

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Executive

Audit & Performance Review Committee : 7 April 2010

Subject: Developing and Monitoring of Action Plans for the Revenue Budget Proposals

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1** This report presents progress updates on the action plans drawn up from the Revenue Budgets proposals agreed by Council in February 2008 and February 2009. It also discusses the new proposals agreed in February 2010.

2. Background

- 2.1** The Administration presented budgetary and other proposals in a document entitled 'An Improving Council – Revenue Budget Proposals 2009-2011' to Councilⁱ on 12 February 2009. The budget was accepted and also the proposals contained therein. A similar process took place in February 2008 when the proposals in the documentⁱⁱ entitled 'A Safer, Greener & Brighter Future' were agreed. The latter document has become known as the 'Building Blocks'.
- 2.2** The Chief Executive subsequently requested that the actions contained in the two documents be input to Covalent to assist in monitoring progress. Appendices 1 and 2 show the current list of actions and their progress.
- 2.3** A progress reportⁱⁱⁱ on the 'Improving Council' Action Plan was submitted to Corporate & Efficient Governance Committee in June 2009. The Committee agreed that the actions must be included within respective departmental plans (and therefore scrutinised by appropriate Committees) and that overall progress reports should be submitted regularly to the Audit & Performance Review Committee (A&PRC).
- 2.4** A progress report^{iv} on these plans was subsequently submitted to the A&PRC in December 2009.
- 2.5** In February 2010 the Council agreed the budget proposals contained in the Administration's proposals containing in the document subtitled 'Sustainability in Tough Times'. This contains 36 'Actions'; some of which are specific budget proposals whilst others are a mixture of aims, actions and tasks for various departments to progress.
- 2.6** A progress report on the 2008 and 2009 proposals is due to be presented to the A&PRC in April – this will now include the 2010 document.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** Scorecards have been set-up in Covalent for the 2008 and 2009 Proposals. Departments have linked their department's actions in the 2008 and 2009 documents to their departmental plan scorecards. Departmental Management teams will be able to monitor progress of these actions through their normal monthly/quarterly departmental planning scrutiny processes.
- 3.2** The numbering of actions has been maintained as per the documents; however not all of the proposals in the documents translate into an action. Some interpretation of the 2009 document has been undertaken to ensure that the actions are as SMART¹ as possible; whereas the 2008 document has been entered 'verbatim'.
- 3.3** Departments have been asked to ensure that the 'actions' in the 2008 and 2009 documents be either completed or cancelled (with outstanding actions/milestones carried into respective departmental plans) – therefore it was intended that this report to the April A&PRC be the last such progress report.
- 3.4** In a series of workshops with Elected Members on the Corporate and Departmental Planning process in 2009 it was noted to Elected Members that early consultation and input to the Corporate Plan during the summer months and to Departmental Plans in the autumn would render it unnecessary to produce the non-budgetary elements proposals at the late stage of the planning process in the future. However, this has not happened and the new 2010 proposals contain a significant number of non-budgetary proposals which could have been better included in respective departmental plans.
- 3.5** There are a number of strategic plans in the Council – the key ones should be the SOA/Corporate Plan and the five departmental plans – which collectively contain all the strategic indicators and actions to deliver services and monitor progress. Currently we have the Best Value Improvement Plan, the new PSIF 'areas for improvement', Actions Plans for the 8 Strategic Priorities and a number of other action plans. Future work will concentrate on rationalisation of these plans – into the five core departmental action plans which should be the focus of management and Elected Member scrutiny.
- 3.6** To ensure that progress of the Councils agreed proposals are monitored a further 'scorecard' has been created in Covalent for the new 2010 budget proposals – the 36 'actions' have been interpreted into 'objectives' and Departments are currently assessing these and either creating new actions to meet these (and simultaneously entering them into their respective Departmental Plans) or linking the objective

¹ Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound

to respective actions that already exist in their new plans. This work is not yet complete.

4. Personnel Issues

4.1 There are no personnel issues.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications.

6. Risk Analysis

6.1 There is a risk that an increased number of action plan documents will have a negative impact on the scrutiny process.

7. Equalities Impact

7.1 No significant issues are identified at this stage regarding potential equality impact of this action plan

8. Conclusions & Officer Recommendations

8.1 The status of the budget proposal actions on the three budget proposal documents is submitted for Elected Member comment.

8.2 Elected Members are encouraged to assist in the process of rationalisation of action plans by engaging in the planned Corporate and Departmental Planning consultation during 2010/11.

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Date: 22 March 2010

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Appendix 1: Action Plan for "Building Blocks Progress"

Appendix 2: Action Plan for "An Improving Council"

Appendix 3: Action Plan for "Sustainability in tough times"

Background Reports:

ⁱ [‘An Improving Council’ - Appendix 1 to Council Minutes 12 February 2009](#)

- ii [A Safer, Greener & Brighter Future' - Appendix 1 to Council Minutes of 14 February as submitted to Council Meeting 27 February 2008](#)
- iii [Report to Corporate & Efficient Governance Committee 24th June 2009](#)
- iv [Report to Audit & PR Committee December 2009](#)