



West Lothian
Council



CITIZEN LED INSPECTION

'LOOK SEE'

FEEDBACK REPORT

Corporate Communications

Web, Print & Social Media Communications

April 2018

INSPECTION TEAM:

Liz Liddell

Kaitlin McLaughlin

Alistair Slater

REPORT SUBMITTED TO:

Julie Whitelaw

Head of Corporate Services

Garry Heron

Corporate Communications Manager

Colin Baxter

Web Services Manager

Introduction

The 'Look See' customer experience inspection is designed to bring a depth of insight through a "lighter" version of the council's Citizen Led Inspection. The inspection forms a short, concentrated, specific activity to allow customer inspectors to bring their training and knowledge to bear on a focused area of service provision.

Inspectors will score the service based on the set criteria established prior to the inspection and will use a rating scale of Excellent, Good, Adequate, Poor and Very Poor.

This is designed to involve customers in reviewing and making changes to services. It is a particularly valuable during periods of change to ensure that service standards and performance is maintained.

Background to the Inspection

The council's Corporate Communications Service aims to enhance and protect the council's reputation through providing integrated corporate communications. The team is responsible for developing and delivering a wide range of communications, designed to promote the council and its services to communities and the wider public. Corporate Communications has developed both the council's Branding Guidelines and the West Lothian Way Communications Guidelines to ensure a consistent approach is taken to all forms of communications. The team also play a leading role in supporting the delivery of online services via the council's website.

A 'Look See' inspection was launched in April 2018 to look at, from a customer point of view the council's web, print and social media communications including how accessible, effective and reliable they are as tools for providing information to council customers.

The Inspectors met with the service management team prior to undertaking their inspection to allow them to find out more information about the service and if there were particular issues for them to be aware of or to concentrate on during the inspection. In this instance the inspectors were asked to carry out a general review across a range of communications platforms including web, print and social media including Facebook and Twitter.

The inspectors were provided with examples from the council's website of web pages that the service considered to be best practice and what they considered were in need of improvement.

Specific feedback received around the content of service specific pages will be provided to directly to the relevant service.

Inspectors were asked to review the council's use of a variety of communication platforms, using set guidance and criteria but with the scope to expand on this as they saw fit depending on their findings. The inspectors agreed to carry out their inspection throughout April and were free to visit, use and interact with as many different communication platforms, on as many different occasions, as they saw fit.

Service Specific Websites

Inspectors were provided with a number of examples of web pages (considered to be both good and poor examples) to review and the summary of their findings for each is as follows:

Web Page / Service	Website (General)	Road Closures	School Holidays & Term Dates	What's on at your Local Library	Report a Broken Street Light	Do I Need a Building Warrant?	Activities at Beecraigs	Care Services for Older People	Support for Mental Health Issues	
1	Awareness this council service	Good	Adequate	Very Poor	Good	Adequate	Good	Adequate	Adequate	Poor
2	Ease of accessing (on chosen device)	Excellent	Adequate	Excellent	Good	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good
3	The appearance / design	Good	Poor	Good	Good	Good	Good	Adequate	Excellent	Adequate
4	The quality of the content	Good	Poor	Good	Excellent	Good	Good	Excellent	Good	Adequate
5	The relevance of the content	Good	Adequate	Good	Good	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Adequate
6	The ability to interact with council services	Good	Very Poor	Very Poor	Very Poor	Adequate	Good	Adequate	Adequate	Poor
	Overall Findings	Good	Poor	Adequate	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Adequate

Findings – Website & Service Specific Webpages

The table below highlights the key findings, areas of good practice and recommendations for areas for improvement for the council’s website and each of the specific council web pages that the inspectors were asked to review.

Web Page / Service	Areas of Good Practice	Areas for Improvement	Overall Rating
Website (General)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inspectors found the council’s website easy to access from a PC or laptop and to navigate around from the home page ▪ Information is easy to find and search for on a variety of council services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some processes within the website may prove to be “awkward” or “clumsy” for some users if accessed via a smart phone or other mobile device. ▪ Whilst the ‘Home’ page was considered to be fine and in keeping with the council’s corporate colours and branding, it was felt that the service related pages viewed by the inspectors could be more exciting looking with more pictures and moving images. ▪ It would be beneficial if customers were able to complete transactions from the service page rather than have to navigate away to another page e.g. “Pay for It”. The example cited by the inspectors was paying for Beecraigs Services. ▪ The council should consider the use of an FAQ section on each page to assist users and customers. ▪ Capturing user experience feedback that allows the council to do some meaningful evaluation of the quality of the web pages. ▪ The younger member (18) of the inspection team felt that the website was of little interest, relevance or appeal to young people. 	Good

Web Page / Service	Areas of Good Practice		Areas for Improvement	Overall Rating
Recommendation(s)	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all interactive services on web pages are fully functional and user friendly for smartphone and tablet devices 		
	1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review how service specific web pages could be improved by the use of more pictures and moving images 		
	1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where pages contain transactional and interactive functions ensure that these are available and visible for customers on the specific pages themselves. 		
	1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider introducing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sections into service specific web pages 		
	1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the value and possible solutions to capture customer feedback on web pages 		
Road Closures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on specific road closures and works was quick and easy to find. The information was relevant and accurate and explained to customers in a concise manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some of the maps provided for particular locations (Livingston South Station) were unclear and difficult to interpret. These were especially difficult to understand on a smartphone. The inspectors felt that some FAQs on this page may be beneficial to customers. 		Poor
Recommendation(s)	2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that maps are clear and easy to understand, particularly when being viewed on a handheld device 		
	2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As with 1.4 - Consider introducing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sections into service specific web pages 		
School Holidays & Term Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The inspectors felt that the enquiry process was quick and easy to use to find the required information. The related documents on the page were considered a good source of supplementary information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The inspectors felt that some FAQs on this page may be beneficial to customers particularly for specific schools e.g. available car parking. 		Adequate
Recommendation(s)	3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As with 1.4 - Consider introducing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sections into service specific web pages 		
What's on at your Local Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The information on "What's on" at local libraries was easy to find and the inspectors felt that all the information was very relevant to them as regular service users. The supplementary and supporting information that is available on the page is good and it is well organised under clear headings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspectors felt that the library pages on the council website would benefit from having an online enquiry facility to find out if certain books were available and also a system for reserving a book online. 		Good

Web Page / Service	Areas of Good Practice		Areas for Improvement	Overall Rating
Recommendation(s)	4.1	▪ Investigate the feasibility of introducing a system for checking library stock and reserving online		
Do I need a Building Warrant?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inspectors found these pages to be well laid out with clear information which would be of use to customers requiring in depth information around applying for a building warrant. ▪ The inspectors felt that, despite the complexity of rules and regulations around Building Warrants, the information on the page and the supplementary documents provided good clarification and were easy to understand. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The inspectors felt that some FAQs on this page may be beneficial to customers e.g. How long will an application take? How much does it cost to apply for a Building Warrant? 	Good
Recommendation(s)	5.1	▪ As with 1.4 - Consider introducing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sections into service specific web pages		
Activities at Beecraigs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The information on the page around attractions within the country park and the facilities available was easy to find. ▪ The content and the relevance of the information on the page was considered to be good. ▪ The maps that are available on the page were useful for showing where everything was located are beneficial. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The inspectors felt that some FAQs on this page may be beneficial to customers e.g. is there CCTV in the car park or barrier at the entrance to the car park? 	Good
Recommendation(s)	6.1	▪ As with 1.4 - Consider introducing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sections into service specific web pages		
Care Services for Older People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The information available on the page was informative and easy to understand. ▪ The enquiry process was quick and easy to use. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The inspectors felt that some FAQs on this page may be beneficial to customers e.g. how long are the waiting lists for specific type of services? What are the costs of services? 	Good
Recommendation(s)	7.1	▪ As with 1.4 - Consider introducing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sections into service specific web pages		
Report a Broken Street Light	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The reporting faults online facility was quick and easy to find and to use, from the expanded options menu. ▪ The information on the page was relevant, accurate and concise. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The inspectors felt that some FAQs on this page may be beneficial to customers. 	
Recommendation(s)	8.1	▪ As with 1.4 - Consider introducing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sections into service specific web pages		

Web Page / Service	Areas of Good Practice		Areas for Improvement	Overall Rating
Support for Mental Health Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The page was easy to use and find, well laid out and the information was clear, in depth, plentiful and presented in a logical manner. ▪ Links to other related pages are clearly marked 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Given the amount of information available on the page maybe a review of the presentation should be considered. (The inspectors highlight Glasgow City Council's web pages on the same subject as good practice) ▪ The information on the page appeared to be fairly limited in relation to the wide variety of, well publicised, mental health conditions that people might experience e.g. eating relating disorders, obsessive compulsive disorder. ▪ Some search enquires – Alzheimer's and Home Help – resulted in no response when searched for. ▪ The inspectors felt that some FAQs on this page may be beneficial to customers e.g. how long are the waiting lists for specific type of services? What are the costs of services? 	Adequate
Recommendation(s)	9.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review how information is presented on the page to make it more user friendly for customers including reviewing how other council's present their web information on this topic. 		
	9.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that information is available on a wide range of mental health subjects and concerns that customers may have. 		
	9.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As with 1.4 - Consider introducing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sections into service specific web pages 		

Findings – Social Media

The social media pages communication channels were reviewed by the inspection teams younger member who was more familiar and comfortable with this type of channel.

Social Media Platform	Areas of Good Practice		Areas for Improvement	Overall Rating
Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a vast amount of up to date content and news on the page which will be of interest to people in West Lothian. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The picture used on the Facebook page does not sell West Lothian. The inspector could not understand the use of daffodils as opposed to one of the many landmarks or buildings within West Lothian. There is no information on the page about contact times or whether customers could contact the council through the page. Contact times just set to “away”. 	
Recommendation(s)	10.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the main pictures on the Facebook page and consider using more West Lothian landmarks etc. 		
Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a vast amount of up to date content and news on Twitter feed which will be of interest to people in West Lothian. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The picture used on the Twitter page does not sell West Lothian. The inspector could not understand the use of daffodils as opposed to one of the many landmarks or buildings within West Lothian. 	
Recommendation(s)	11.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the main pictures on the Twitter feed and consider using more West Lothian landmarks etc. 		

Findings – Bulletin & Staff Interaction

The social media pages communication channels were reviewed by the inspection teams younger member who was more familiar and comfortable with this type of channel.

Area Inspected	Areas of Good Practice		Areas for Improvement	Overall Rating
Bulletin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inspectors found the Bulletin to be well presented and inviting to read ▪ The contents and articles are well written and easy to understand, relevant to the people of West Lothian. ▪ The use of colour and photographs adds to the reader experience. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No areas for improvement were identified by the inspectors. 	Excellent
Recommendation(s)	12.1	▪ No recommendations were made regarding this section of the inspection		
Staff Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inspectors found staff to be respectful, professional and knowledgeable about their service area. ▪ Staff were courteous and always willing to help 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No areas for improvement were identified by the inspectors. 	Excellent
Recommendation(s)	13.1	▪ No recommendations were made regarding this section of the inspection		

Conclusions & Next Steps

The inspectors were asked to review the council's main methods of electronic communications as well as the council's newspaper – Bulletin. The main area of review as part of the assessment was the council's website although the Council's Facebook page and Twitter feed were also reviewed.

The inspectors found the overall look and feel of the council website to be good and easy on the eye. They did however, feel that the more images or moving pictures could be used to promote and highlight West Lothian throughout the web pages.

Inspectors found the council's website to be user-friendly and easy to navigate around for users – particularly though a PC or laptop. Some concern was raised that some of the interaction functionality may be more difficult for some users when using a smaller mobile or tablet device.

The inspection team reviewed a number of the service specific pages and have provided specific feedback on each of these. The general consensus with these was similar to the overall feedback on the website – easy to use, nice look and feel but in some instances more could be done with pictures and moving images. Some concern was raised about the ability to interact with services directly on these pages and it was not always ideal to have to navigate away from a page to make an online booking for example.

The younger member of the inspection team focused more on the social media communications channels, primarily Facebook and Twitter. Again the use of images to promote the council and West Lothian was highlighted as the most obvious area for improvement to be considered.

The service should now review the findings of the inspector; take note of the recommendations made and devise an improvement plan to action these. Planned improvements will then be fed back to the inspectors and followed up with the service by the Business Improvement Officers.

For further information please contact Katherine McLaughlin or Daniel Matonti, Performance and Improvement Service.

Date: June 2018

Appendices

Appendix 1: Inspection Evaluation Forms