

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Chief Executive

Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee : 25 November 2009

**Subject: Service Improvement Arrangements
Continuous Improvement – Progress Report**

1. Purpose

1.1 As part of the budget process in February 2009, Council agreed that appropriate resources from across the Council should be brought together to address the need for Service Improvement. This report details the progress of the Continuous Improvement function for the period July – October 2009, across the following key areas:

- Strategic implementation of PSIF across the Council
- Implementation of Service Performance Assessment Improvement Plans and the five PSIF Improvement Plans generated as a result of the national pilot.

2. Current Position

2.1 To maintain the element of independent challenge and scrutiny required to deliver the continuous improvement function and to ensure clear links between performance and improvement, steps are underway to establish a Quality Team integrated within the Chief Executive's Policy and Performance section.

2.2 The team will manage a strategic approach to corporate self evaluation and improvement. It will also provide support to service based self evaluation and improvement, which will extend to statutory inspection and audit frameworks such as HMIE Quality Management in Education (QMIE) and the SWIA Performance Improvement Model (PIM).

2.3 A three month secondment has been secured to manage continuous improvement across the Council commencing at the end of September 2009, whilst the post is subject to internal advert and recruitment.

3. Strategic implementation of PSIF across the Council

3.1 The Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) will provide the focus and act as a catalyst for identification and prioritisation of improvement activity. However, it will not replace other review and improvement activity.

- 3.2** A draft WDC Continuous Improvement Strategy has been designed to meet elements of the Best Value Improvement Plan. This has identified the following actions:

PSIF to identify improvements and further review:

- benchmarking to prove if services are competitive
 - process review using KAIZEN (other applicable techniques) to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of processes
 - option appraisal to review whether the configuration of the service delivers best value
 - embedding community engagement and consultation
- 3.3** Roll out of PSIF across the Council is being implemented using a hierarchical approach, covering both strategic and operational business improvement. This will ensure that the Council, Departments and Services are all participating in a programme of reviewing and improving performance.
- 3.4** To re launch the PSIF framework, update progress and outline plans for the way forward, a PSIF Development session was delivered for Managers at a Senior Managers Network early in October 2009. (An evaluation of the session using the HMIE six point scale which has a range from poor to excellent performance, indicated that 1% of respondents rated the session as adequate, 50% as very good and 49% as excellent.)
- 3.5** In preparation for roll out of the framework, the Corporate Management Team (CMT) attended PSIF training provided by Quality Scotland. The CMT then participated in a corporate PSIF assessment of the Council, facilitated by Quality Scotland, and are currently producing an Improvement Plan.
- 3.6** The Social Work and Health Senior Management team attended one day introduction to PSIF delivered in house. The Department of Social Work and Health has now participated in a Departmental PSIF assessment as part of a national pilot with Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA) and the Improvement Service. An evaluation of the pilot is in progress and a Departmental Improvement Plan is in preparation.
- 3.7** WDC has had a significant role in the national mapping of PSIF against HMIE QMIE and SWIA PIM to determine if the scope of roll out should include education, social work and health functions.

- 3.8** As noted in the Council decision of February 2009, the self evaluation of leadership at CMT level using PSIF has embedded a streamlined approach, working with the Organisational Development Team to develop appropriate improvement actions to review and improve strategic leadership.
- 4. Implementation of a Continuous Improvement Plan for every service and (PSIF) Improvement Plans for the five pilot services**
- 4.1** All services have used a customised mini Service Performance Assessment (SPA) questionnaire based on the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) to evaluate their performance and identify targeted areas requiring improvement. As a result, a short term Improvement Plan was developed for each service. A total of 306 improvement actions were identified across Council services. From the current analysis 229 actions are either fully implemented or well on their way to full implementation. This equates to 74%. 77 actions are not yet started. However, many of the actions identified are common across service areas and will require a standardised corporate approach.
- 4.2** Full PSIF Improvement Plans were developed for five services which participated in the national pilot. Analysis has highlighted that services have identified some common areas for improvement. For example:
- competitiveness testing and benchmarking
 - workforce planning
 - leadership and management development
 - process management
- 4.3** Support to implement PSIF improvement plans is being addressed by the Improvement and Efficiency work streams, which are developing corporate approaches to implement the four Best Value priority areas.
- 4.4** To ensure continuous improvement is embedded in planning and performance management systems, Improvement Plans have been included in Covalent and actions included in service based Development Plans.
- 5. Personnel Issues**
- 5.1** There are no personnel issues.
- 6. Financial Implications**
- 6.1** There are no financial implications.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** Securing systems and frameworks to achieve continuous improvement across the Council is a recommendation of Audit Scotland which forms a core part of the Best Value Improvement Plan. The actions noted above will address the risks of not achieving this.

8. Conclusions and Officers' Recommendations

- 8.1** Implementation of strategic PSIF is well underway. The CMT and the Department of Social Work and Health have participated in assessments. Arrangements are in place to develop Council and Departmental Continuous Improvement Plans.
- 8.2** A draft Continuous Improvement Strategy has been developed. This outlines the approach and how it will be implemented to secure successful outcomes for stakeholders.
- 8.3** PSIF will be the overarching approach to continuous improvement in WDC. However, other targeted improvement activity such as process review, competitiveness testing and option appraisal will be implemented in tandem with PSIF.
- 8.4** Work is underway to implement service based Improvement Plans. Corporate support has been designed in the form of four Improvement work streams. The main resources are now in place to drive forward common areas for improvement.
- 8.5** Members of the Committee are asked to note and comment on the contents of this report

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Date: 11 November 2009

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Appendices None

Background Reports: PSIF Covalent performance reports
Draft Continuous Improvement Strategy

Wards Affected: All