
Strategic Assessment - Summary

West Lothian Community Planning Partnership

Many thanks to all partners who supplied data and other information for this document. Acknowledgements to all members of the core Strategic assessment planning group for their data gathering, analysis and advice throughout the process.

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INTRODUCTION

This is the first Strategic Assessment undertaken by West Lothian Community Planning Partnership¹, and is one of only a few to have been written in Scotland. It is accepted that, particularly with a background of fiscal austerity as well as review and change at a national level, evidence-based community planning of this type is likely to become the norm and will strongly influence the strategic direction of partnerships and the targeting of resources.

This assessment will form the basis of the refreshed Community Plan² and new Single Outcome Agreement³ and aims to allow the CPP to undertake evidence-based prioritisation and planning and better align service delivery and financial strategy. It will also take the changes in the National Performance Framework into account – a new outcome for older people new indicators for early years and some changes to existing indicators and outcomes.

This document assesses current trends across community planning themes, emerging issues and priority areas of concern for West Lothian. It also acts as a forecasting tool, which can later form the basis of a Community Planning Partnership corporate risk register.

Partnership working is well established in West Lothian through a number of thematic partnerships, and programmes of change are also embedded in West Lothian driven in part by the Christie Commission which in June 2011 outlined recommendations for the future delivery of public services in Scotland. Notwithstanding the positive steps already taken, if we adopt these principles⁴ locally there is an opportunity to revolutionise planning and service delivery as a partnership in West Lothian.

¹ CPP

² 'Towards 2020'

³ SOA

⁴ A necessary shift to prevention / Greater integration of local public services / Greater workforce investment / Focus on improving performance and focus on outcomes / Services must be designed with and for people and communities.

METHODOLOGY

Data is gathered from a variety of sources across the community planning themes – from community planning partners for calendar years 2009-2011¹ and open source research. On occasions where this is not possible, any available recent data has been used.

The assessment has been divided into

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|---------------------|------------------------------|
| I. Scene-setting | Introduction to West Lothian |
| II. Core Theme | Inequality |
| III. Priority Areas | Wealthier & Fairer |
| | Smarter |
| | Greener |
| | Healthier |
| | Safer & Stronger |

Forecasting will occur throughout the document and is an important tool within the strategic process, allowing us to identify and assesses the impact of internal and external factors that may affect the partnership in the coming years. It allows future challenges and opportunities to be incorporated into the priority-setting process, and for the partnership to take measures to counter the challenge posed by these forecasts or exploit the opportunities afforded by them.

¹ Wherever available, otherwise data is collected by Fiscal year April-March

SCENE-SETTING

West Lothian has undergone significant change over the last ten years in demography, physical environment and its economy. These changes have presented opportunities and challenges for West Lothian's communities and the organisations that deliver services in the area.

Two thirds of West Lothian's 428km² are predominantly used for agriculture, with a tenth taken up by urban development. Small but prominent areas of deprivation are the result of rapid development and heavy reliance on the coal and oil shale industry. Currently the main sectors are public services, retail and distribution, hotels and restaurants, manufacturing, construction and finance and IT; with opportunities for growth in other priority industries.

Overall levels of satisfaction with West Lothian as a place to live are high¹, and Perceptions of the change in West Lothian over the last few years are also positive, with ²/₃ of respondents stating that West Lothian has improved. Within the wider 'happiness index',², West Lothian residents rated themselves as 7.53 (on an 11 point scale) compared to 7.48 in Scotland and 7.41 in the UK.

West Lothian has a population of about 172,080³, accounting for 3.3% of Scotland's total population, and is one of the fastest growing and youngest in the country, with an average age of 38 compared with 40 across Scotland. In recent years there has been an increase in the Eastern European population, a trend mirrored nationally.

In recent years, West Lothian has been one of the fastest growing parts of Scotland and is predicted to continue this trend. By 2035 the population of West Lothian is projected⁴ to be 205,345, an increase of 19.3% compared to the 2010 population⁵. The number of dwellings and households in West Lothian has also been increasing in recent years, and projected to increase by 30%⁶ from 2010 to 2035. This compares to a 23% projected increase in Scotland as a whole over the same period.

¹ Citizen's Panel¹ Quality of Life (QoL) survey – around 80% are satisfied/very satisfied with West Lothian as a place to live.

² The first subjective wellbeing survey on this scale in the UK - ONS July 2012

³ Based on 2010 mid-year projections from the National Records of Scotland

⁴ Open to influence by a number of factors including the rate of house building amongst others.

⁵ From the General Register Office Scotland (GROS). The population of Scotland is projected to increase by 10.2% over the same period.

⁶ 73,160 in 2010 to 95,160 in 2035

The population aged under 16 in West Lothian is projected to increase by 13.3% over the 25 year period, however the biggest area of growth is in the older population, with growth in people of pensionable age anticipated to be biggest in West Lothian (52%), with particular increases in the over 75s. Although West Lothian's older population is growing faster than the average for Scotland¹, it is from a low base: the predicted proportion of over 65s in West Lothian in 2033, at 22%, will remain below the Scottish average of 25%.

Increases in life expectancy are also anticipated, though not necessarily a corresponding increase in *healthy* life expectancy. People with complex health conditions, including children born with disabilities, are also anticipated to live for longer due to advances in medical science.

The impact of all these projections is comprehensive, but centre around an increase in demand for services which is likely to exceed available resources if services are not fundamentally redesigned; as the current economic climate seems to prevent increasing resources. Service areas which are anticipating an increase from demographic change alone are Housing, all older people's services, health and care providers, waste management and education (particularly early years and for children with complex needs).

¹ From 2008-2033, the number of 65-74 year olds will increase by 80% in West Lothian, compared to 48% in Scotland and the number of over 75s will increase by 151% in West Lothian compared to 84% in Scotland.

CORE THEME - INEQUALITIES

In the UK, the poorest half of the population holds just 9% of the wealth. The richest 10% are 100 times richer than the poorest 10%.

“The demand for public services is set to increase dramatically over the medium term – partly because of demographic changes, but also because of our failure up to now to tackle the causes of disadvantage and vulnerability – inequalities that have widened in recent years.”
Christie Commission June 2011

The evidence demonstrated that inequalities and deprivation are at the heart of poor outcomes across health, community safety and education and employment for individuals and communities, and, as such, the Community Planning Partnership has adopted “Tackling Inequalities” as its central theme¹.

WEALTHIER & FAIRER

“Enable businesses and people to increase their wealth and allow more people to share fairly in that wealth. This will generate more opportunities to work; make Scotland a more attractive place to live, work and invest; and ensure that the benefits of increased national prosperity are shared fairly across Scotland.” Scottish Government

Diversify West Lothian’s Economy

Within this, attracting business and higher quality jobs from a range of sectors, building on desirable location and infrastructure and developing a low carbon economy will be the focus.

Stability and Security for Communities

to employment, housing and homelessness, the long-term unemployed and employment in young people and with it, financial security, access will be the focus.

SMARTER

¹ Alcohol was another cross-cutting theme, but its misuse is unequally spread, generally in accordance with deprivation, and so alcohol is intrinsically linked to inequalities and should be addressed under this rather than as a separate cross-cutting theme.

“Expand opportunities for people in Scotland to succeed from nurture through to life long learning ensuring higher and more widely shared achievements. Lay the foundations for the future wellbeing and achievement of our children and young people, increase skill levels across the population and better channel the outputs of our universities and colleges into sustainable wealth creation, especially participation, productivity and economic growth.”
Scottish Government

Children With Additional Needs

Within this, Looked After Children, children with additional support needs and children at risk of disengaging from education should be focused on.

Adult Literacy and Numeracy

Within this, English as a second language and the generational impact of poor adult literacy and numeracy should be focused on.

Positive Destinations

Within this, the skills balance - academic vs vocational – the need of young people vs the skills demand from business and employability should be focused on.

Raising Attainment

Despite the rising attainment and performing better than comparator local authorities, language and accounting/economic skills and aspiring to bring other attainment indicators¹ in line with the Scottish average could be areas for focus.

HEALTHIER

Help people to sustain and improve their health, especially in disadvantaged communities, ensuring better, local and faster access to health care.

People living in Scotland should enjoy the best physical and mental health they can, free from preventable illness and disability. We want to make Scotland healthier by tackling health inequalities and supporting healthier lifestyles and choices, complemented by early interventions and anticipatory, responsive services.

Increasing Healthy Life Expectancy

¹ 3+ Highers by end of S5 and 5+ Highers by end of S5

PROTECT
WEST LOTHIAN COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

Within this, improving currently low levels of fitness, addressing high levels of problematic substance misuse (particularly alcohol) and reducing the impact of long-term and chronic conditions should be focused on.

Mental Wellbeing

No specific area of mental wellbeing has been recommended for focus, but this was identified due to an increasing prevalence in all mental health aspects in West Lothian¹ as well as higher prescription levels for anxiety, depression and psychosis compared to Scotland and a higher level of psychiatric hospitalisations than Scotland. Dementia in particular is also due to increase due to the changing demographic.

Maternal and Child Health

Within this, smoking and alcohol consumption in pregnancy, breastfeeding and underweight children should be focused on.

Older People

This aspect of demographic change is anticipated to have a large impact on the 'Healthier' theme, with areas of focus on the effects of a growing +75 population on health and social care incorporating dementia, falls and caring/carers.

GREENER

"Improve Scotland's natural and built environment and the sustainable use and enjoyment of it and facilitate the transition to a low carbon economy. The choices and decisions we make every day - as government, as businesses and as individuals, young and old, rural and urban - impact on the environment around us. Achieving a greener Scotland depends on all of us - and will benefit us all too." Scottish Government

Waste

Within this, reducing business waste, food waste and reducing overall consumption should be focused on.

Education

Transforming community will into action – work in schools, recycling/reducing/reusing habits, energy efficiency and use of renewables and greenspace should be focused on. The link between greenspace and mental and physical well being is noteworthy.

¹ Depression, newly diagnosed depression and dementia

Decarbonise Transport

Within this, developing active transport (and the link to physical health), reducing reliance on car travel and enforcing green travel plans for businesses should be areas of focus.

SAFER & STRONGER

“Helping local communities to flourish, becoming stronger, safer places to live, offering improved opportunities and a better quality of life. Creating thriving communities; better places to live and work, contributing to a more economically-cohesive Scotland and sustainable economic growth. We will achieve this by improving housing and neighbourhoods, fighting crime, and reducing the fear of crime, making communities we are proud to be part of. By making our communities safer and stronger for those who live there, we will also increase the attractiveness of Scotland as a place to live and work.” Scottish Government

Building Strong Communities

Within this, building cohesive and tolerant communities, getting people involved and invested in their community and effectively tackling low-level community safety issues should be focused on.

Serious and Organised Crime

No specific area has been selected, but work between the Economic and Community Safety Partnerships, making West Lothian a hostile environment for organised crime and protecting young people at risk of involvement in serious organised crime could be focused on.

Protecting People at Risk

Within this, Domestic abuse, Child protection and young people at risk of offending, Suicide and self-harm and identifying pre-offending indicators should be areas of focus.

Alcohol

Cross cutting issue linked to inequality, but particularly impacts upon community safety and offending behaviour.