



The Naming of New or Existing Council Buildings or Public Spaces

Policy and Procedures

**Version: 1.1
January 2025**

1.0 Background

At a meeting of West Lothian Council on 28 September 2021 it was agreed unanimously that a protocol would be prepared to establish a clear process for the naming or renaming of heritable council property, public spaces or any other places otherwise in the control of the council.

Heritable property is understood to relate only to land and buildings.

This protocol will ensure that a consistent and sustainable approach is taken which also takes account of the wishes of the community and also, where a building or space is to be named after an individual, the wishes of relatives.

There is a presumption against renaming buildings other than by location and function.

This protocol was agreed at Council Executive on 16 November 2021.

2.0 The Naming of New or Existing Council Buildings or Public Spaces

The guidance in this document applies to the naming of new council buildings and public spaces, as well as the renaming of existing council buildings and public spaces.

2.1 Approval Process

The process of naming a new council building or public space may be time-sensitive and all requests should be discussed with the Chief Executive Office to establish timescales if required.

Requests for naming or renaming of council buildings or public spaces should be received in writing to the Chief Executive of West Lothian Council. These requests can only be made by West Lothian Councillors. If a member of the public or community group wishes to make this request they should contact their local councillor(s) to discuss. Information on elected representatives is available on the council's website: <https://westlothian.gov.uk/councillors>

On receipt of a request, the following procedure will be followed:

Stage 1

The validity of the request is determined by the Chief Executive, under delegated authority.

This determination will consider:

- Does this person / event have the relevant local connection?
- Is the property / space to be named / re-named covered by the protocol?
- Does the council own (or otherwise operate) the property / space in question?

If a request is rejected at this stage (i.e. not able to satisfy these criteria) a written update will be provided to the requestor to advise of the outcome with an explanation of the decision reached. An update will then be provided to group leaders and independent councillors and the matter will be considered closed by officers.

If a request is able to satisfy the criteria of stage 1, then it will progress to stage 2.

DATA LABEL: Official

Stage 2

Officers will determine the service area responsible for progressing the request.

Group leaders and independent councillors will be advised of the valid request and officers will prepare and share an initial briefing paper providing detail of the request received.

The Chief Executive and the Head of Finance & Property Services will agree the list of stakeholders to be consulted. This may include:

- Family
- Former colleagues
- Political Group Leaders
- Ward members
- Management Committee (where appropriate)
- Community Council
- Legal Services
- Building partners (where a building is controlled in partnership)

A final briefing will be produced, including an indicative timeline, expected costings and a plan of necessary actions.

Stage 3

The final briefing paper will be shared with group leaders and independent councillors for comment.

Stakeholder consultation will be undertaken.

Stage 4

A report will be taken to the Corporate Policy and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) for consultation. A copy of this report will be provided to identified stakeholders.

A report will then be taken to Council Executive for decision. This report will advise of the views of stakeholders and PDSP meeting.

2.2 Naming Policy

In general, buildings and facilities should only be named after people, places or events with a significant connection to the local area, or West Lothian as a whole. New or updated building or public space names can preserve history for future generations, reinforcing the sense of place.

Names should meet at least one of the following criteria:

- honour and commemorate noteworthy persons associated with the local area, or West Lothian as a whole
- commemorate local history, places, events or culture, and in particular any that pertain to the site
- celebrate cultural diversity in West Lothian
- strengthen neighbourhood identity

DATA LABEL: Official

Where possible, the location name should remain and be added to. This will minimise confusion to customers for existing buildings or spaces. For example:

Linlithgow Partnership Centre – Tam Dalyell House

3.0 Signage Policy

Signage on property should reflect the design and technical practicalities of installation. Signage should ensure it is clear to enable positive identification by members of the public.

Consideration will be given to dual language signage (English and Gaelic) where appropriate, in line with the council's Gaelic Language Plan.

The funding required to modify and / or erect the signage determined to be required should be obtained via existing property maintenance budgets, noting that any such expenditure is likely to be one-off and irregular.

4.0 Complaints

In the first instance complaints should be made to Property Services. However, if the complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction West Lothian Council has a formal complaint procedure, details of which can be found online <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/complaints>

5.0 Contacts

Any related communications should be directed to the Chief Executive Office for appropriate action.