

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Executive

Corporate Services Committee: 28 June 2006

**Subject: Chief Executive's Department:
2006/7 Service Plans**

1 Purpose

1.1 This report sets out the 2006/7 service plans for the Chief Executive's Department.

2 Background

2.1 Following an organisational restructure in April 2006, the Chief Executive's Services and Corporate Services merged to form the Chief Executive's Department, led by the Chief Executive.

2.2 Prior to the restructure, the Chief Executive's Services and Corporate Services produced plans in June 2005 for the 2005/9 planning period setting out their contribution to delivering the corporate priorities and objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2005/9. The plans also set out the specific objectives of the services over the period to March 2009 and identified the necessary actions and resources that would be required to achieve them, particularly in the first year, 2005/6.

3 Main Issues

3.1 Appendix 1 sets out the service plans for the Chief Executive's Services and Corporate Services for the second year of the 2005/9 planning period, that is, 2006/7.

3.2 Since the development of these plans began several months prior to the merger, they are shown separately.

3.3 The plans summarise progress in the first year and set out detailed actions for the year ahead.

3.4 It is our intention to produce a single strategic plan for the new Chief Executive's Department for 2007/11. The process of preparing this plan will commence in August 2006 following the issue of Joint Planning & Budget Guidance in July 2006. This guidance will inform the development of a draft plan by October 2006 and a final plan by March 2007 for the new department.

4 Personnel Issues

There are no personnel issues.

5 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Members are requested to agree the contents of this report.

Tim Huntingford

Chief Executive

Appendix 1: Chief Executive's Department: 2006/7 Service Plans

Person to Contact:

Lynn Henderson – Policy Officer (Corporate Planning & Performance Review)

Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton G82 3PU

Tel: 01389 737528

E-mail lhenderson@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Appendix 1
Chief Executive's Department: 2006/7 Service Plans

West Dunbartonshire Council

Chief Executive's Department

**Departmental Strategic Plans 2005/9
Year 2 Updates 2006/7**

April 2006

OVERVIEW

Following an organisational restructure in April 2006, the Chief Executive's Services and Corporate Services merged to form the Chief Executive's Department, led by the Chief Executive. This new department comprises the following:

- Policy Unit;
- Public Relations and Marketing;
- Finance Services;
- Information Services;
- Legal and Administrative Services;
- Personnel and Training Services;
- Corporate Procurement Unit;
- Elections.

Prior to the restructure, the Chief Executive's Services and Corporate Services produced plans in June 2005 for 2005/9, setting out their contribution to delivering the corporate priorities and objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2005/9. The plans also set out the specific objectives of the services over the period to March 2009 and identified the necessary actions and resources that would be required to achieve them, particularly in the first year, 2005/6.

This document follows on from this, setting out separately the plans for the Chief Executive's Services and Corporate Services in the second year of the 2005/9 planning period, summarising progress in the first year, 2005/6, and setting out detailed action plans for the second year, 2006/7.

It is our intention to produce a single strategic plan for the new Chief Executive's Department for 2007/11. The process of preparing this plan will commence in July 2006 following the issue of Joint Planning & Budget Guidance at the end of June 2006. This Guidance will inform the development of a draft plan by October 2006 and a final plan by March 2007 for the new department.

The two plans contained within this document follow the same format:

Section 1, '**Where are we now?**', provides a brief overview of the service and summarises performance over the last year, that is, from April 2005 to March 2006. It sets out the key issues facing the service over the period of the plan, identified through a strategic analysis of the internal and external factors that influence its work both now and in the future.

Section 2, '**Where do we want to be?**', sets the service's work in the context of the Council's Corporate Plan and identifies its specific objectives. These specific objectives reflect the corporate priorities and address issues raised in the performance review and strategic analysis referred to in Section 1 above.

Section 3, '**How are we going to get there?**', sets out the actions that the service will implement in 2006/7 to help deliver the corporate objectives and its specific objectives as well as the resources that will be required to do this.

Section 4, '**How will we manage and report our progress?**', sets out the performance management and reporting arrangements for the service.

A summary of the priority areas for the Chief Executive's Services and for Corporate Services for the 2005/9 period are set out below:

Chief Executive's Services

- community planning and partnership working;
- external funding;
- anti-poverty;
- health improvement;
- sustainable development;
- international development;
- information;
- Best Value;
- performance management;
- strategic planning;
- employee development;
- engaging stakeholders;
- customer care;
- diversity and equality;
- public relations and marketing;
- efficient government;
- democratic processes.

Corporate Services

- providing high quality, best value, front-line and internal services;
- driving the Council's Customer First Strategy;
- establishing a Council wide Efficient Government ethos;
- providing strong prudential financial management;
- encouraging the effective use of all Council resources;
- ensuring legal decision making and implementing statutory frameworks;
- developing workable policies and procedures;
- leading on risk management, disaster recovery, and business continuity;
- supporting the evaluation of corporate performance;
- supporting elected representatives in extending democracy.

The plans are intended for a wide range of audiences – elected members, Council managers and employees, our Community Planning partners, our customers and citizens, voluntary and community groups, and businesses.

Tim Huntingford, Chief Executive

Date

West Dunbartonshire Council

Chief Executive's Services

Departmental Strategic Plan 2005/9 Year 2 Update 2006/7

April 2006

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1.0 WHERE ARE WE NOW?

SERVICE PROFILE

Purpose

1.1 The Chief Executive's Services (CES) helps the Council and its services meet the challenges of an ever-changing environment. This involves:

- identifying and communicating changing needs and demands;
- developing and communicating appropriate Council policies and practices;
- working with partners; and
- responding to wider national agendas.

Values

1.2 Our values are:

- putting customers first;
- continuous improvement;
- partnership working;
- equal opportunities and diversity;
- sustainability;
- valuing our employees; and
- openness and accountability.

Functions

1.3 The CES has specific responsibilities in the areas of:

- Community Planning;
- corporate planning and performance monitoring and review;
- corporate Best Value;
- diversity and equal opportunities;
- preparing statistical profiles and co-ordinating statistical and statutory returns;
- social inclusion and social justice strategies;
- decentralisation, community involvement and strengthening local democracy;
- public and partner consultation ;
- Efficient Government agenda;
- the Council's decision making processes;
- health improvement;
- customer care;
- sustainability;
- international development issues;
- police liaison and community safety;
- co-ordinating the Council's approach to attracting external funding in conjunction with partner agencies;

- development of democratic structures and elections; and
 - public relations and marketing comprising:
 - media;
 - marketing communications;
 - internal/external communications; and
 - market research/consultation.
- 1.4 We report to the Chief Executive and the Corporate Management Team. We work and consult with other Council departments, customers and citizens, elected members, representatives of the local community, voluntary groups and partner organisations. The progress of our work is highly dependant on co-operation and partnership with other services, agencies, and community groups.
- 1.5 At a wider level, the CES is responsible for the research and development of many of West Dunbartonshire Council's policies, and for responding to proposals from the Scottish Executive, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA), and other agencies.
- 1.6 The department has objectives in each of the given areas of responsibility, some set by the Scottish Executive and some via consultation with the local community and its representatives. These link with the priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 1.7 A leaflet entitled 'Working for You' provides further information on the work of the Policy Unit. Copies of this leaflet can be obtained by calling 01389 737231.

Resources

Physical Resources

- 1.8 The CES is based at Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton, and is (largely) located on the same floor as the Chief Executive.

Human Resources

- 1.9 There are 23 posts in the Chief Executive's Services:
- 5 full time administrative posts;
 - 2 Modern Apprenticeships;
 - 11 full time permanent posts wholly funded by the Council;
 - 2 part time permanent posts wholly funded by the Council (28 hours and 17.5hours);
 - 1 full time temporary post;
 - 1 Health Improvement post jointly funded by the Council, the Scottish Executive and the Community Planning partners until April 2008; and
 - 1 Police Liaison Officer funded by Strathclyde Police.
- 1.10 A diagram setting out the staff structure for the CES is shown at the end of this section.

Financial Resources

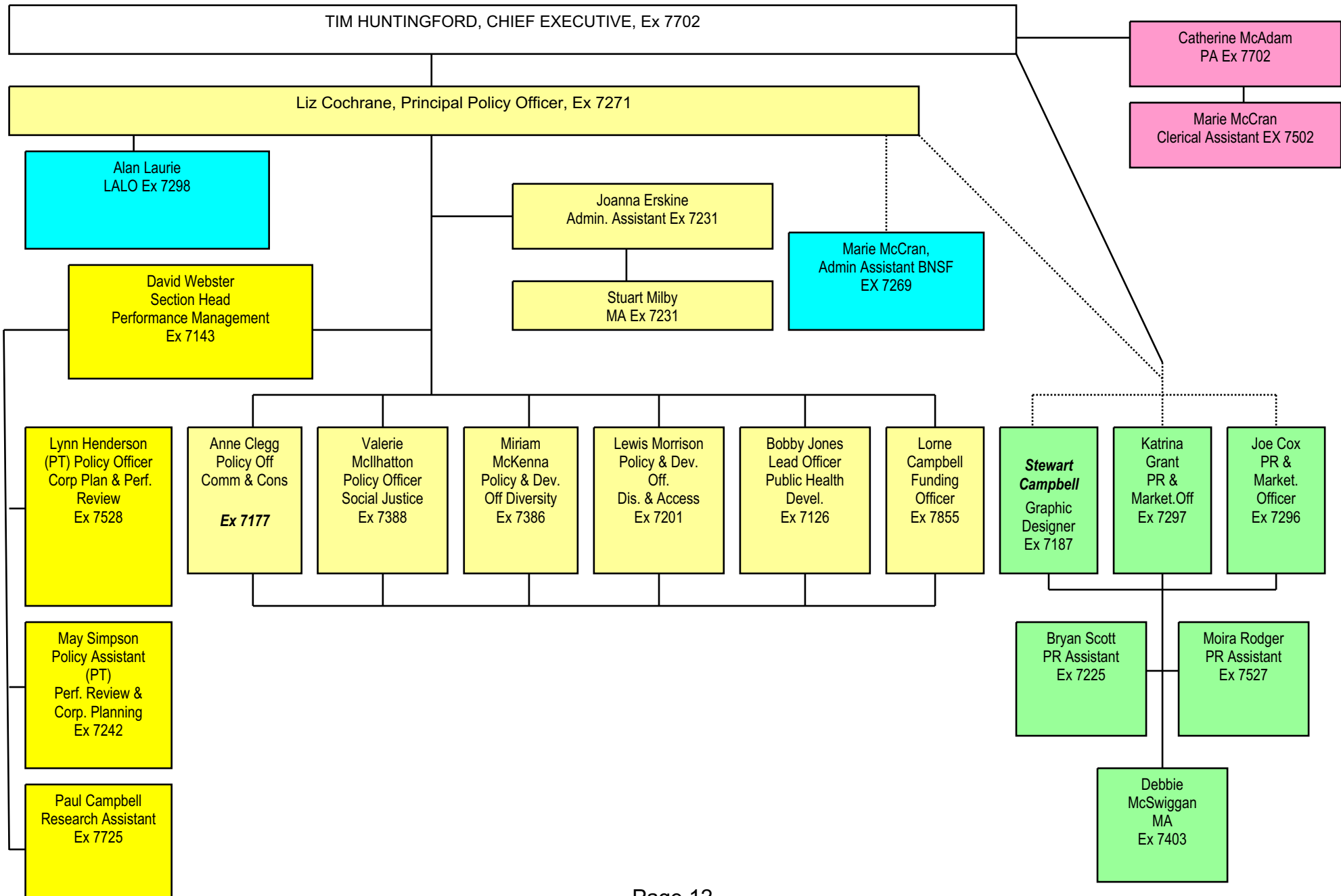
- 1.11 Appendix 1 gives a full breakdown of the budget for the CES for 2006/7. The total gross expenditure for the CES in 2006/7 is £876,550 and income is £35,550, giving net expenditure of £841,000.

Stakeholders and Consultation

- 1.12 The stakeholders of CES are as varied as the issues we communicate and consult about. The stakeholders extend from the elected members and the Corporate Management Team, to Council service departments, partner agencies, and the various interest groups which reflect the local community. It would be inappropriate to rely on any one method when communicating and consulting with these. We employ a range of communication and consultation mechanisms including:

- council newspaper;
- Citizens' Panel;
- Community Participation Committee;
- public meetings and focus groups;
- targeted mailings;
- Disability Working Group;
- booklets/pamphlets/leaflets and posters to support specific areas of work;
- briefing and training sessions;
- press and radio advertising;
- Council internet site and intranet;
- Community Day and Community Week;
- Opinionmeters;
- media contacts e.g. press enquiries and issuing releases;
- staff magazine;
- workshops;
- exhibitions; and
- surveys and questionnaires.

- 1.13 We also advise on consultation approaches and provide guidance on a corporate approach to equal access to information and consultation opportunities.



PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Key Achievements in 2005/6

1.14 Outlined below are our key achievements in 2005/6 in relation to the relevant corporate priority areas.

1.15 Regenerate and Develop the Local Economy

- published 2005/6 Anti Poverty Strategy;
- facilitated in attracting £500,000 in external funding to West Dunbartonshire;
- organised two 'Form-a-thon' events at which fifty groups were advised on external funding issues and assisted in completing application forms;
- developed an external funding newsletter and distributed it quarterly to more than 300 voluntary and community groups;
- prepared a draft External Funding Strategy for West Dunbartonshire Council.

1.16 Promote Health and Well Being

- co-ordinated a West Dunbartonshire wide partnership response to five public health consultations;
- established a Scottish Health at Work (SHAW) inter-departmental steering group;
- completed the co-ordination of a partnership Joint Health Improvement Plan;
- completed a 'cross department' Council wide mapping of health improvement activity;
- co-ordinated the development of a West Dunbartonshire wide Choose Life Action Plan in partnership with co-lead officers;
- established a West Dunbartonshire Youth Health Improvement Group;
- contributed to the formation and development of a national association of health improvement officers;
- supported a partnership approach to developing a West Dunbartonshire shared Sexual Health Strategy Group;
- contributed to the planning and roll out of the Community Health Partnership health improvement action planning process;
- contributed to the development of the health improvement section of the Regeneration Outcome Agreement;
- assisted in establishing and developing a national Health Impact Assessment Network;
- authored a section of the Director of Public Health Annual Report on the effects of housing on health;
- judged the West Dunbartonshire schools Hungry for Success awards.

1.17 Provide High Quality, Best Value Services

- published the 2005/6 Social & Economic Profile and Quick Facts;
- responded to all requests for social, economic and statistical information;
- produced and distributed Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation products;
- published and launched Equal Opportunities Monitoring Guidance for Services and Employment;

- reviewed and revised 'Communicating Effectively' and re-issued via the website;
- established 24 hour telephone interpreting service for the Council;
- developed equality and diversity web pages on Council website;
- carried out equal opportunities training for elected members;
- established Equality and Diversity Working Group, comprising senior officers and elected members;
- developed race and disability training as part of induction;
- produced an Integrated Impact Assessment Toolkit;
- piloted an Integrated Impact Assessment on housing allocations policy, funded by CoSLA and in partnership with Public Health Development lead officer;
- published the Equality and Diversity Strategy 2005/9;
- revised and published the Race Equality Scheme 2005/8;
- reviewed all Council functions and policies for relevance to Race Equality and published on website to meet Race Equality Scheme Specific Duty;
- responded to consultation documents from Commission for Racial Equality, The Equalities Review, Scottish Executive, Department of Trade and Industry - Women and Equality Unit;
- supported and developed the Community Participation Committee;
- ran Community Day 2005;
- developed West Dunbartonshire Citizens' Panel into a partnership resource via a multi-agency steering group, appointing a consultant to refresh and recruit the panel and increasing the representation of under represented groupings;
- established a Consultation Network to achieve better co-ordination and planning of consultation activity;
- produced a consultation strategy to implement measures to achieve the above including the development of an intranet form to record consultation activity and a good practice guidance toolkit for the intranet;
- reviewed the Corporate Plan 2003/7 and produced and distributed the Corporate Plan 2005/9;
- produced the Chief Executive's Services Service Plan 2005/9;
- reviewed the first year of the Chief Executive's Services Service Plan 2005/9 and produced, agreed and published second year update for 2006/7;
- further developed, in conjunction with IS, the Action Planning Database;
- held Quarterly Performance Review meetings and produced quarterly performance reports on CES for Audit & Performance Review Committee;
- co-ordinated and drafted four public performance reporting articles for the Council's newspaper, West Dunbartonshire News, linked to the Council's corporate priorities;
- improved accessibility of complaints process by adding electronic version of complaints form to the web;
- co-ordinated the completion of statutory performance indicator data for the 'How well are we performing?' 2004/5 booklet which includes the new 'traffic lights' monitoring sheets;
- produced the 2004/5 performance report on the progress of the Corporate Plan 2005/9;
- co-ordinated the collation of statutory performance indicators for audit and subsequent reporting;
- publicised performance information at Community Day 2005;

- produced Disability Equality Strategy;
- drafted Equality Training Strategy;
- provided training on access issues for building professionals;
- piloted provision of disability equality training;
- created corporate budget to support building access improvement programme and implemented programme;
- formed Positive Employment Group;
- identified programme of reviews for employment related policies;
- consulted disabled employees about their experience of working for the Council;
- developed Disability Working Group;
- designed, produced and distributed six editions of the Council newspaper, West Dunbartonshire News, to 45,000 households throughout West Dunbartonshire;
- designed, produced and distributed four issues of the staff magazine, Westlife, to 6,500 employees;
- responded to 836 enquiries in 2005 and managed 225 press releases and 144 photo calls;
- completed 175 marketing jobs including the Council newspaper, the Corporate Plan 2005/9 and the Social & Economic Profile 2005/6;
- co-ordinated and produced the Best Value submission for the Best Value audit;
- produced Customer First Strategy, Customer Service Standards and six guidance leaflets for staff on customer care and launched them at the Senior Managers Network in September 2005;
- facilitated Customer First Steering Group and led Customer Services Working Group;
- set up Sustainable Development Working Group;
- revised and agreed planning and performance management process;
- led and facilitated the Best Value Development Group – a network of departmental policy/strategy officers – which raised the profile of Best Value, strategic planning, the Action Planning Database and continuous improvement across the Council;
- increased the range of activities covered by the Best Value Strategy Group to include consultation, sustainable development, continuous improvement and efficient government;
- applied to achieve Investors in People by April 2006;
- completed all PDPs and established process;
- supported Council's involvement in international development;
- commenced work to support preparations for 2007 election boundaries and structures.

Statutory Performance Indicators

1.18 There are no statutory performance indicators relating specifically to the CES although the CES coordinates an indicator covering access to buildings. Introduced in 2004/5, it is defined as "The number of council buildings from which the council delivers services to the public, and the percentage of these in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people." The figures below show the audited figure for 2004/5 and the unaudited figure for 2005/6.

2004/5: 21%

2005/6: 28% (unaudited)

Complaints and Complaints Processing

- 1.19 In relation to complaints and complaints processing, the CES have received no formal complaints since the Council introduced a corporate complaints process in 1999.

Outcomes of External Audits

- 1.20 As a result of the Audit Scotland Best Value Transitional Arrangements Review in March 2004 a number of key improvement areas were identified for action in the first year of this service plan i.e. 2005/6. The main issues were:

- produce a CES plan;
- ensure that the Action Planning Database is used within the planning process;
- implement a performance management, measurement and reporting structure within the CES; and
- develop an Equal Opportunities Strategy for the Council.

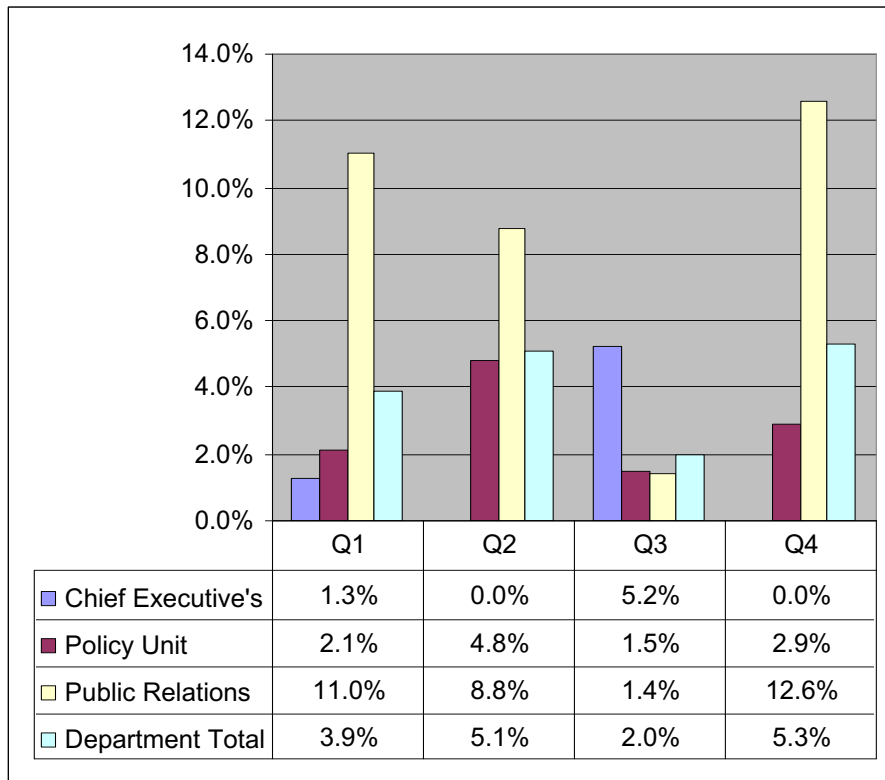
- 1.21 All of these issues have either been addressed or are continuing to be progressed.

- 1.22 A full external audit of the Best Value framework, carried out by Audit Scotland, commenced in November 2005 and will be completed in Spring 2006. Any new issues arising from this will be considered for action in 2006/7 or planned for action in subsequent years.

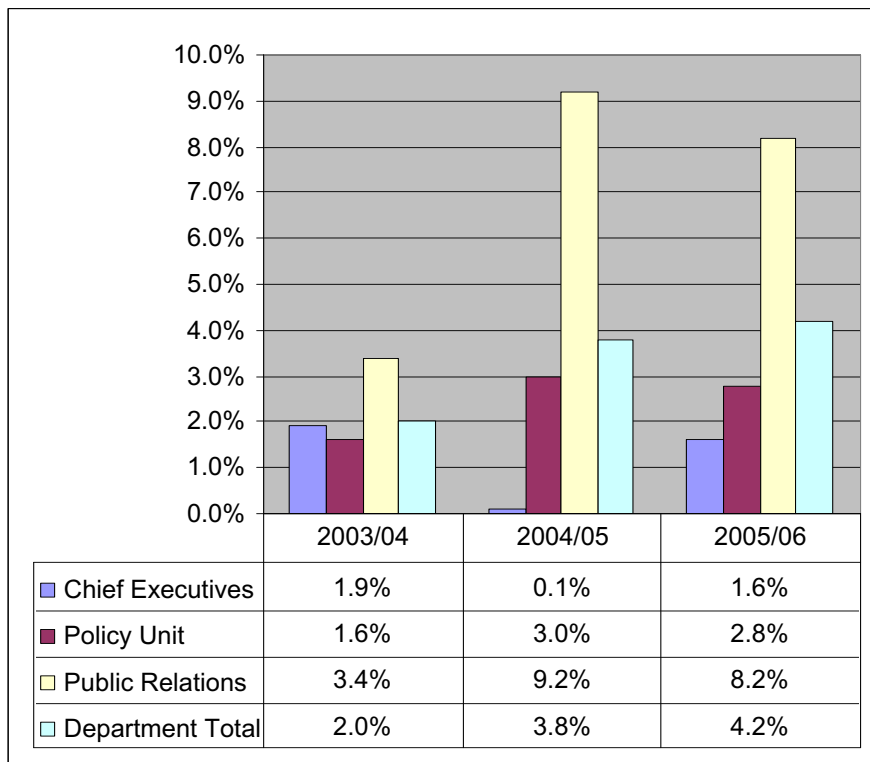
Absence Management

- 1.23 Graph 1 shows the percentage of days lost in 2005/6 due to sickness absence for each quarter. Graph 2 shows the overall total for 2005/6 and compares this with the two previous years.

Graph 1: % of Days Lost 2005/6 by Quarter



Graph 2: % of Days Lost by Year



STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

PEST/SWOT Analyses

1.24 A strategic assessment was carried out using PEST/SWOT tools - a PEST analysis (Political, Economic, Social and Technological) and a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). The results of these analyses are shown in tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1: PEST Analysis

<p><i>Political</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Changes to political shape of Council e.g. appointment of spokesperson on Equality & Diversity, development of the Member/Officer Group on Equality/Diversity ➤ Requirement to meet new laws and legislation -e.g. Equality ➤ Community Planning could alter the democratic base of elected members ➤ Increasing attention being paid to Equal Pay and Equal Pay audits ➤ Impact of 2007 electoral changes, multi member wards, likelihood of hung Council, uncertainties re boundaries etc ➤ Scottish Executive pressures re efficiencies, shared services and budgets 	<p><i>Economic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased pressures on budgets e.g. IIP, PDP, training, Race Equality duties, transcription and interpretation due to increased engagement with disability groups/individuals and BME groups ➤ Section now involved in capital budget bids/plans in regard to disability access ➤ Potential alternative sources of funding re joint health focus ➤ Regeneration opportunities
<p><i>Social</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ West Dunbartonshire has taken longer to adjust to structural economic change than other areas so risks lagging even further behind ➤ Low education and skills base has led to over emphasis of low paid low skilled jobs ➤ Developing awareness/ expectations among equality groups ➤ Lack of demographic information and demographic changes ➤ Growing populations of Black and Minority Ethnic communities across Scotland 	<p><i>Technological</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IT developments especially facilitating shared services ➤ Need to ensure that equalities are addressed in e-communication / information ➤ Increasing pressure to monitor needs, has to be backed up by effective databases and management information systems

Table 2: SWOT Analysis

<p><i>Strengths</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Access to members and senior management ➤ Able to direct objectives ➤ Skilled, experienced, dedicated, discrete, loyal, professional staff ➤ Good strategic view of what the Council needs to do ➤ Flexible and responsive service ➤ A broad range of experience focused in single 'department' with a group of officers focusing on equality issues ➤ Enthusiasm to get things right and working well ➤ Team Working ➤ Internal and external networks and partnerships ➤ Access to means of communication and databases, Systems and Libraries of images and information 	<p><i>Weaknesses</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Large amount of reactive work which takes priority over planned work ➤ Lack of understanding by services of crucial issues and a reluctance to "buy into" corporate initiatives ➤ Lack of resources including money, human and IT resources
<p><i>Opportunities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Partnership working with other councils, and Community Planning partners and other local authorities to share expertise and some funding for shared projects and the opportunity to test innovative approaches</i> ➤ <i>On-going staff development.</i> ➤ <i>Working better with Equality Commissions to make sure we are getting it right</i> ➤ <i>Opportunity to influence partnership direction through community planning</i> ➤ <i>Range of areas requiring a corporate 'steer' providing an opportunity to "lead"</i> ➤ <i>To work better and smarter to streamline budgets</i> ➤ <i>To obtain external funding</i> ➤ <i>Better co-ordination of consultation with Partners</i> ➤ <i>Expand/extend electronic storage of images (e.g. photography) and make more use of the internet</i> ➤ <i>Opportunities created by Scottish Executive pressures on local government to reform</i> 	<p><i>Threats</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Increased demands that cannot be satisfied without more resources</i> ➤ <i>Lack of authority</i> ➤ <i>Lack of corporate identity</i> ➤ <i>Seen as backfilling need for research and development facility for elected members/staff</i> ➤ <i>How to attract and keep good staff.</i> ➤ <i>Political environment – changes and uncertainties</i> ➤ <i>Limited strategic vision by some services</i> ➤ <i>Uncertainties created by Scottish Executive pressures on local government to reform</i>

1.25 The outcome of the performance review and strategic assessment set out in this section informs the priority areas and objectives of the CES and our planned actions for 2006/7.

2.0 WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

VALUES, VISION, PRIORITIES

Values

2.1 The Council's values underpin the way we work and guide everything we do. They are:

- putting customers first;
- valuing our employees;
- equal opportunities and diversity;
- openness and accountability;
- sustainability;
- continuous improvement; and
- partnership working.

Vision

2.2 The Council's vision for West Dunbartonshire is shaped by partnership:

Working together we want to end poverty and exclusion, deliver better services, and improve the quality of life for the people of West Dunbartonshire.

2.3 This vision has been agreed and adopted by all our Community Planning partners.

Corporate Priorities and Objectives

2.4 Following from this vision, the Council has identified six key priorities. These have been informed by a range of factors including the opportunities and challenges that we face over the period of this plan, the needs and aspirations of our community, and the commitments of the Council administration elected in May 2003. These are:

- *Regenerate and develop the local economy*, focusing on area regeneration; enterprise, new business and job creation; helping more people into work; and tackling the effects of poverty.
- *Promote health and well-being*, specifically in relation to vulnerable groups and the developing role of the Council as a health improvement organisation.
- *Promote lifelong learning*, particularly access, participation and achievement in learning for adults; and schools regeneration.
- *Create a better environment*, focusing on an attractive environment; a safe environment; housing conditions; waste management; transport and roads; and anti-social behaviour.

- *Develop our children and young people*, specifically in relation to access, participation and achievement in learning; engaging children and young people; and vulnerable children and young people.
 - *Provide high quality, best value services*, focusing on partnership working; strategic planning and budgeting; managing and improving performance; managing resources; engaging stakeholders; and access to services.
- 2.5 These priorities have in turn been translated into specific, measurable objectives. Targets have been set for each objective, enabling us to monitor, manage, and report our progress to all our stakeholders.
- 2.6 The CES have set out an action plan for 2006/7 to help meet the corporate objectives. It focuses on:
- tackling the effects of poverty;
 - role of the Council as a health improvement organisation;
 - engaging children and young people;
 - partnership working;
 - strategic planning and budgeting;
 - managing and improving performance;
 - managing resources;
 - engaging stakeholders; and
 - access to services.
- 2.7 It is summarised in Section 3, 'How are we going to get there?', and set out in detail in Appendix 2.

CES Priority Areas and Objectives

- 2.8 In addition to the corporate priority areas outlined above, the CES will also focus on a number of other priority areas in 2006/7:
- community planning and partnership working;
 - information ;
 - performance management;
 - diversity and equality;
 - public relations and marketing;
 - democratic processes;
 - external funding;
 - efficient government;
 - sustainable development; and
 - international development.
- 2.9 These reflect the outcome of our strategic assessment and review of our performance in 2005/6 set out in Section 1.
- 2.10 Table 3 below shows how these areas link to the corporate priorities. It should be noted that while many of the CES priority areas link to more than one corporate priority, we have structured our work under the most relevant corporate priority for simplicity.

Table 3: Links Between Corporate Priorities and CES Priority Areas

Corporate Priority	CES Priority Area
Regenerate and develop the local economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ community planning and partnership working ➤ external funding
Promote health and well-being	-
Promote lifelong learning	-
Create a better environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ sustainable development ➤ international development
Develop our children and young people	-
Provide high quality, best value services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ information ➤ performance management ➤ diversity and equality ➤ public relations and marketing ➤ efficient government ➤ democratic processes

- 2.11 Objectives have been developed in relation to each of these priority areas. For each objective, performance indicators have been identified and targets set, enabling us to monitor, manage, and report our progress to all our stakeholders. Details of these objectives are set out in Appendix 3.
- 2.12 These will be recorded in a networked database, the Action Planning Database, which has been set up to help us monitor, manage, and report our performance effectively and efficiently to all our stakeholders.
- 2.13 The CES have set out an action plan for 2006/7 to help meet these objectives. This is summarised in Section 3, 'How are we going to get there?', and set out in detail in Appendix 4.

3.0 HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET THERE?

ACTION PLAN

A programme of actions to help deliver the corporate objectives and the CES specific objectives has been developed.

Actions to Deliver the Corporate Priorities and Objectives

3.1 Actions to help deliver the corporate priorities and objectives are summarised below under their respective priorities and set out in detail in Appendix 2.

3.2 Regenerate and Develop the Local Economy

- participate in community and third sector events promoting sources of external funding and support offered by West Dunbartonshire Council;
- assist social economy and third sector organisations to complete funding application forms;
- distribute external funding bulletins electronically to social economy and third sector organisations and relevant Council officers;
- organise a programme of 'Form-a-thon' events for social economy and third sector organisations;
- provide high quality ad hoc information on appropriate funding sources to social economy and third sector organisations in West Dunbartonshire;
- distribute quarterly 'External Funding News' newsletter to voluntary and community groups and third sector organisations;
- provide training on external funding matters to officers of West Dunbartonshire Council and members of social economy and third sector organisations;
- facilitate the implementation of the Anti-Poverty Strategy via an inter-departmental working group;

3.3 Promote Health and Well-being

- evaluate the pilot integrated impact assessment;
- roll out health impact assessment as an integral element of integrated impact assessment on new and reviewed Council policies;
- develop and maintain a Council infrastructure to provide information and co-ordinate progress;
- co-ordinate the delivery of the SHAW core and additional criteria to meet the bronze award standards;
- contribute to the development of West Dunbartonshire Community Health Partnership Health Improvement Action Plan via the Community Health Partnership health improvement development team;
- work with the Community Planning Partnership to align the Regeneration Outcome Agreement health improvement activity with departmental service planning health improvement actions;

- co-ordinate the Council contribution to a joint partnership approach to the development of West Dunbartonshire strategies which address Joint Health Improvement Plan health topics;
- co-ordinate and develop a partnership approach to Integrated Impact Assessment;
- facilitate the shared production and delivery of a West Dunbartonshire Joint Health Improvement Plan;
- work with each of the four directorates (including the Chief Executive's Services) to integrate Joint Health Improvement Plan aims and objectives into their service plans and action plans.

3.4 Develop Our Children and Young People

- develop links between the Community Participation Committee and young people.

3.5 Provide High Quality, Best Value Services

- support the implementation of the service planning process and the production of service plans throughout the Council;
- implement the service planning process for the CES and produce a service plan that conforms to the corporate guidance;
- develop and implement the corporate planning process;
- support the implementation of the performance management framework – quarterly performance reviews – within directorates;
- co-ordinate the collation and presentation of information for quarterly performance reviews within the CES;
- develop the Action Planning Database in conjunction with Information Services;
- publish an annual statement of public performance reporting plans for the Council;
- co-ordinate and draft six articles, one for each of the six editions of West Dunbartonshire News, focusing on the Council's performance in relation to the corporate priorities;
- review service specific and partnership performance reporting;
- produce a guide on the accessibility of services;
- improve physical access to West Dunbartonshire Council operational buildings;
- develop procedures and guidance for providing information in alternative formats;
- monitor the impact of the employee guidance 'Communicating Effectively';
- facilitate the review of employment policies in relation to the employment, support and advancement of disabled employees;
- develop and implement an equalities training strategy;
- support services to assess disability equality in Best Value reviews;
- produce and publish a disability profile of West Dunbartonshire;
- contribute to the development of integrated impact assessment throughout the Council, particularly in relation to disability equalities;
- organise and run a conference on access and involvement for the disabled community and public services;
- support services in delivering the Race Equality Scheme and associated race equality legislation;

- finalise and implement the Gender Equality Scheme;
- design, produce and distribute six editions of the Council newspaper, West Dunbartonshire News;
- co-ordinate and support the audit of statutory performance indicators;
- produce the performance publication 'How well are we performing?', incorporating the audited statutory performance indicators presented in a graphical way;
- collate and update the statutory performance indicators graphical monitoring sheets as part of the Council's performance management framework;
- collate, monitor and report corporate complaints and complaints processing;
- develop a systematic and challenging approach to option appraisal;
- produce a revised Best Value Improvement Action plan following the Best Value Audit;
- review our overall approach to benchmarking and make recommendations for improvement;
- review the Best Value service review process and make recommendations for a simple, effective, comprehensive and structured self-assessed continuous improvement process;
- measure compliance with Customer Service Standards;
- measure overall customer satisfaction with Council services;
- review the current process for integrating planning and budgeting and reflect this in the annual Joint Planning & Budget Guidance;
- review and revise the corporate health indicators;
- co-ordinate the completion of the Chartermark accreditation programme throughout the Council;
- apply for Investors in People accreditation for the Chief Executive's Services;
- conduct a Best Value review of internal and external communications;
- lead the implementation of the Council's Decentralisation Scheme;
- lead the implementation of the Council's Consultation Strategy;
- attend the Communities Thematic Group meetings of the Community Planning Partnership and contribute to multi-agency working groups on a range of topics;
- develop links between the Community Participation Committee and young people;
- facilitate the development and operation of the Citizens' Panel via the steering group.

Actions to Deliver CES Specific Priorities and Objectives

3.6 Actions to help deliver the specific priorities and objectives of the CES are summarised below under their respective CES priority areas and set out in detail in Appendix 4.

3.7 Community Planning and Partnership Working

- develop the Council's internal structures for officers and members;
- promote best practice in communicating effectively with customers within the Community Planning Partnership.

3.8 External Funding

- participate in events promoting sources of external funding and support offered by West Dunbartonshire Council;
- assist organisations to complete funding application forms;
- distribute external funding bulletins electronically to organisations and relevant Council officers;
- organise a programme of 'Form-a-thon' events;
- provide high quality ad hoc information on appropriate funding sources to organisations within West Dunbartonshire;
- distribute quarterly 'External Funding News' newsletter to organisations;
- provide training on external funding matters to officers of West Dunbartonshire Council and partners.

3.9 Democratic Processes

- revise decision making processes and member support structures to reflect multi-member wards.

3.10 Information

- respond to requests for social, economic and statistical information;
- produce the Social and Economic Profile and Quick Facts for 2006/7.

3.11 Performance Management

- monitor directorate returns to the Scottish Executive;
- produce quarterly reports on key departmental performance indicators and corporate health indicators for the CMT and the Council.

3.12 Diversity and Equality

- implement, monitor and report on the Gender Equality Strategy;
- update, monitor and report on the Race Equality Scheme action plan;
- produce a comprehensive guide for people with a disability on how key services respond to people with a disability;
- develop and implement the sexual orientation strand of employment regulations in compliance with legislation;
- implement, monitor and report on the Equality and Diversity Strategy;
- implement walking audits for identifying access improvements.

3.13 Efficient Government

- co-ordinate the Council's approach to the Efficient Government initiative;
- develop shared service delivery.

3.14 Sustainable Development

- develop a sustainable development strategy for West Dunbartonshire Council;
- develop and monitor quality of life indicators;
- enhance the procurement strategy to take more account of sustainability issues;
- produce a local biodiversity action plan.

3.15 International Development

- support the local government Sierra Leone Task Group;
- develop West Dunbartonshire as a fair trade area.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

3.16 The implications of these actions in terms of our financial, human, ICT and physical resources are set out below:

Financial

3.17 There are no additional financial implications associated with the 2006/7 action plan for delivering the corporate objectives and the specific objectives of the CES. A breakdown of the budget for 2006/7 is set out in Appendix 1.

Human

3.18 It is anticipated that the current staffing levels will not change, although every vacancy is used as an opportunity for review.

ICT

3.19 No major changes to ICT provision are envisaged over the plan period. The Department is the 'owner' of the Councils Action Planning database, developed internally by IS. This will be further developed in response to user needs.

Physical

3.20 The long term aim is to co-locate the department if circumstances allow.

4.0 HOW WILL WE MANAGE AND REPORT OUR PROGRESS?

MONITORING, MANAGING AND REPORTING OUR PERFORMANCE

- 4.1 A new performance management framework, introduced to the Council in 2004, requires all directorates to monitor, review and report their performance to the relevant committee/s on a quarterly basis. These quarterly performance review meetings form the basis of our performance management within the Chief Executive's Services. The meetings focus on the following areas of performance:
- absence management;
 - complaints and complaints processing;
 - Statutory Performance Indicators;
 - the CES Plan 2005/9 in relation to:
 - the progress of actions to meet the corporate objectives;
 - the progress of actions to meet the specific objectives of the CES; and
 - the extent to which the CES objectives have been met.
- 4.2 In previous CES service plans we did not identify performance indicators to measure the extent to which the specific objectives of the CES had been met. Consequently, this area of performance has not been examined in quarterly performance review meetings to date. However, for this service plan, at least one performance indicator has been identified for each service objective to enable us to begin to monitor this from 2006/7.
- 4.3 Monitoring the extent to which the *corporate* objectives have been met is carried out as part of the corporate planning process.
- 4.4 Following each quarterly performance review meeting, a report will be submitted to the Corporate Services Committee setting out our performance in general and identifying those actions and outputs assessed as 'delayed' and the reasons for this. The first report will be submitted to Committee on 13 September 2006, followed by a report on 20 December 2006. The dates of subsequent meetings have still to be confirmed at the time of writing.
- 4.5 Additional reporting to other key stakeholders will be agreed and implemented. This will include six articles on performance in West Dunbartonshire News setting out the CES contribution to the corporate priorities and objectives.
- 4.6 In addition to the above, the Public Relations and Marketing section prepare a monthly performance report for the Chief Executive, Corporate Management Team, Council Leader and all relevant Councillors as Convenors or spokespersons of services. This report details the number and content of press enquiries, copies of all press releases, number, content and outcome of marketing work, and the number of photo calls and advertising.

APPENDIX 1

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S SERVICES BUDGET 2006/7

	<u>Chief Executive</u>	<u>Policy Unit</u>	<u>Public Relations</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Employee Costs	182,220	430,760	168,550	781,530
Apt & C Staff - Basic	144,030	346,640	134,250	
Apt & C Staff - Superannuation	22,580	53,660	21,060	
Apt & C Staff - National Insurance	14,660	27,550	10,250	
Apt & C Staff - Total	181,270	427,850	165,560	
Travel & Subsistence	950	1,250	900	
Other Staff Costs	0	1,660	2,090	
Property Costs	50	1,620	670	2,340
Furniture & Fittings	0	1,620	670	
Other Property Costs	50	0	0	
Supplies & Services	1,220	8,440	14,710	24,370
Office Equipment	870	250	1,380	
Computer Software	0	0	0	
Computer Consumables	0	2,270	0	
Computer Equipment	0	2,470	0	
Publicity	0	0	0	
Other Supplies & Services	350	3,450	120	
Computer Equipment & Consumables	0	0	4,560	
General Publications & Promotions	0	0	8,650	
Transport And Plant	0	0	0	0
Other Transport & Plant	0	0	0	
Administration Costs	1,610	6,580	3,920	12,110
Printing & Stationery	650	4,230	1,120	
Telephones	450	0	930	
Postages	130	2,250	510	
Advertising	0	0	0	
Newspapers, Journals & Directories	0	100	1,360	
Books & Publications	60	0	0	
Other Admin Costs	320	0	0	
Payment to Other Bodies	0	2,980	0	2,980
Payment to Other L.A.'s	0	2,980	0	
Other Expenditure	1,200	49,190	2,830	53,220
Community Planning	0	16,270	0	
Community Safety	0	2,070	0	
Consultation - Decentralisation	0	10,500	0	
Hospitality	400	0	0	
Conferences & Courses	800	4,800	2,440	
Promotion Campaign	0	3,300	0	
Publications / Promotions	0	9,000	0	
Training Support	0	1,250	0	
Miscellaneous	0	2,000	390	
GROSS EXPENDITURE	186,300	499,570	190,680	876,550
Income	0	35,550	0	
Other Income	0	0	0	
Re-allocated Salaries	0	35,550	0	
NET EXPENDITURE	186,300	464,020	190,680	841,000

West Dunbartonshire Council

Corporate Services

Departmental Strategic Plan 2005/9 Year 2 Update 2006/7

April 2006

3-11

This section outlines the profile of the service, its strategic position and the measures we have in place for reviewing our performance

- What do we do?
- Where do we fit into the Council and what do we cost?
- What do our customers expect?
- What we achieved in year 1 (2005-2006)

12-13

This section outlines our strategic vision of the service and clarifies our role in supporting the council deliver its corporate objectives

- What is our vision?
- What are our values?
- What do we contribute?

14-18

This section outlines our role in helping the council to attain its priorities, details our own departmental priorities, sets the scene for other department planning and summarises the key objectives found in our Departmental Continuous Improvement Strategy

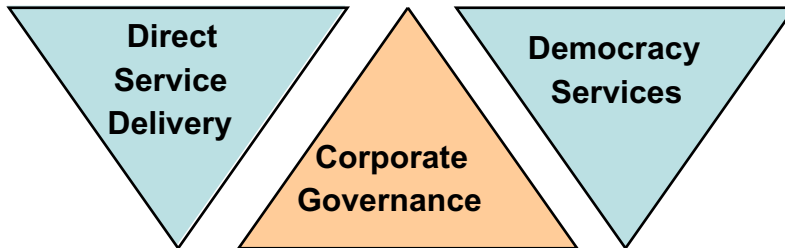
- How will we monitor and/or adjust objectives and actions?
- What are the main actions we must deliver to meet corporate objectives?
- What are the main objectives have we set to meet departmental priorities?
- What plans do we have for everyday services?

19

This section outlines the various ways we engage with our key stakeholders to communicate our progress.

Service Profile: What do we do?

1.1 Corporate Services is a diverse department that delivers front-line services, supports the democratic process and through its professional services, supports departments to optimise their resources. Our work can be split into 3 main themes:



Direct Service Delivery: Delivering High Quality, Best Value Services

1.2 With an employment cost of £7.9 million, we invest approximately £1m in delivering front-line services, including Web management, telephony, switchboard, reception, concierge, registration of births, deaths and marriages, council tax and other fees collections, council house sales, printing, licensing and courts' services, recruitment and selection, electronic service delivery. In addition, we provide consultancy/professional support services to outside organisations e.g. Dunbartonshire & Argyll & Bute Valuation Joint Board.

Corporate Governance: Supporting every department to optimise every resource

1.3 Our support services help departments identify workable business solutions. Given the Modernising Government agenda and the Customer First framework there is an increasing demand being placed on the skills of our employees particularly in ICT, Personnel and Employee Development. We also have a key role to play in developing robust corporate policies and procedures to ensure strong frameworks for excellent management practice. We also provide management information to support robust decision making. Finally, we take the lead in minimising corporate and community risk by encouraging departments to consider issues such as; disaster recovery, business continuity, health and safety, systems controls, key service risks, procurement, efficient government, scrutiny and legal compliance.

Democracy Services: Supporting Citizens/Members to enhance environmental well-being

1.4 Every department has a responsibility to engage communities. One way is to ensure that accurate agenda's, committee reports and minutes are available to communicate the policies and decisions agreed by Council. These are available to citizens and can be found on the [Council's website](#). In addition the department facilitates the smooth running of the [Council's Open Forum](#)¹. The department also ensures that everyday services are in place to help Elected Members conduct their Ward business.

¹ [Open Forum](#)

Service Profile: Where do we fit in the Council and what do we cost?

- 1.5 Currently we have a traditional structure with 4 Service Units. Our budget for 2006/07 equates to £8,726,110, which is 4.3% of the Council's total budget of £203,514,260. Mindful of the resource allocated to us we are committed to identifying any potential inefficiency. Currently we have 6 projects looking for improvements in Printing, Training, Debt, Collection Hall, Benchmarking and HR.
- 1.6 The Management Organisation Chart as at 25/05/2006, is included below:



Angela Clements
Head of
ICT & Business
Development



Stephen Brown
Head of
Legal &
Administrative



David Connell
Head of
Finance Services



Tricia O'Neill
Head of
Personnel Services

Dorothy Farquhar
Section Head Customer
Services & User Support

Anne Laird
Manager of
Administrative Services

Lorraine Coyne
Manager of Audit

Alex Thomson
Project Manager
Pay Modernisation

Peter Rudzinski
Section Head Systems &
Business Development

Nigel Ettles
Section Head
Litigation

Gillian Jump
Manager of
Accounting

Andrea Gibson
Acting Section Head
Personnel Operations

James Alexander
Manager of Infrastructure

Alan Douglas
Manager Special
Projects and Best Value
(Seconded to PPP)

Vincent Gardiner
Manager of
Exchequer

Donald Gordon / Margaret
Dickson
Acting Section Heads
Employee Development

- 1.7 We have 335 employees each contributing to the delivery of our services and have been a leading department in promoting flexible working policies and practices
- 1.8 Our current revenue budget is just under £9 million. See Appendix 1 for a full breakdown. However, this is summarised as follows:

	<u>Revenue</u> <u>Budget</u> <u>2006/2007</u> <u>£'000</u>
Legal & Administration Services	3,363,530
Finance Services	2,208,280
Personnel Services	838,780
Information Services	2,315,520
 TOTAL	 8,726,110

- 1.9 It should be noted that £95,000 of the Personnel revenue budget is reserved for life assurance claims, bringing the actual budget closer to £900,000. In addition, a similar personnel resource is established across Housing Regeneration and Environmental Services, Education and Cultural Services and Social Work Services.
- 1.10 We play a fundamental role in submitting, with partners, Modernising Government Bids that also secure extra resources for the Council.
- 1.11 Like most services within the council we face the challenge of ensuring that our budgets are aligned to corporate and service priorities. This is an area for improvement within Corporate Services and will be addressed in 2006/07. The department currently operates on a central re-charge basis.

Service Profile: What do our Customers Expect?

- 1.12 We can only know what our customers expect if we take the initiative and ask them. To make sure this plan is prioritised and meets continually changing service needs, we are committed to gaining service feedback in the following ways:
- 1.13 Listening to Customers
Currently we tend to have informal meetings with citizens, elected members and departmental service users. We do have pockets of good practice e.g. internal audit issue questionnaires after each audit, treasury management have just recently sent out a comprehensive questionnaire, ICT and business development services routinely request feedback from helpdesk support and personnel services have conducted sample reviews on recruitment and selection. Legal and Administrative services have recently engaged in a number of customer surveys which were reported to Corporate Services Committee in April 2006.
- 1.14 Listening to Employees
As a department we know that employees play a critical role in improving services. To enhance this, the department is committed to providing employees with opportunities to share their ideas. We have introduced departmental and

service staff gatherings where we encourage employees to network and share best practice. We also conduct periodic Employee Surveying to assess if employees feel valued and confident in delivering their roles. In addition, we support a formal Joint Consultative Committee where service matters can be explored in partnership with Union Representatives.

1.15 Listening to Managers

Managers have a critical role to play in establishing regular contact with key stakeholders. Managers will be expected to conduct meaningful self assessment and address any gaps in stakeholder analysis that are established.

1.16 From the information we have to date, our main service user expectations can be described as follows:

- provide **high quality, joined-up, accessible, best value services**;
- provide **strong prudential financial management** to ensure the Council keeps within budget and maximises collection rates so that front line services are maintained and/or enhanced;
- provide our internal customers with **comprehensive advice** that contributes to effective business solutions;
- provide **leadership on risk management**, helping all departments to identify and prepare for business & community critical incidents;
- develop clear and understandable **policies and procedures** to improve corporate governance and comply with regulation;
- support the **democratic process** by providing effective committee administration and election systems.

1.17 As described in 1.14, detailed investigation and analysis of customer responses to services and the standards they expect will take place on a planned and prioritised basis from during 2006.

Service Profile: What do we contribute?

1.18 Corporate services are viewed as an internal service provider and were also described in the government's Gershon Report, as a 'back office function'. However, it is important to remind ourselves that we undertake critical work without which some of our front-line services could not be delivered. For example, our

- **Legal Teams** provide critical support in many areas e.g. helping citizens to purchase their Council House, purchasing land central to the economic regeneration of deprived areas, and helping our Social Work colleagues to protect vulnerable children
- **Finance Teams** help us to develop frameworks for the fair distribution of community grants vital to key community projects as well as offering guidance

to maximising every public pound, for example our Audit Team recently identified overcharges in water billing and successfully obtained savings to the value of £ 102,298. In addition, we are also developing corporate procurement systems to bring about further efficiency savings

- **Personnel and Health & Safety Teams** help us to recruit, retain and safely employ the best possible workforce so that we can continue to improve services to our communities
- **Administration Teams** support elected members in running effective council meetings, administer the local children's hearing system and school attendance councils as well as running elections and managing strategic issues such as contingency planning and corporate risk management
- **ICT Teams** provide vital infrastructure support to enable internal critical systems and external electronic services e.g. on-line recruitment, 24/7 payment systems and general public information via the Web
- **Revenues Teams** collect monies vital to delivering front-line services
- **Registration Teams** provide a central support in the community for registering births, deaths and marriages whilst also helping citizens to claim essential grants e.g. school clothing and footwear
- **Reception, Telephony and Concierge Teams** provide that first point of contact for council visitors and callers

Performance Review: What we achieved in Year 1 (2005-06)

Achievement 1: Improving communications and employee engagement

- 1.19 In March 05 a high level service plan for 2005 – 2009 was formulated and agreed by the Corporate Services Committee. Our first Departmental Staff Gatherings were held to communicate the content of the plan and 89% of employees managed to attend.
- 1.20 Every employee at the Staff Gathering and those on long-term sickness and maternity leave received an Employee Survey. 93% of employees completed the survey and results were published on the department intranet site. Tables 1 and 2 summarise the findings which, in the main, were positive.
- 1.21 However, there was a high level of employee dissatisfaction about the department's ability to work together to deliver high quality services and this reinforced the CST's strategic aim to develop a single department culture. Some of the actions taken in 2005 – 06 were:
- Holding a full department staff gathering
 - Improved intranet minimising the separate section approach
 - Development and implementation of department communication standards
 - Not to have separate service unit plans as it would work in conflict with the strategic aim to develop a single departmental culture

- Develop a culture where each service unit would undertake self assessments and address the gaps identified in service unit improvement plans

1.22 In addition, some people felt their jobs provided little scope for personal growth & development and this confirmed the departments need to continue pursuing the standards set out in Investors in People (IIP).

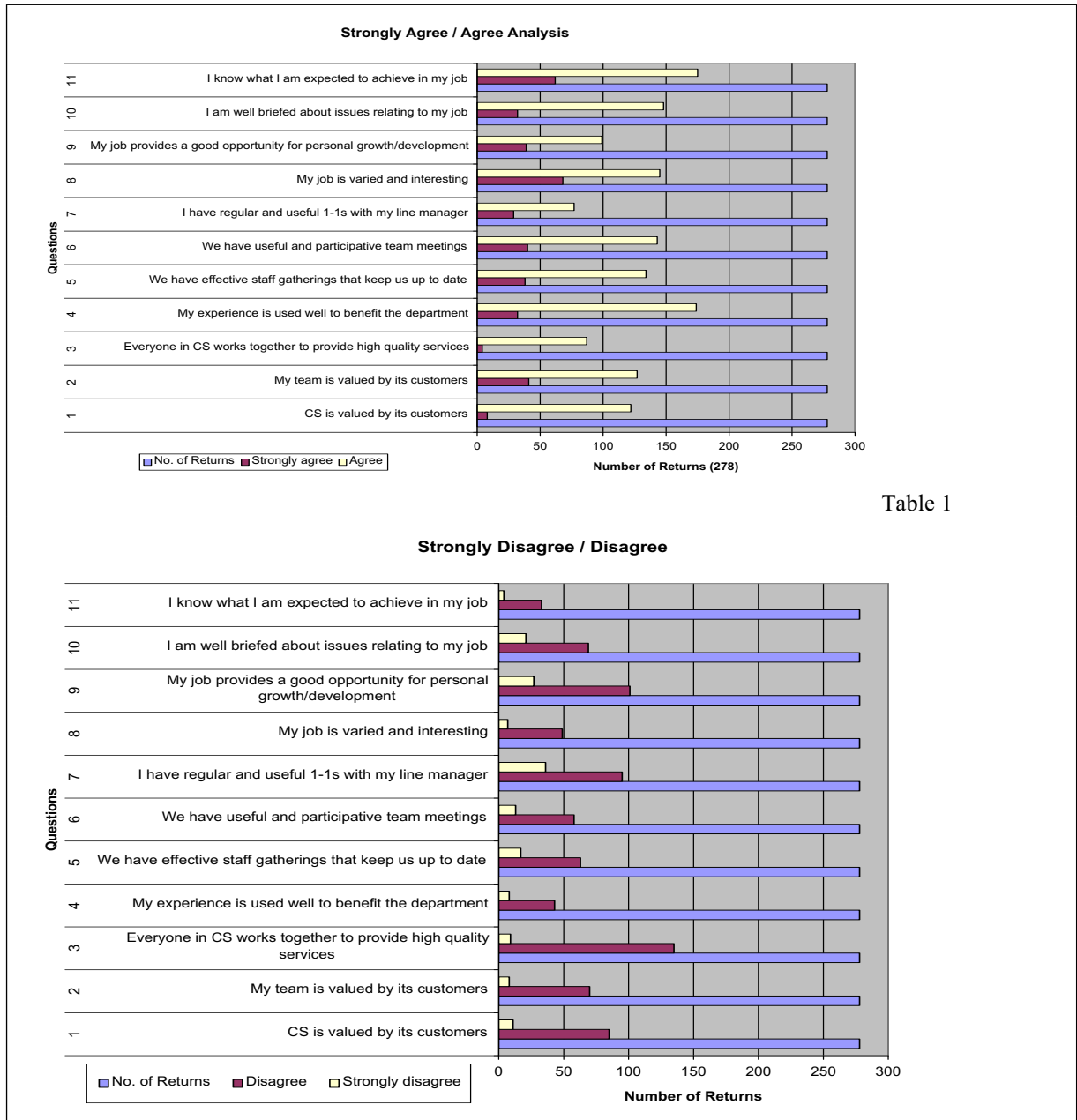


Table 1

Table 2

1.23 To demonstrate the department’s commitment to communications and employee engagement, the [Communications Standards Document](#)² was developed and launched. Since this has been introduced we have:

² [Communications Standards Document](#)

- Held full department staff gatherings to launch the service plan priorities and outline areas for change
- Held service staff gatherings to highlight service issues
- Improved the intranet and have copies of service plans and performance reports readily available
- Improved the way meetings are synchronised to provide a better opportunity for two-way feedback

Achievement 2: Establishing key Objectives and Actions

- 1.24 In June 05, the CST finalised its discussion on the main actions required from Corporate Services to ensure the Council meets its Corporate Priorities and the Department meets its own Departmental Priorities. Printed reports from the Action Planning Database are in appendices 2,3 and 4 of this plan.
- 1.25 Revising actions to achieve objectives is a dynamic part of the service planning process. On a quarterly basis following rigorous performance discussions at Management Team Meetings (MTMs) and CST Quarterly Performance Review meetings, decisions are made to maintain or amend actions to ensure that the department remains focussed on achieving corporate and departmental priorities. The department adopted Corporate guidance and produces regular reports to Corporate Services Committee highlighting actions necessary to ensure Corporate Objectives and Departmental Priorities are achieved.

Achievement 3: Improving Continuous Improvement and Performance Management

1.26 The department has started to create a culture where managers own the performance of their services. Every manager has been trained and/or received one-to-one coaching in performance management fundamentals. A Departmental – Senior Manager Network was run at the start of October to provide an overview of the primary topics associated with performance management and detailed information relating to the population of the corporate Action Planning Database. An opportunity was taken to identify further performance management training needs e.g. stakeholder analysis, benchmarking, risk management and these are planned for 2006.

Achievement 4: Improving Service Quality, Accountability and Efficiency

- 1.27 Self Assessment plays a critical role in reflecting upon the effectiveness of current service provision. There are many suggested ways to conduct objective self-assessment and outlined below is the approach that has been adopted by Corporate Services.
- 1.28 The *Investors in People* framework provides a nationally recognised set of criteria to assess whether the human resource available is being developed appropriately to deliver business outcomes. The pay bill for West Dunbartonshire Council is £90million, therefore Corporate Services are committed to using this framework to assess how well we maximise the talents of our people. Currently ICT & Business Development Services, Personnel Services and Legal and Administrative Services have attained iIP.

- 1.29 The CST agreed to use the *Chartermark* framework that provides yet another nationally recognised set of criteria to assess customer responsiveness. ICT & Business Development Services attained this recognition in December 05 and Registration Services and Recruitment and Selection and/or Personnel Services will attain this in 2006.
- 1.30 In Audit Scotland's – The Audit of Best Value: A guide for councils, 10 Best Value Criteria are highlighted. The Council completed a transitional audit in July 2004 and Corporate Services have now adapted the template to enable use to conduct a *Departmental Level Self Assessment Tool*.
- 1.31 In addition, the department also wanted to assess each functional service therefore an interim *Service Level Self Assessment Tool* was developed. The information gathered has been entered into a database so that reports about key issues such as sustainability, diversity and risk can be reported upon. The next round of self assessments have been scheduled for 2007 to coincide with local government elections.
- 1.32 *The use of Customer Surveying* is of great importance and is being taken seriously within Corporate Services. As mentioned previously, Legal and Administration Services has conducted customer surveys and service improvements have resulted. Despite this, we can improve our performance across the services in this regard. The Council has recognised stakeholder engagement as an area for improvement and has established a Corporate Working Group to improve systems and processes and centralise data gathered. In addition the Consultation Network has recently been set up. Corporate Services are active members of both these groups and intend to formulate a prioritised Consultation plan in 2006.
- 1.33 Another feature of improving performance is to *benchmark* our services and processes with others. Current benchmarking approaches tend to be informal or only undertaken as part of best value reviewing. We have started to log current benchmarking activity and we will establish better ways to prioritise benchmarking activity and optimise the benefits that can be attained from it. Work has already started on creating a departmental database of benchmarking activity and we are aiming for this to be fully operational by the end of 2006.
- 1.34 *Performance indicators* help us to establish current and desired performance levels. Like many other parts of the Council there has been a tendency to focus on Statutory Performance Indicators, however, as we start to pursue Chartermark in 2006, this will act as a catalyst for working with managers to identify meaningful measures for service performance. The table below summarises the performance of the Statutory Performance Indicators as at May 06 we manage and/or co-ordinate:

Statutory Performance Indicator	Position	Trend
Employee absence all groups	Red	Green
Employee absence local government employees	Red	Green
Employee absence craft	Red	Green
Employee absence Teachers	Amber	Amber
Litigation claims	Red	Red

No of women in top 2% of earnings	Green	Red
No of women in top 5% of earnings	Green	Green
Cost of council tax collection	Red	Green
Council tax collection rates	Red	Green
Recovery of NDR	Red	Green
% Payment of invoices within 30 days	Red	Green
Right to Buy Sales – time take to complete transaction	Amber	Green

- 1.35 To improve *efficiency* the CST established 7 Work stream project teams to investigate inefficiencies in Printing, Typing, Secretariat and Administration, Training, Debt, Collection Hall, Benchmarking and HR. To date, £54,000 of savings, have been identified.
- 1.36 Having completed the majority of this comprehensive Self Assessment, it is evident that there are areas where services would be improved by restructuring. *Restructuring* is planned for 2006 and trades unions have been involved from an early stage.
- 1.37 At the beginning of 2005 the department was perceived, by a large group of employees, to be ineffective in 'working together to deliver HQ Best Value Services'. This contributed to the CST establishing 6 efficiency work stream projects.
- 1.38 The employee survey also highlighted that there was still a significant proportion of employees who felt they did not get sufficient opportunity for personal growth and development in their current jobs. The CST reinforced their commitment to the Investors in People.
- 1.39 Employees have been encouraged to make service improvement suggestions via team meetings and project workstream groups, however, this will be re-vitalised in 2006 to encourage greater participation.
- 1.40 An excellent start has been made to departmental self assessment. The department has now gathered significant information fundamental in supporting effective service planning
- 1.41 Departmental performance management systems have been improved and we are now fully populating the Corporate Action Planning Database. More detailed work on budgetary alignment, outcomes and performance indicators is planned for 2006/07.
- 1.42 Managers have received support in developing their skills and knowledge to manage the performance of their own services. More development sessions will be arranged for 2006.

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What is our Vision?

- 2.1 Corporate Services, like every department, is here to help the Council attain its vision of “Working together, to end poverty and exclusion, deliver better services and improve the quality of life for the people of West Dunbartonshire”.
- 2.2 To support the attainment of this vision, Corporate Services must:
- Provide our services in a joined-up, corporate manner
 - Support and/or challenge departments to use every resource wisely
 - Increase collection rates to maximise resources available

What are our Values?

2.3 Our values are the same as those of the Council, however, this section demonstrates what Corporate Services have done, or need to do, to support them.

- **Putting Customers First:** We have been a central partner in developing the Council’s Customer First Strategy and will continue to take a lead in securing resources to develop a one-stop-shop approach to service delivery. We have allocated ICT & Business Development Services resources to enable departments, including our own, to move towards electronic access of services and have enabled various 24/7 payment facilities. In addition, The Registration Service recently won the quarterly “Excellence in Customer Service” Team Award. This award follows a very positive response to a customer survey which was carried out during January/February 2006.
- **Valuing Our Employees:** The council continues to maximise the department’s expertise in developing modern personnel policies and practices that demonstrate our commitment to employees. We have recently introduced employee recognition schemes and a systematic roll-out of personal development plans. As a department we have been a leader in promoting the liP standard demonstrating such a commitment by taking our own department through the framework. A key challenge for Corporate Services will be to maintain this value whilst pursuing the national single status agenda.
- **Equal Opportunities:** Once again, the council continues to maximise our department’s expertise in supporting the diversity agenda. Personnel Services continue to contribute to the Scottish National Joint Council’s sub-group on Equalities and Diversity to develop clearer national guidance for Scottish Councils on Diversity. In addition, Personnel are active partners in the Council’s Elected Member/Officer Working Group to improve equalities and diversity within the Council. Corporate Services will have a key role in identifying strategies to address pay inequalities identified during single status work as well as developing employment policies and strategies to deal with further legislation e.g. age discrimination.

- **Openness and Accountability:** The department was responsible for establishing the framework for complying with the Freedom of Information Act. Legal and Administrative Services played a critical role in policy/procedural developments and Personnel Services provided the framework for manager briefings via the Senior Manager Network. Further challenges still exist e.g. developing effective corporate records management systems. We must also recognise the role of ICT & Business Development Services in the development of an effective and well-used Council Website.
- **Sustainability:** We have a significant role to play in the sustainability of West Dunbartonshire, our major role being in devising a Corporate Procurement Strategy that contributes to local sustainability. Further to this, we have recently had our Risk Management strategy and Risk calculating method approved. We are also the largest local employer and make a significant impact upon the economically active population rates. Our personnel policies, practices and overall approach is designed to produce a positive employment climate where our communities receive the services they need. ICT & Business Development Services have introduced an automatic powering off of ICT equipment to ensure energy wastage is reduced. In addition, our Internal Audit team have planned to conduct a Value for Money review of Waste/Recycling.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Corporate Services have made a significant start to this agenda. The approach will be more formalised and responsive to findings from our self assessment and overall approach to continuous improvement.
- **Partnership:** The department plays a critical role in the efficient government agenda and significant partnerships have already been established. We are active members of the Clyde Valley Forum and have submitted a number of MGF bids in partnership with others.

This service plan, together with the actions specified in the action planning database, demonstrate our key roles, responsibilities, priorities, objectives and key actions.

2.5 The 4.3% of the Council budget invested in Corporate Services ensures that the Council, departments, managers and employees can get the right support at the right time. We will remain committed to attaining this vision.

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How will we monitor and/or adjust objectives and actions?

3.1 The Council's service planning process is dynamic and is sufficiently flexible to accommodate for increased service demands and the reassessment of currently allocated resources.

3.2 At each CST quarterly performance review meeting, actions to attain objectives e.g. target setting and review, are scrutinised and new demands are explored. Following discussion in the CST (which is informed by discussions at MTMs and Team Meetings), decisions are taken and any necessary changes to targets are made to the Council's Action Planning Database, thus, reinforcing the principles of responsiveness and continuous improvement.

3.3 The department actively used the Action Planning Database to explore objectives and set new targets as can be seen in the Actions to deliver Corporate Objectives report from the Action Planning Database (Appendix 2), Actions to deliver Corporate Services Departmental Objectives report from the Action Planning Database (Appendix 3) and Progress Towards Corporate Services Objectives (Appendix 4).

Action Plan: What actions do we have in 2006/07 for Corporate Objectives?

3.4 *Regenerating town centres and related waterfronts*

- Legal Services will play a critical role in the next 2 years to conclude various contracts for the purchase of the 4 acre site at Queens Quay, Clydebank. In addition, they will be involved in supporting H&TS to draw up a specification for a new leisure centre and issuing/evaluating tenders returned
- Finance Services will provide a financial monitoring service to the Community Regeneration Fund

3.5 *Improving the health of Council staff*

- Personnel Services are establishing the appropriate frameworks required to gain the Scottish Health At Work (SHAW) Bronze and Silver Award for the whole Council by August 2006. In addition, various strategies are being developed to reduce sickness/absence levels

3.6 *Provide school resources fit for purpose in the 21st century*

- Finance Services and Legal Services will provide dedicated resources and expertise to the Council's £100 million PPP for schools programme

3.7 *Ensure priorities are reflected in financial plans*

- Finance are reviewing and improving systems to ensure that finances are being allocated appropriately to corporate priorities. In addition there will be a review of the Corporate Grants Procedure

- Further develop 3-year budgeting by producing new guidance for 2006/07 Budget process

3.8 *Improve service performance and standards*

- Information Services are working across the Council to continue developing various payment options e.g. 24/7 web payment facilities, payment cards, and telephone payments. Much progress has been made with these. In addition, they are co-ordinating Council progress towards the achievement of the Scottish Executive's 46 national Electronic Service Delivery (ESD) targets
- Personnel Services are continuing to support departments who require help in attaining the IIP and Chartermark standards

3.9 *Improving the quality and timing of financial management information*

- Finance Services are fully implementing the roll out of the new Financial Management Information System, whilst also developing plans to implement Asset Management Planning

3.10 *Ensure the observance of audit committee principles*

- Finance Services develop and implement an Annual Corporate Audit Plan that is regularly monitored by Audit and Performance Review Committee

3.11 *Providing employees with opportunities to learn and develop*

The department will:

- Assess progress of PDP's for PO11 +
- Development/delivery of learning and development strategy
- Supporting Unions with Union Learning Rep infrastructure
- Continue to implement action plan for PDP
- Retain learndirect Scotland accreditation within Information Services
- Support employees and members of the community to attain ECDL qualifications

3.12 *Improve value for money of capital expenditure*

- Finance Services will develop revised policies and procedures for capital programmes including the introduction of Options Appraisal for capital investments

3.13 *Increase the in-year recovery of council tax/NDR*

- Finance Services will review Council Tax systems, processes and linked relationships e.g. benefits and implement an agreed implementation plan

3.14 *Reduce lost time due to sickness absence*

- Personnel Services, in partnership with departmental Personnel Practitioners, will implement and assess strategies to improve employee health and well-being

3.15 *Raise standards to attain the revitalising health and safety agenda*

- Personnel Services will Identify Health and Safety Training needs and develop a strategy to secure additional budgets required to implement the training needs
- Accidents will be monitored particularly in terms of relationships to occupational health referrals and accident costs
- Finally an electronic H&S Audit System will be developed

3.16 *Achieve and maintain an effective approach to risk management*

- Information Services will provide a fully functional ICT disaster recovery solution
- Complete training programme for senior staff
- Implement intranet toolkit
- Develop Actions and Performance Indicators in the Action Planning Database and use in the QPR process thereafter

3.17 *Procure goods and services to achieve economy*

- Establish and agree a 3-year Procurement Project Plan to include our role in joint procurement initiatives with other Councils and partner agencies
- Establish a benefits realisation model
- Enhance the procurement strategy to take more account of sustainability

3.18 *Involve employees in decision which affect their work*

- The department will maintain its commitment to recently established Communication Standards

3.19 *Improve the co-ordination of consultation with stakeholders both internally and with our partners*

- Carry out an employee survey and repeat on a regular basis thereafter

Action Plan: What Objectives do we have in 2006/07 for Departmental Priorities?

3.20 *Ensuring legal decision making/implementing statutory frameworks*

- Develop and maintain a robust infrastructure to support FOISA
- Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Registration Service
- Develop and maintain a robust infrastructure for new licensing/gaming
- Improve Data Protection Awareness

- Develop guidance and support for implementing new European Procurement Directive
- Publish all Committee Papers on the Committee Information website

3.21 *Customer First Strategy*

- Improve citizen and community information via the website
- Further develop the website to maximise the range of transactions that can be electronically accessed
- Develop and implement infrastructures to support customer first
- Develop ICT monitoring for customer service/performance management

3.22 *'Efficient Government' agenda*

- Develop and implement a Benefits Tracking Process
- Maximise EFG bid opportunities

3.23 *Supporting Elected Representatives in extending democracy*

- Implement new ward boundaries for local government elections
- Provide support and advice to Local Community Councils
- Introduce Single Transferable Vote for local authority elections in May 2007

3.24 *Managing Resources*

- Develop and complete a corporate HR Strategy
- Complete Pay Modernisation programme
- Develop Workforce Planning Strategy
- Continue to support initiatives to achieve corporate absence target of 5%
- Fully implement PDP process across the Council

3.25 *Providing high quality, best value, Front-line & Internal Services*

- Implement a standardised network desktop and improve support for users
- Ensure high quality, effective telephone answering service
- Provide an up to date telephone database
- Provide modern ICT solutions to support improvements to front line service delivery
- Provide effective ICT project management
- Actioning global email address changes/updates

- Supporting departments to optimise ICT resources
- Manage database of mobile telephone users
- Manage and maintain records of software licenses

3.26 *Developing workable policies and procedures*

- Improving departmental approach to Policy/Procedure Development
- Conduct a review of HR policy infrastructure
- Develop corporate H&S Policy annexes. Procedures and guidance
- Conduct Annual review of corporate H&S Policy
- Review the Employee Code of Conduct in consultation with employees and commence monitoring on compliance

3.27 *Leading on risk, disaster recovery & business continuity*

- Developing a corporate culture cognisant of risk.

3.28 *Supporting the evaluation of corporate performance*

- Assist Corporate Policy in exercising their duties to Members and the Community

3.29 *Preparing for new democratic systems post May 2007*

- Prepare for the operation of multi member wards

Action Plan: What plans do we have for everyday services?

- 3.30 We do, of course, deliver everyday essential internal and external services such as telephony, reception, printing, recruitment, member services, collection halls, registration and it is essential that they are subject to review.
- 3.31 From the recent service level self assessment exercise, services are now being prioritised in terms of:
- When they will be subjected to best value review, and
 - What level of reviewing will be applied

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4.1 Corporate Services have fully adopted Council Guidance on managing and reporting performance progress. As a reminder we have:

- **Corporate Management Team Meetings** involve service Directors and the Chief Executive exploring specific strategic and corporate performance issues.
- Corporate Service Heads explore operational performance issues at Monthly **Corporate Services Team Meetings (CST)**.
- In addition, there is a **CST Quarterly Performance Review (QPR) Meeting** to explore and determine actions required to rectify objectives that are not on-track. Reports from the Action Planning Database are central to these discussions as are Corporate Templates on Statutory Performance Indicators. In the second half of 2005 – 2006, these meetings will also explore the appropriateness of local performance indicators
- **Committee Performance Reporting**, happens on a quarterly basis and enables Elected Members to engage in discussions about corporate and departmental performance. To reinforce the importance of comprehensive communication, employees can also view reports produced for committee onto the department's **intranet page**.
- **Management Team Meetings (MTMs)** are designed in the same way as CST meetings. Once again, reports from the Action Planning Database are explored so that Heads of Service and Section Heads can assess the actions that may be required along with any resource implications.
- **Service Unit Team Meetings** are also held to explore specific service objectives/actions and any other operational performance issues e.g. best value reviewing, health and safety, risk assessments etc.
- **1-1s and Performance and Development Planning (PDP)** are also used and enable employees to see how service developments relate specifically to their jobs and any training & development needs they may have.

APPENDIX 1 CORPORATE SERVICES BUDGET 2006/7

	Estimate 2006/2007 £
Corporate Services Resources	176,340
Cultural Services	121,000
Legal & Administration	1,101,210
Risk and Contingency Planning Section	
Children's Panel	43,500
Central Purchasing	48,410
Office Accommodation	1,267,800
Canteen	35,630
Courier Service	26,000
Registrars	147,780
Clydebank Town Hall	268,980
District Courts	106,750
Licensing - Licensing Board	(33,970)
Licensing - Civic Gov Act & Taxis	(77,580)
Printing	0
Members' Services	198,060
Finance	3,169,810
Procurement Section	(100,000)
Cost of Collection of Rates	(73,090)
Cost of Collection of Council Tax	(788,440)
Personnel	838,780
Information Services	2,315,520
Total	9,023,450