

West Lothian Council

Impact of Regulatory Service Delivery on SMEs



What our client wanted

The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) had anecdotal evidence that there was a high level of member dissatisfaction with the way that Scottish local authority regulatory services worked, and that they were restrictive to business. Following discussions between FSB, Scottish Enterprise and West Lothian Council, they agreed to conduct research in West Lothian on how regulatory services were delivered and to identify good practice from elsewhere.

What Frontline did

We evaluated the way that services were delivered and the impact this had on small businesses. The research with local companies addressed three areas of work, Licensing and Administration, Environmental Health and Trading Standards, and Development and Building Control. Frontline also contacted every local authority in Scotland to seek their views of good practice from their area.

Our report provided qualitative and quantitative evidence that West Lothian Council was providing a valued service, and that there were areas for improvement. It provided the FSB with evidence for their members and recommendations to take to local authorities that might help their member's interests.

What difference we made

The Frontline report gave a balanced view of what was happening in one area and recommendations that could support local authorities throughout Scotland. Both the Federation of Small Businesses and West Lothian Council welcomed the outcome as a true partnership approach to tackling the issue and they subsequently presented the report jointly to the Scottish Executive.