

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Executive Director of Housing, Environment and Economic Development

**Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee:
2 February 2011**

Subject: Economic Development Strategy 2011 - 2016

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report seeks committee approval for the West Dunbartonshire Council Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan (attached as Appendix A).

2. Background

- 2.1** The West Dunbartonshire Council Economic Development Strategy has been developed to provide an economic vision and strategy for West Dunbartonshire Council for a five year period. The strategy is based on a detailed analysis of the economic characteristics and priorities of West Dunbartonshire and sets out the objectives for economic prosperity and the proposed means of achieving these.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** In the last two years the economic climate has altered significantly and the policy context at national and local level has had to change in order to address the economic downturn. This has resulted in an increased requirement for the development of an Economic Development Strategy that is fit for purpose and responds to these challenges.
- 3.2** The strategy has been developed through a comprehensive consultation process which included workshops with internal and external key stakeholders and local businesses. The workshops focused on the challenges, priorities and issues for West Dunbartonshire.
- 3.3** The consultation process generated widespread support for the need for an Economic Development Strategy for West Dunbartonshire and reflected the positive approach of key players to work in partnership to deliver the aims of the strategy.
- 3.4** The strategy is supported by an action plan which outlines the projects/activities to be implemented to achieve the aims of the Economic Development Strategy for the period 2011 - 2016.

3.5 The strategy and action plan also outline headline targets for the economic growth of the local area for the five year period which are listed below:

- increase the number of registered enterprises in West Dunbartonshire by 10% from 1620 to 1782 by 2016;
- increase the employment rate within West Dunbartonshire to 71% by 2016;
- deliver £200 million of private sector investment through our regeneration sites by 2016; and
- maximise the commitment of time and resources from partners to ensure agreed outcomes are achieved.

3.6 The achievement of the outcomes of this strategy is reliant on the continued commitment and funding from both private and public sector partners. The action plan sets out what are considered to be priority activities at this stage but further work is required with partners over February/March to:

- prioritise these activities over the 5 years of the plan;
- establish timelines for delivery of key actions;
- identify resource requirements to support delivery; and
- define deliverables for each of the outcome themes.

On completion of this work the resourced action plan will be presented to Members for final approval.

3.7 Progress in delivering the strategy and associated action plan will be reported annually.

4. People Implications

4.1 There are no issues.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 Funding approval will need to be obtained where necessary for any proposed areas of economic development activity within the action plan prior to activity commencing.

6. Risk Analysis

6.1 Failure to develop an Economic Development Strategy would result in a lack of strategic direction for the Council's economic development activities.

6.2 The consultation process with partners and key stakeholders ensured that the content of the strategy is appropriate to assist with economic prosperity for the local area. The strategy will be reviewed in two years to ensure that any local and national economic changes are integrated where appropriate.

6.3 The achievement of the outcomes of this strategy is reliant on the continued commitment and funding from both private and public sector partners.

7. Equalities Impact

- 7.1** The influence and impact of the Economic Development Strategy is wide ranging. An equalities impact assessment will therefore require to be carried out for each area of project activity as appropriate.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 8.1** The proposed Economic Development Strategy and action plan have been developed in consultation with partners and key stakeholders to provide a strategy for economic development activity for West Dunbartonshire Council.

- 8.2** It is recommended that the Committee:

(i) approve the West Dunbartonshire Economic Development Strategy;

(ii) approve in principle the associated action plan activity subject to consultation with partners on determining timelines and resources for its delivery;

(iii) agree that a further report on the finalised action plan be brought to the next meeting of the Committee;

(iv) delegate authority to the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development to implement the Economic Development Strategy; and

(v) agree that reports on progress in implementing the strategy/action plan are presented to the Committee annually.

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Date: 10 January 2011

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Appendix: West Dunbartonshire Council Economic Development
Strategy and Action Plan

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: All