN A LANDMARK VENUE AT THE HEART OF HISTORIC LINLITHGOW

The elegant Grade A-listed Burgh Halls is perfect for couples looking for a unique location steeped in history, combined with modern facilities.

Sitting at Linlithgow’s picturesque Cross in the town centre, the iconic town house is next to Linlithgow Palace, St Michael’s Church and Linlithgow Loch. It has undergone a £5 million refurbishment to create two stylish, contemporary function rooms and a stunning roof terrace ideal for weddings.

Linlithgow Burgh Halls, The Cross, Linlithgow, EH49 7AH | Tel: 01506 282720  
email: [burgh.halls@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:burgh.halls@westlothian.gov.uk)  
[www.linlithgowburghhalls.co.uk](http://www.linlithgowburghhalls.co.uk)



Howden Park Centre presents

# Beauty and the BEAST

**11-28 December**  
**Howden Park Centre, Livingston**

A magical family panto, full of songs, jokes and frosty winter fun!  
A fresh take on the classic tale

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operated by **west lothian leisure**  
West Lothian Leisure gratefully acknowledges the support of West Lothian Council

## Meet an Olympian!

An Olympic Silver Medallist is coming to Xcite!



Duncan Scott, Olympian, World and European Champion swimmer will be attending Super Splash Saturday at Xcite Bathgate on 18 November 2017.

The event is open for all to come along and see Duncan, the 100m men's freestyle British Record Holder, take part in a whole host of water activities! Watch Duncan in action racing against the very best of Swim West Lothian, who represent the local swim clubs. There will be free taster sessions for 8-15yrs timetabled throughout the day, from Rookie Lifeguard and Water Polo to Skills & Drills and lots more, wrapping up with an Inflatable Party! On the spot special offers will also be available.

Duncan, aged 20 from Alloa, has successfully represented Great Britain winning international races, with two Silvers at Rio 2016 Olympics and Gold at Budapest 2017 World Championships. He was the most successful British athlete in the European Games 2015 with 3 Gold medal wins. Duncan now trains at the National Swimming Academy in Stirling.

As an Ambassador for Scottish Swimming's Learn to Swim programme, Duncan is

happy to come along and meet the West Lothian community to tell them about his experiences and progression from learning to swim to club swimming at 6 years-old to competing at World events.

**Super Splash Saturday** is a great opportunity for keen swimmers, no matter their age, to meet Duncan, ask him questions and even get a selfie!

The Xcite Swim Team and Scottish Swimming will be on hand to talk to parents about the Learn 2 Swim programme at Xcite venues from Adult & Baby classes and progression through to Club Swimming. Xcite also offers an adult swim programme for those keen to get in the water for fitness or honing in on their skills training for events like Triathlons.

Angela McCowan, Xcite's Aquatics Activities Co-ordinator said: "We are delighted that Duncan Scott is taking time from his busy training schedule to support **Super Splash**

**Saturday.** At such a young age Duncan has already achieved the dreams of aspiring athletes and I'm sure that sharing his story during his visit to West Lothian will inspire many of the local community".

Helen Plank from Scottish Swimming commented: "Scottish Swimming's National Framework for Swimming in Scotland, in partnership with Scottish Water, will help more than 100,000 children across the country learn to swim. The programme highlights the importance of swimming from an early age. The first seven years are the most influential in establishing good exercise habits and setting foundations for learning throughout life."

**To find out more about Super Splash Saturday and for a full timetable of events visit [www.westlothianleisure.com](http://www.westlothianleisure.com). Please note some activities will need to be booked in advance.**



**Duncan Scott**  
Age: 20



**Medals:**  
Olympics: Men's Relay Team - Silver 4 x 200m Freestyle and Silver 4 x 100m Medley Rio 2016

**World Championships: Men's Relay Team - Gold 4 x 200m Medley and Silver 4 x 100m Freestyle Budapest 2017**

**European Championships: Men's Freestyle - Gold 100m, Gold 200m. Men's Relay Team - Gold 4 x 100m Freestyle Kazan 2015**

**Commonwealth Games: Men's Freestyle 4 x 100m Glasgow 2014**  
**British Championship: Men's Freestyle - Gold 100m**



**Records: British Record 100m Freestyle 47:90 in 2017**

**LEARN 2 SWIM**

Learning to swim is an important milestone in a child's life and one that they should absolutely love. It can also open up exciting opportunities...water activities on holiday, having fun at pool parties or perhaps even an Olympian in the making!

## Reasons to sign up for Learn 2 Swim @ Xcite

- ✓ Value for money.
- ✓ Lesson Programme affiliated with Scottish Swimming.
- ✓ Highly qualified Teachers.
- ✓ Progression through the Levels at a rate specific to your child.
- ✓ Online weekly reports on your child's progress.
- ✓ Awarded Caps.
- ✓ Continuous lessons throughout the year.
- ✓ Links to local Swimming Clubs.
- ✓ Adult Lessons are available.



Xcite has 6 Swim venues pools in West Lothian at  
 Armadale • Bathgate • Broxburn  
 • Linlithgow • Livingston • Whitburn.

For more details visit [www.westlothianleisure.com](http://www.westlothianleisure.com)

## XCITE VENUES

- XCITE Armadale T: 01501 229200
- XCITE Bathgate T: 01506 237910
- XCITE Broxburn Swimming Pool T: 01506 237930
- XCITE Broxburn Sports Centre T: 01506 237920
- XCITE Craigswood (in Livingston) T: 01506 237940
- XCITE East Calder T: 01506 883340
- XCITE Fauldhouse T: 01501 770345
- XCITE Linlithgow T: 01506 237960
- XCITE Livingston T: 01506 237970
- XCITE Whitburn T: 01501 229210

For more information on Xcite visit:  
[www.westlothianleisure.com](http://www.westlothianleisure.com)

@XciteLeisure



## WIN a Master Swim Session with an Olympian!

You could be one of the lucky swimmers to win a Master Class swim session with Duncan Scott at **Super Splash Saturday!** All you need to do is design a Swim Cap to mark the event! To find out more and how to enter visit [www.westlothianleisure.com](http://www.westlothianleisure.com) for full details.