

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Executive

Council: 23 February 2011

Subject: Best Value Improvement Plan 2010/11

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1** This report presents an update on the Best Value Improvement Plan (BVIP) for 2010/11. At the Improvement and Efficiency Executive (I&EE) on 13 April 2010 members requested that the BVIP be reviewed and refined to facilitate more effective scrutiny and increase the pace of change. The plan has therefore been streamlined to focus attention on the key actions which will deliver strategic improvement. The revised plan was first reported to Council at the meeting on 30 June 2010ⁱ.

2 Background

- 2.1** On 30 September 2009, Council agreed the establishment of four new workstreams to progress the key priorities emerging from the latest BV Auditⁱⁱ. Progress on developing the Plan has been overseen by the I&EE at its meetings. Progress in developing the plan has been reported to the I&EE and Council on a regular basis.
- 2.2** The I&EE last met on 30 September 2010.
- 2.3** The most recent report to Council on the Best Value Improvement Plan 2010/11 was submitted to the Council meeting on 27 October 2010ⁱⁱⁱ.

3 Main Issues

Reports from the Four Best Value Workstreams

3.1 Strategic Leadership

- 3.1.1** At a recent meeting of the group on 25 January 2011 the Chief Executive gave a brief update on his recent meeting with Audit Scotland's new LAN lead. There are early indications that we will be able to simplify our current reporting arrangements by combining the BVIP and the AIP. It also seems that our BV2 inspection will take place in 2012/13 and not 2011/12 as previously thought (see also paragraph 3.6.1).
- 3.1.2** Progress towards delivering the 8 Strategic Priorities for 2010/11 was discussed. It was acknowledged that work was progressing on all 8 topics but that not all PIDs were complete.

- The Chief Executive stressed the need for all 8 PIDs to be finalised by 11 February 2011.
- Progress on all 8 will require to be reported to Council soon in order that work can be done to identify the Priority areas for 2011/12.

3.1.3 The Chief Executive requested reports on the CMT PSIF Improvement Plan and Risk Management be brought to the CMT on 8 February in order to progress these key areas.

3.2 Competitiveness

3.2.1 The competitiveness group has met and discussed the way forward in proving whether each of the 21 services highlighted in the original report can demonstrate competitiveness or not. At the most recent meeting of the competitiveness working group it was agreed that the best way forward for the group was for the Lead Officer to meet with departmental Lead Officers and Service Managers from each department who lead each of the specific workstreams. These meetings took place during December where each of the lead officers and departmental reps was asked to provide an update on progress to date. This update was challenged through the use of a set of dedicated questions and the use of a template which required to be completed.

3.2.2 The process was very fruitful with each of the departmental reps and workstream lead Managers feeling some benefit of actually sitting down and having a full and frank discussion regarding what was expected within their area. The outcome was that there are a number of gaps that were not answered at the original interviews and these gaps/pro-formas were asked to be completed by 27th January. Returns are now being analysed and follow up meetings have been arranged with Lead Officers to conclude this process.

3.2.3 It is intended that the Lead Officer of the competitiveness working group will provide a presentation to the next meeting of the strategic leadership group that will contain a comprehensive update on progress to date. It will clearly identify closure on some of the original 21 services considered as being competitive. It will highlight areas where there is still more work to be carried out as competitiveness has not been fully demonstrated.

3.2.4 A further consideration for the strategic leadership group to debate is the way forward to identify new services or themes that should be considered as phase 2 of the competitiveness review. One view is that this may tie in to the Council's main strategic priorities.

3.3 Organisational Culture

Leadership and Management Development

Progressive Leadership Programme

- 3.3.1** A review of the Progressive Leadership Programme was completed in December 2010 to assess suitability of the programme in terms of content and approach. Some adjustments were incorporated to the content of the remaining three modules (i.e Political Awareness, Continuous Improvement, and Coaching Skills) and additional coaching support has been scheduled for participants.
- 3.3.2** The programme is scheduled to complete by the end of March. The composition of each cohort has changed significantly from that at the outset due to many changes at senior management level therefore a programme evaluation will be completed by participants to assess how leadership development should progress in the future. This will be balanced with a pulse survey issue in early March to evaluate staff's current perception of leadership and management.

Management Development

- 3.3.3** A graduation event was held late November in recognition of the achievement by over 70 managers of their management qualification through the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) or Chartered Management Institute (CMI). These programmes have been highly successful and the third phase has recently commenced through our partnership with Clydebanks College. In addition our Level 2 programme is now firmly established in-house and our Level 3 programme will also progress to in-house delivery from March onwards.

Strategic Leadership development

- 3.3.4** In response to the recommendations within KPMG's annual audit report to Council, two development sessions were delivered during November focused on Audit Scotland's improvement report "Roles and working relationships: are you getting it right?".
- 3.3.5** Within the November SMN over 100 managers completed the officer's assessment and put forward suggestions for improving working relationships. This was followed by the Member's Business Day session which incorporated an assessment of working relationships from a member perspective.
- 3.3.6** The outcomes of both sessions highlighted the general feeling that relationships between members and officers have improved and were broadly considered positive by both groups. There is momentum

across both groups to build on the structures and systems already implemented to improve working relations and future improvement should focus particularly on areas such as knowledge sharing, protocol development, and development of the pre-agenda structure. This will help support greater understanding and appreciation of each other's role and responsibilities.

- 3.3.7** In late November a further development session involving the CMT and the Administration focused on developing better ways of working together to improve executive leadership and how this could positively influence organisational culture change. This open discussion highlighted practice that works well between the two leadership roles such as the approach to joint forward planning, early engagement, the revised financial planning process, and the business day programme. It was agreed to concentrate future improvement on developing the corporate and strategic focus, better information sharing between the roles, and consistent communication on key messages. A further development session will be planned for later in the year.

Staff engagement

- 3.3.8** The Strategic Leadership workstream reviewed the outcomes of the pulse survey and open questions section at the October meeting, and agreed the key development areas of improving communication (in relation to core brief framework), developing staff recognition, and developing teamworking opportunities.
- 3.3.9** The pulse survey results, including responses to all the open questions, have been published to staff. A further pulse survey is scheduled for early March to assess staff perception on leadership and management within the Council and the Council's main Employee Survey is scheduled to take place in May.
- 3.3.10** Some research and analysis is underway to ascertain the issues and challenges in relation to our low response rates however early indication shows no apparent reason and it may be associated with staff morale and motivation to engage in surveys. It is evident that face-to-face communication through focus groups is more popular with staff and this method will be incorporated within the employee survey in May. Consideration will also be given to including some format for face-to-face consultation aligned with future pulse surveys.
- 3.3.11** It is also envisaged that the introduction of the new intranet site will enable greater promotion of staff surveys as well as providing easier and more flexible access to survey completion.

Performance and Development Planning (PDP)

- 3.3.12** Development of a revised approach to PDP, including a core competency framework for all staff, has been completed and progressed to consultation with the Trade Unions through the Employee Liaison group. It is planned to test the framework through a pilot exercise within Corporate Services, combined with consultation within each department on the feasibility of implementing the new framework across the Council from April 2011.






3.4 Community Engagement

- 3.4.1** The Council has widened its approach to Budget Consultation with a series of budget consultation workshops for employees, budget roadshows for the public and a planned citizens' panel survey (the timing of the latter has still to be confirmed). In addition, a further round of public consultation meetings took place during January to invite public views on the Administration's budget savings proposals prior to the budget being set.
- 3.4.2** Building on previous training, a further 8 courses will be run before the end of March 2011 involving around 35 employees. The courses are being run by the Consultation Institute and we are joining up with Glasgow Housing Association and Young Scot to share courses and deliver best possible value for money (approximately £110 per person, per course – a saving of 58.5% on full prices). Feedback on courses which have already taken place is very positive.
- 3.4.3** A Consultation Toolkit with guidance for employees has been finalised. The date for putting this on the website and intranet has been re-scheduled from October to the beginning of February. This revised timescale will allow consideration of a launch of the Toolkit via the Core Brief, aiming for widest circulation. It also accommodates the timescale for populating the new intranet site.
- 3.4.4** Progress with implementing the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) community engagement tender is continuing. Organisational Development Services (ODS) is working in collaboration with forums themselves to support meetings and scope out a learning programme. Clydebank and Dumbarton Forums are participating. A joint (Dumbarton and Clydebank) training and skills session on Community Research is planned for January. Work is underway to extend membership of Clydebank and Dumbarton Forums, including a survey of local community groups.
- 3.4.5** Following the resignation of the chair, a meeting took place in December to revitalise the Vale of Leven Forum and identify and appoint a new chair and office bearers. Due to adverse weather conditions the turn-out was small. As a result, another meeting will be held during January to progress this.






3.4.6 ODS is assisting with establishment of a CPP community engagement Coordination Group. Three sessions have taken place and the and fourth session will be in February. The work is developing a logic model which will form the basis of a Joint Community Engagement Action Plan. Depending on progress an additional session may be required.

3.5 Progress on Actions

3.5.1 The status column in Appendix 1 provides a visual aid to assessing the status of each action, i.e.:

Action Status	
	Cancelled
	Overdue; No longer assigned
	Unassigned; Not Started; Check Progress
	Resuming; In Progress; Assigned
	Completed

3.5.2 The table below summarises the status of actions across the four workstream areas:

		Action Status			Total
Workstream area	Page Refs in App. 1	Green  	Amber 	Red  	
Strategic Leadership	1 to 5	5 [3]	1	0	6
Competitiveness	6 to 7	2 [1]	0	0	2
Organisational Culture	8 to 9	3 [1]	0	0	3
Community Engagement	10 to 15	2 [0]	1	0	3
TOTAL		12 [5]	2	0	14

3.5.3 Of the 11 actions in the “green” column, 5 have been fully completed, as indicated by the numbers in “[]”.

3.6 Meeting with Audit Scotland – 24 January 2011

3.6.1 On 24 January 2011, the CMT met with Audit Scotland. The purpose of this meeting was to provide an update on the Shared Risk Assessment approach for 2011/12. Audit Scotland is in the process of finalising a report on this matter which it is anticipated will be made available in mid February. The CMT was advised at this meeting that:

- For 2011/12, the Council can merge the Best Value Improvement Plan into the Assurance and Improvement Plan, so that only one

scorecard report rather than the current two will be required in Covalent. It should be noted that 8 of the 14 individual actions shown in the BVIP also appear in the AIP which demonstrates that there is already a significant degree of overlap between the two documents.

- The BV2 audit of West Dunbartonshire Council, previously scheduled for 2011/12, will now not take place until 2012/13.

3.6.2 The above information is included within the report entitled “Shared Risk Assessment – Assurance and Improvement Plan” which has also been submitted to this Council meeting.

4. People Implications

4.1 There are no people implications.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 For financial year 2010/11, a budget of £108,500 was set aside for funding the BV Improvement plan. As at Period 9, total expenditure was £15,098 which can be analysed as follows:

	£
Organisational Culture	12,109
Miscellaneous	364
Competitiveness	500
PSIF	2,125

TOTAL	£15,098
	=====

6. Risk Analysis

6.1 Strategic Risk SR012 (Poor reports from external sources) currently has a score of 6 (significant impact, likely to occur). The target is to reduce the overall score to 4. Scrutiny by Elected Members of the BVIP is a key component of meeting this risk reduction target.

6.2 A review of Strategic Risk SR012 will take place after Audit Scotland’s report on the Shared Risk Assessment approach for 2011/12 has been received.

7. Equalities Impact

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

8. Conclusions & Officer's Recommendations

- 8.1** Members are asked to review and comment on the progress of the Best Value Improvement Plan for 2010/11.
- 8.2** Members are asked to note that for 2011/12 the actions for the Best Value Improvement Plan will be merged into the Assurance and Improvement Plan.
- 8.3** Members are asked to note that the BV2 audit of West Dunbartonshire Council, previously scheduled for 2011/12, will now not take place until 2012/13.

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Date: 11 February 2011

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Appendix 1: Best Value Improvement Plan 2010/11

Background Reports: See below

Wards Affected: All

i [West Dunbartonshire Council \(June 2010\). Report to Council on Best Value Improvement Plan 2010/11](#)

iii [West Dunbartonshire Council \(October 2010\). Report to Council on Best Value Improvement Plan 2010/11](#)