



ANNUAL EFFICIENCY STATEMENT 2010/2011



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WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

ANNUAL EFFICIENCY STATEMENT 2010/2011

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** The Efficient Government initiative was launched by the Minister for Finance and Public Services in June 2004 and is an integral part of the continuous improvement agenda under the 'Best Value' regime established by the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.
- 1.2** The Efficient Government initiative is directly related to National Outcome 15 which requires the Council to provide high quality, continuously improving, efficient and responsive services.
- 1.3** As part of the 2007 Spending Review the Scottish Government re-affirmed its commitment to the Efficient Government Agenda and required the public sector to meet in-year efficiency targets of 2%, 4% and 6% for each of the three years of the Spending Review 2008/9 to 2010/11.
- 1.4** Local Authorities have a continuing role to demonstrate the efficiency gains delivered each year. These savings are invested back into delivering high quality and responsive public services.
- 1.5** The Annual Efficiency Statement provides details of efficiencies identified for the financial year 2010/11, opportunities which are currently being developed and implemented and highlights areas which are under investigation for future years.
- 1.6** The Efficient Government Group within West Dunbartonshire Council was redefined in order to meet the requirements of the Best Value Review. It includes the Accountancy Business Partners for each service area and receives input from the five main areas of Efficient Government as defined in the Council's Efficient Government Strategy (Procurement, Absence Management, Asset Management, Customer First and developing Shared Services) in order to identify efficiencies and track progress.
- 1.7** The Covalent system is being used to monitor progress on the Best Value Improvement Plan and the Assurance and Improvement Plan to Council on a quarterly basis and appropriate actions and milestones have been developed and monitored in relation to efficient government objectives.

2. OPENING POSITION

- 2.1** This section outlines our position at the start of the financial year in terms of efficiencies and notes the financial pressures that the Council faced in 2010/11.
- 2.2** The Council was faced with a number of significant budget pressures when setting the budget for 2010/11. As a result, we required to apply £2.613m of both service efficiencies and service reductions to the budget to finance a 0% increase in council tax.
- 2.3** The main opportunity to capture efficiency savings is from the annual budget process. Proposals are itemised with indicative savings against which actual performance can be evaluated. Additional efficiencies are sought from the outcomes of various Best Value and Public Sector Improvement Framework (PSIF) reviews which have been used to streamline service delivery in specific areas under the Continuous Improvement Agenda.

- 2.4** Efficiencies are achieved by altering the ratio of inputs to outputs in two main ways:
- by maintaining the same outputs with fewer inputs; or
 - by providing more or better services with the same inputs.
- 2.5** Service cuts which result in reduced public services or increased income from higher fees and charges to the public are not classed as efficiencies. Verification is required to ensure that efficiencies claimed are genuine and no reduction to the level or quality of service is evident. Efficiency savings are retained by the Council and reinvested in local service priorities.
- 2.6** Efficiency targets are now included in a Medium/Long Term Financial Strategy document (covering a 10 year period), which identifies future revenue budget gaps over a rolling 3-year period. To manage these budget gaps, the Council requires to identify a number of efficiencies and possibly service reductions.
- 2.7** The five efficient government workstreams (Absence Management, Asset Management, Customer First, Procurement and development of Shared Services) are now well established and have been progressing initiatives within their individual areas.
- 2.8** This is the Council's fifth efficiency statement and identifies new efficiencies worth £2.853m in cashable savings for financial year 2010/2011.
- 2.9** Work is continuing to embed the principles of efficient government within the strategic planning and budgeting process to make services more streamlined, effective and efficient.

3. KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY - 2010/2011

- 3.1** This section describes progress made in the main projects during the year 2010/2011. It concentrates on the work programmes for the five efficient government workstreams and also includes efficiencies made on projects outside of these five themes.

Procurement

- 3.2** Collaborative procurement continues to deliver significant savings and benefits for the Council.
- 3.3** The Procurement Team has been involved in assisting service departments in accessing 25 national contracts and framework agreements through both Scottish Procurement and OGC Buying Solutions. National collaborative contracts have delivered savings of £0.355m for the Council in 2010/11. In addition, the Council has accessed all 44 contracts available in 2010/11 from Scotland Excel and savings of £0.202m have been realised from these.
- 3.4** The team has also provided support to departments on a number of local tenders and procurement projects which have resulted in cashable savings of £0.087m.
- 3.5** Use of the Public Contracts Scotland portal has increased and during the year, 25 contract notices and 8 Quick Quote notices were published. The number of users has also increased from 22 to 38.
- 3.6** The Council's WeBuy electronic procurement system has been successfully implemented in the Council's Educational Services Department, where an additional 273 users have brought the total number of active system users to 714, bringing the total Webuy spend to £2.563m for the year. The system provides improvement through quicker operational processing time, improved visibility of spending and greater awareness of internal collaboration opportunities.

- 3.7** Purchasing card usage has also increased considerably since last year, with an additional 60 users bringing total spend for the year to £2.2m. WeBuy and Purchasing Cards are now providing complimentary epurchasing and payment solutions across all Council departments.
- 3.8** The Council's Servitor computerised system is also used for electronic procurement. During 2010/11 the council placed 8,264 orders via this source, worth £3.467m.
- 3.9** Within the Procurement Team, changes have been made to the system of ordering for Housing and Property Maintenance. All aspects of the ordering process from generation of requisitions to creation and sending of orders is now carried out electronically. This is a much more efficient system than the previous paper based system and it has freed up staff time to allow the development of more value adding procurement work.
- 3.10** A review of Procurement was undertaken in the last quarter of 2010/11 and recommendations on changes to the Procurement Operating Model to allow greater efficiencies to be identified and achieved in 2011/12 and beyond are currently being considered.
- 3.11** An Improvement Plan from the last Procurement Capability Assessment has been developed and will be actioned in the first half of 2011/12. A Procurement Manual providing advice and guidance on a range of procurement issues has also been developed for use by devolved procurement staff.

Absence Management

- 3.12** Human Resources are developing strategies to improve the absence level for West Dunbartonshire Council which has been above the Scottish Councils average for several years and the average full time equivalent days lost per full time equivalent employee improved by 1.63 days between 2009/10 and 2010/11 (equivalent of £0.667m non cashable savings, on an average salary base of £20,000 per annum for 5,341 FTE).

	2010/11	2009/10
Local Government Employees	11.26	13.26
Teachers	7.66	7.41
Council wide: average days lost per employee	10.65	12.28

- 3.13** During the period 2010/11, long term sickness was identified as a particular issue which led to a focussed approach to the identification and management of such absences. This approach was supported by a dedicated case management team, which was created as part of the HR & OD restructure. In addition, a comprehensive management training programme was rolled out across the council including the following topics:
- Long Term Absence (including use of Occupational Health);
 - Stress Management;
 - Conflict Management and Mediation;
 - Organisational Change; and
 - Handling Disciplinary Issues.
- 3.14** These topics were specifically identified as contributing to employees' non-attendance at work.

- 3.15** The main focus in relation to improving sickness absence levels in 2010/11 was the development of a revised Attendance Management Policy. This policy provides a robust framework to effectively manage absence and potentially improve absence levels. In addition there was a greater emphasis on earlier referrals to Occupational Health (OH) and an extension to the services provided by the OH service e.g. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy sessions to support stress related absences.
- 3.16** In February 2011, the Council approved the establishment of a short-life Member / Officer Absence Working Group, which included Trade Union representation. The remit of the group is to support a robust and joined up focus across the Council in facilitating improved performance in the management of absence. The group has considered and approved the revised Attendance Management Policy, and this was subsequently approved by the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee for implementation in September 2011. The group will meet on 6 occasions during 2011/2012.
- 3.17** Occupational Health Services, provided by SERCO, continues to provide significant support to employees and managers to effectively manage sickness absence and facilitate early intervention and return to work. A series of Management Training sessions on Managing Long-Term absence were provided in January 2011 as a joint project between HR and the Occupational Health Service provider. This was attended by 125 managers. Full use of Occupational Health Services is an integral part of the new Attendance Management Policy.
- 3.18** In 2010/2011 Stress was reported as one of the top 3 reasons for absence in West Dunbartonshire Council. A robust review of the Stress in the Workplace policy was carried out by the Stress Steering Group and a revised policy is currently under development. A series of Management Training sessions on Stress Management were provided in March 2011 which was attended by 34 managers. The Council also continues to provide confidential employee assistance and counselling service through the Employee Counselling Service to promote employee wellbeing.
- 3.19** A Confidential Contact and Mediation Service continues to be available to resolve issues as early as possible. As part of the HR & OD restructure a dedicated team now supports all Dignity at Work cases. A series of Management Training sessions on Conflict Management were provided in February 2011 which was attended by 62 managers.

Asset Management

- 3.20** Improvements and efficiency developments achieved during 2010/2011 in relation to the management of building assets are as follows:
- 3.21** Schools
- Two new primary schools (Bonhill Primary School & Goldenhill Primary School) were handed over in summer 2010. Approval to proceed with the new Dumbarton Academy was granted by WDC and the Scottish Futures Trust. The project team further developed the design of the new School and progressed with the tendering process. Development continues on the schools regeneration programme with a new Co-located Primary School with associated E.E.C.C and Kilpatrick Secondary School currently being considered through the Securitisation Project. These new fit for purpose buildings will create property savings such as energy efficiency and repairs/maintenance.

3.22 Housing

- Following the appointment of a stock transfer manager the Council's strategy for partial stock transfer is being progressed with a tenant's vote planned for late 2012.
- Successful implementation of the standard delivery plan may enable disposal of housing stock identified as being in high risk stock categories following a positive ballot outcome from tenants.
- West Dunbartonshire Council Members approved the 2010/11 Housing Capital programme which proposed investment in the housing stock amounting to £20.56m. The investment is primarily aimed at meeting obligations towards the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015 for proposed retained stock with cognisance of landlord responsibilities and safety issues for proposed non-retained stock. Increasing cognisance is being given to carbon reduction initiatives funded by government which is assisting in reduced user energy cost and minimising fuel poverty issues.

3.23 Office Accommodation

- Development work on the current and future use of existing Office and Depot accommodation is currently progressing. An initial Outline Business Case has been produced as part of the Securitisation Project which will be progressed to Detailed Business Case before the end of 2011.

3.24 Non-operational Properties

- During 2010/2011 excellent progress has been made regarding the Securitisation Project. This included undertaking a feasibility study to establish whether securitisation of the non-operational estates rental income is feasible and how much capital it might generate. This feasibility was approved at Council in January 2011 which instructed officers to progress all related projects to Outline Business Case stage. Development work continues on a disposal programme and further investment will depend on available funding.
- Funding would be available for spend to save projects in a number of areas (still to be agreed by Council) and it is anticipated that through new management processes of the properties additional rent/funds will be made available for enhancement of the properties ultimately increasing desirability and rent options for those properties.

3.25 All Building Assets

- In accordance with E.U. directive 2002/91/EC, resources are being established to progress the production of Energy Performance Certificates. The outcome and recommendations of these inspections will inform our ability to reduce energy usage and carbon emissions which, in turn, will provide a financial saving to the Council in future years.

3.26 Corporate Asset Management Strategy

- The new Corporate Asset Management Strategy was approved by Council in October 2010. The aim of the strategy is to strategically manage assets and to align them with the organisation's corporate goals and objectives. Good progress is being made with the Property Action Plan with all targets being met within 2010/2011. Good progress is also being made developing service specific asset management plans for Open Spaces, Vehicle Fleet/Plant, Roads, Structures & Lighting and ICT, with the expectation being that these will identify opportunities for future efficiencies.

Customer First

- 3.27** During 2010, the Customer First programme reviewed its approach to streamlining Council Services. Work that was started under National Diagnostic Pathway project in 2009 was reviewed and a programme of transformational service reviews has commenced.

- 3.28** Four major transformation projects (repairs, council tax, bookings and homecare) have been agreed and work started in 2010 to review existing processes. During 2010, whilst all four service transformation reviews have started, only the Repairs transformation has at this time delivered the high level business case, identifying efficiencies that can be delivered in the future and investment required.
- 3.29** The remaining service transformation projects, Homecare, Council Tax and Bookings have all identified Quick Wins and work to benchmark the cost of the service will continue into 2011/12.
- 3.30** Additional smaller service transformation projects have also be started during 2010 (Tell Us Once for Birth and Death registrations and Clothing Grants awards) and following implementation in 2011, efficiencies will be generated.
- 3.31** Several new features were added to Council web site including Google™ Analytics to help assess most popular features and help plan future developments. An external web site review was also undertaken to identify areas for improvement. Integrated online pest control reporting and payment feature was launched during 2010 but increased service charges have resulted in a reduction in take up. There has been a small increase in number of payments being made online and a marketing campaign is required to highlight these online services to encourage further take up of the service. Further website redesign is in progress and a relaunch is planned for 2011.
- 3.32** In addition to delivering a range of diverse services via our web site, we initiated a review of reception areas at key Council locations and this will be included in wider review during 2011 of the Contact Centre and One Stop Shop service delivery model.
- 3.33** WDC implemented new telephony technology in 2010 in Council's Contact Centre and this has resulted in a fuller understanding of call volumes, peaks, etc. and enabled the Contact Centre to increase its call handling volumes whilst maintaining staff numbers.

Shared Services

- 3.34** Involvement in key national and regional shared service initiatives (support services, eplanning, eprocurement and the Criminal Justice Partnership) is continuing.

Clyde Valley Community Planning Partnership (CVCPP) Shared Services Review

- 3.35** The Clyde Valley Partnership offers opportunities to provide a joint working/shared services approach to both new and existing services for the eight councils (or sub groups of these) and community planning partners to find different ways of delivering services. Opportunities exist for both cost savings and improved services.
- 3.36** The review undertaken identified ten workstreams and in February 2010 the Council agreed that, while all ten areas have some merit and should be supported, within the West Dunbartonshire area priority should be given to:
- Integrated waste management;
 - Integrated health and social care service; and
 - Developing a joint approach to back office services.
- 3.37** The Council also agreed to offer to play lead role in the development of a joint economic strategy.
- 3.38** In June 2010, the Clyde Valley Chief Executives met to agree the scope and priorities within four workstreams (waste management, social transport, health and social care and support services).

- 3.39** Outline business cases have now been completed, discussed at a further meeting of Council Leaders and Chief Executives in November 2010. Detailed Business Cases are being developed and expected to present options for councils to consider from September 2011.

Other Efficiency Gains achieved during 2010/2011

3.40 Chief Executive and Corporate Services

- The Council undertook exercises to maximise the benefit for both investments and longer term debt interest rates through debt rescheduling, resulting in savings to the Council of £0.119m.
- A review of the staffing structures and processes, resulted in centralisation and restructures in staffing of internal services supporting front-line services creating efficiencies of £0.297m per annum.
- Cost of collection council tax has decreased by £0.011m with the collection rate on a higher number of units remaining static from the previous year.

3.41 Educational Services

- Reviewing and changing the way the Council supports pupils and families has allowed for the removal of 2 support workers and in doing so has achieved in year efficiency savings of £0.035m.
- The delivery of teachers CPD is more efficient due to the use of new technology and re-alignment of activities and tasks undertaken which has removed duplication, resulting in a saving of £0.100m.
- Review and realignment of teaching numbers based upon school rolls has resulted in savings of £0.078m.
- Curriculum for excellence has developed enterprise activities which have become further embedded within learning and teaching approaches - therefore reduction in staffing allowance for enterprise activities, resulting in savings of £0.023m.

3.42 Housing, Environment and Economic Development

- Review and change in working methodology has resulted in use of out of hours transport staff rather than overtime, resulting in savings of £0.030m.
- Reduction in the number of vehicles in the Council's fleet through better integration and planning of usage has created savings of £0.050m.
- Review and change in processes and working methodology has resulted in staffing restructures, saving the Council £0.250m.
- Reduction in void house rent loss, saving the Council £0.027m.

3.43 Social Work & Health Department

- By redesigning the care setting of three clients the CHCP has repatriated these clients within the West Dunbartonshire area and in doing so has achieved in year efficiency savings of £0.031m.
- The CHCP has removed three posts from its establishment and assigned the workload to existing staff. This efficiency has saved £0.150m.
- By choosing a new approach to providing appropriate settings for children with behavioural difficulties and investing more time working with the affected families the CHCP has avoided the need to purchase secure residential schools placements in 2010/11. This efficiency has saved £0.286m.
- Through national negotiations between COSLA and Care Home providers the CHCP has benefitted from a reduction in the cost of care. The same level of care was provided at a lower cost to the CHCP. This efficiency has saved £0.041m.
- Cost benefit analysis has led to the purchase rather than the lease of specific vehicles and saved the Council £0.013m in leasing costs per annum.

4. SUMMARY OF OTHER EFFICIENCIES DELIVERED - 2010/2011

- 4.1 The attached summary (Appendix 1) shows efficiencies both by service and by efficient government themes. This uses the standard template developed by COSLA and shows cashable efficiencies of £2.175m and non cashable savings of £0.678m for the year to 31 March 2011.

5 VERIFICATION

- 5.1 A description of the impact on service delivery and performance of the efficiencies identified are contained in Appendix 1.
- 5.2 A schedule of efficiencies has been certified by the manager of each service and where possible verification has been provided to show that there has been no change to the level and quality of the service being delivered.
- 5.3 Regular customer surveys are also undertaken for some services and provide a quality check on the services being provided to customers.

6. KEY AREAS TO BE TARGETED FOR EFFICIENCIES - 2011/2012

- 6.1 In setting its budget for 2011/12, the Council included a number of savings targets within its financial planning which will provide savings of £1.350m which will ensure front line services continue.

6.2 Community Planning Partnership Investment

- The Council and its CPP partners are currently experiencing unprecedented, complex and sustained financial challenges. At the same time the CPP is experiencing increased pressure to deliver improvements and reform programmes.
- During 2010/11 the CPP introduced processes which challenge programmes and individual projects to reduce duplication to ensure services contribute effectively to the overall delivery of the Single Outcome Agreement.
- Analysis of performance and financial information to inform future investment decisions was undertaken by the Executive Group. Specific actions are being carried out to interrogate programmes to provide an accurate picture of outcomes and costs relating to the three priority areas to help understand the impact on potential funding reductions, the benefits of which will start to become evident in 2011/12.

6.3 Income Securitisation

- At its meeting in January 2011, the Council agreed to develop a detailed business case with an alternative business model and subsequent fundraising proposal in relation to securitising the Council's non-operational property portfolio. The outline business case identified the suitability of the portfolio to raise a significant sum of finance (estimated at £35m) through successful securitisation.
- Following this meeting, senior officers met to discuss potential projects which could be invested in with the aim to improve the Council's services to the community and may provide better value for money and reduce revenue costs in the longer term. Following an ideas workshop, 13 different projects were identified.
- Each project was taken forward by a project team, assessed and scored through a challenge panel of senior officers, reviewing issues such as financial benefits, other benefits, risks and the cost of doing nothing.

The projects broadly fall into 3 categories:

- **Enablers** – things that have to be done to facilitate some wider change. Projects within this category are:
 - Core IT Network Infrastructure;
 - Leasing of Information Communication Technology; and
 - Web site and contact centre development.
 - **Transformation Projects** – the Council's overall strategic priorities moving forward and assist in reducing revenue burdens. Projects within this category are:
 - Office Rationalisation;
 - Care homes for the elderly;
 - Integrated out of hours / CCTV facility;
 - Energy, wind Turbines;
 - Schools Estate development; and
 - Kilpatrick School enhancement.
 - **Must dos** – areas that without investment will continue to deteriorate and over time represent a reduction in service and undermine key priorities. Projects within this category are:
 - Street lighting; and
 - Vehicle fleet.
 - **Others** – excluded from the above categories are:
 - Debt management (short term cashflow benefits/ benchmarking project); and
 - Out of hours placement (after review it was felt that this was not a viable project).
- In June 2011 Council agreed that the project teams should take the above projects to full detailed business case and report back in December 2011.

6.4 Social Work & Health Department

- CHCP will seek to renegotiate and redesign Housing Support services.
- CHCP will look for opportunities to repatriate more clients into the West Dunbartonshire Council Area where this maintains or improves the care provided and enables the CHCP to reduce costs at the same time.
- CHCP is reviewing how employees Terms and Conditions impact on the cost of providing care with a view to redesigning services that are provided at lower cost by reducing overtime and changing shift patterns.

6.5 Corporate Services and Chief Executives Departments

- Centralisation of support staff throughout the Council will continue to result in a more efficient staffing structure within the internal support function.
- In changing methods of working, it is anticipated that further savings will be achieved through efficiencies in overtime.
- The Council has agreed to implement automated cash machines throughout the Council area, offering payment facilities to the public by alternative means.
- The Council has agreed to introduce three one stop shops – one in each of the three main town centres during 2011/12.
- Key priorities for West Dunbartonshire continue to be tackling poverty and unemployment. Three service areas – Financial Advice Services, Community Learning and Development and Employability – have been transferred to the Chief Executive's Department. By aligning and redesigning services that contribute to tackling these challenges under a single management structure, it is hoped that an overall improvement in the delivery of services for the residents of this area will be demonstrated. The rationale behind these decisions is to reduce duplication, improve service delivery and maximise the impact of this range of services on the most vulnerable residents of West Dunbartonshire.

6.6 Educational Services

- Transport contracts have been tendered and re-negotiated, resulting in a reduction in costs commencing August 2011
- A number of staffing structures have been reviewed and changed to reduce duplication and identify more efficient ways of working (including CLD and central administration, QIS, schools estate unit, pre-five).

6.7 Housing Environment and Economic Development

- The Council continues to move forward with a Leisure Trust model.
- The continuing restructuring of the Department will allow for the alternative delivery models across a range of services generating efficiencies and aligning service to future service demands.
- The modernisation of working practices and increased mechanisation will lead to improved productivity. In addition work is ongoing with client Departments to align resources more closely to current and future demands. This will facilitate more flexible working arrangements and provide the opportunity to optimise use of resources.
- Work is continuing to maximise the use of existing Council property assets and to rationalise where appropriate. This should result in an optimal use of resources without impacting adversely on the delivery of front-line services.
- There is an ongoing review of vehicle utilisation linking data received through vehicle tracking technology to inform future vehicle requirements.
- Implementation of phase 2 of alternate weekly collection with divert waste arising from landfill to achieve financial benefit and national/EU targets.

6.8 Procurement

- There will be further expansion of e Procurement and purchasing cards within the Council.
- The procurement strategy will be revised to provide direction and focus to the various work streams being undertaken.
- The revised Procurement Operating Model will be implemented by the end of 2011 and this will allow for greater control and visibility of procurement activity across the Council with increased opportunities for efficiencies and savings.
- The Procurement manual will be published and training given to devolved procurers to ensure compliance with current best practice.
- Work will continue on developing a corporate contract register to identify new opportunities for generation of efficiencies.

6.9 Customer First

- During 2011/12, the main focus of change will be to complete the high level business case for remaining three service transformation projects (Council Tax, Bookings & Homecare). The data gathered for each of the four service transformation areas (Repairs, Council Tax, Bookings & Homecare), will then be collated to build a business case to support the funding of a transformation work programme. The aim is to introduce standard process and technology across council services.
- In addition to gathering and benchmarking current and future service costs for the four service transformations and capturing the target savings and expected costs for each, a target saving of £125k has been included for 2011/12. This saving will be generated by implementing the quick wins for the four transformation projects and data currently being gathered will be used to assess how this target will be prorated across the projects. Clothing Grants and Tell Us Once Project efficiencies will also be included in apportioning this financial saving.
- Included within the service transformation projects is analysis of high volume transactions within departments to assess if centralisation of call handling staff along side redesign of service delivery can be used to release specialist staff to deal with more complex enquiries.
- Website redesign and technology change was started during 2010 and will relaunch is planned for 2011/12. Included in the relaunch will be marketing campaign to encourage take-up and ongoing monitoring using Google™ Analytics to target and reassess where required.

- During 2011/12 work to establish One Stop Shop contact points across WDC will continue – this will include ongoing consultation with Citizens to assess and expand the range of services that can and should be delivered from single citizen facing centres aligned to the contact centre. Benchmark data will be gathered to assess benefits/efficiencies.
- 6.10 Shared Services**
- The Council continues to take forward opportunities identified during the Diagnostic Pathway Project. Efficiencies during 2010/11 have been noted within departmental budget reviews and will continue to evolve during 2011/12.
- 6.11 Clyde Valley Community Planning Partnership Shared Services Review**
- Following publication of the Clyde Valley Review report in 2009, development work is underway and progressing in the areas highlighted in 3.35 and 3.39 above. It is likely that the options will require spend to save investment and the majority of savings are anticipated in future years. Spend to save investments identified to date have been earmarked through the Council's Modernisation Fund.
- 6.12 Asset Management**
- The Council, at its meeting of 29 October 2008, approved a Standard Delivery Plan to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015 for its housing stock and selected its preferred option of transferring approximately 45% of its stock to a registered social landlord. A Stock Transfer Steering Group meets quarterly to implement and deliver this plan by 2012. In addition, the recommendations of the Asset Management Review will be implemented to align the asset base with the goals and objectives of the organisation with resulting amendments to the standard delivery plan.
 - Continue to review the targets and milestones set for Asset Management in 2011/12 including progress on the 13 identified projects within the Securitisation Project, review and update the disposal list, undertake short/medium term office and depot rationalisation, completion of identified asset management plans and implement energy reduction projects.
- 6.13 Absence Management**
- The Attendance Management Policy and Stress Management Policy will be implemented in 2011/12. This will be supported by a full training programme for both management and employees.
- The Absence Member Officer Working Group will focus on the development of health improvement and wellbeing initiatives and effective absence management measures aimed at improving attendance and improving efficiency within West Dunbartonshire Council.
 - As part of the Wellbeing Strategy, HR and OD will continue to promote initiatives to improve health including the utilisation of the Occupational Health Service, Employee Counselling Service and other local health and wellbeing services.
 - A full review of the Dignity at Work Policy will be carried out in 2011/12 to ensure the policy is effective and continues to support employees and management.
- 6.14 Budget Considerations**
- In addition, the Council also outlined a number of efficiency commitments to be investigated during 2010/11 to allow for full consideration to be given to their inclusion within forthcoming budgets including:
 - **spend to save provisions (modernisation fund)** – the Council has balances held in both capital (£0.214m) and revenue (£3.807m) as at 31 March 2011 available for spend to save initiatives. Bids are due to be reported to Council in August 2011, with a view to generating recurring savings for those projects implemented.

6.15 Public Consultation


- The Council reviewed and amended their budget consultation process during 2010/11 (for 2011/12 budget process).
- The process adopted a different style of consultation to facilitate a more inclusive agenda and ensure that both the public and staff has a greater opportunity to make appropriate assessment on the budget options presented. Following group discussion, consultation sessions and a facilitated question and answer session with a senior officer panel, allowing the public and staff to put forward their own views on key options and issues.
- The new approach adopted for these sessions was successful and well received by the public, which was evident in the feedback.

7. **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The Council has made significant progress in addressing the Efficient Government Agenda and has developed a sound governance framework to enhance our project and performance management.
- 7.2 Appendix 1 summarises the £2.853m of cashable savings identified during 2010/11. Although much of this was planned within the corporate budget process, these actions made a major contribution towards allowing the Council to absorb a number of budget pressures that arose during the year.
- 7.3 The Council substantially achieved all of the targets set for 2010/11 and returned an overall in year surplus against budget of £1.335m.
- 7.4 West Dunbartonshire Council met or exceeded the target set for 30 out of 54 Statutory Performance Indicators. Of the 54 SPI's, 36 show an improvement in performance or matched performance when compared to 2009/10.
- 7.5 While some performance and efficiency targets are included within medium term corporate financial plans it is intended to embed this process throughout the Council.
- 7.6 The development of the PSIF framework and continuous improvement is a key step in embedding a culture of continuous improvement and efficiency throughout the Council and progress will be monitored using the Covalent system.

8. **APPROVAL**

- 8.1 The Efficiency Statement has been approved by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.



David McMillan
Chief Executive



Ronald McColl
Council Leader