

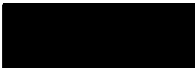
MANAGEMENT COMMENTARY

The council has an established risk based approach to budget monitoring which ensures that effective action is taken to manage risks. During 2024/25, officers will continue to provide updates on risks as part of the quarterly budget monitoring to Council Executive. The Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud Manager also monitors and oversees financial and non-financial risks through updates provided by managers on the council's performance management system. Regular updates are provided to the officer Governance and Risk Board and to elected members and the public through the Governance and Risk Committee. Reports and minutes for the Governance and Risk Committee are available on COINS, the council's committee information system on the link:

[West Lothian Council Committee Information Pages](#)

There remains significant uncertainty for local government regarding future funding levels and the longer term increases in the costs of service delivery particularly in relation to demand for services. Risks and the overall budget position and assumptions will continue to be closely monitored during 2024/25 with further updates provided to Council Executive and policy development and scrutiny panels as appropriate.

The nature of medium to long term financial planning means that identifying expenditure and funding growth for future years is challenging and uncertain under any circumstance. The current cost and funding risks, and wider risks to the economy, only increases uncertainty at this point in time. However, it is widely acknowledged by bodies such as Audit Scotland and CIPFA that a short term budgeting process is not conducive to achieving the aims consistent with planning to meet future service delivery demands and prioritising resources to achieve this. The council has revenue financial plans to 2027/28 and capital investment plans to 2032/33 and is committed to the ongoing review and development of financial plans during 2024/25 to support the council's ongoing financial sustainability.



Graham Hope
Chief Executive

25 September 2024



Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick
Leader of the Council

25 September 2024



Lynda Ferguson CPFA
Depute Head of Finance and Property Services (under delegated appointment)

25 September 2024