

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Chief Executive

Council : 25 May 2011

Subject: Strategic Priorities for 2011/12

1. Purpose

1.1 This report seeks Council's agreement on the proposed strategic priorities for 2011/12.

2. Background

2.1 Each year the Council identifies its key strategic priorities as a way to encourage the early engagement and involvement of members in the development of the Council's strategic direction and subsequently facilitate improved decision making. Similarly these priorities enable the CMT to ensure that resources, projects, and programmes of work are aligned to deliver on these priorities.

2.2 In June 2010 Council agreed the following strategic priorities would be taken forward in 2010/11:

- Financial Pressures
- Schools regeneration
- SHQS
- Asset Management
- CVCPP Shared Services
- Marketing of WDC
- Regeneration
- Redesign of the Service Delivery Model

2.3 Progress and delivery of these priorities has been managed and monitored through the Strategic Leadership workstream and through directorate plans overseen by the CMT. Progress and performance is subsequently reported to the Improvement and Efficiency Executive to ensure members have opportunity to scrutinise and assess progress.

3. Main issues

3.1 Strong progress and development has been achieved during 2010/11 across each priority. Project plans and programmes of work are underway and progress is being monitored and managed through either departmental or operational plans with regular updates to the CMT, or at a corporate level due to the critical impact they have on the Council's future plans. This approach highlights that whilst it was important to develop a high level focus on some

priorities at the outset the deliverables within some of these areas are more of an operational nature rather than what is strategically important for West Dunbartonshire's future success.

3.2 Developing the strategic priorities for 2011/12 was the focus of a development session within the Member's Business Day on the 18th May 2011. Through group discussions members were tasked with identifying issues that would be fundamentally important for the Council to address in the years ahead to ensure the future stability and long term vision for the West Dunbartonshire communities.

3.3 These discussions acknowledged that the overall challenge for the Council still remains the continuing financial challenges, balanced with the need to deliver sustainable services, encourage economic growth, and develop the long term management of our assets to deliver benefits within the community. As a result members identified four key areas as potentially representing the strategic priorities and a basis for decision making at a corporate and political level during 2011/12:

- i. Social and Economic Regeneration
- ii. Financial Planning and Strategy
- iii. Asset Management Strategy
- iv. Fit for purpose services

3.4 Each of these areas defines the Council's strategic priorities at the highest level however the diagram at Appendix A illustrates the differing tangibles and programmes of work which fall within each strategic priority.

3.5 Members also discussed developing a decision framework which uses the strategic priorities as a set of guiding principles to help direct and influence decision making within the Council. In effect the priorities send a clear steer to officers about what is important when building a business case and submitting recommendations to the CMT and Elected Members. Similarly they can be translated as a set of decision criteria which help the CMT and Elected Members in the process of decision making in relation to key projects and initiatives:

- i. How does this (project/initiative) contribute to economic and social regeneration?
- i. How will this help make best use of our money?
- ii. How does it make better use of our physical and human assets?
- iii. How does it change or impact on service provision?

4. People Implications

4.1 Any people implications will be identified and addressed through the relevant programmes of work highlighted within each strategic priority.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** Any financial implications will be identified and addressed through the relevant programmes of work highlighted within each strategic priority.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** There is a risk that failing to identify the important strategic issues for West Dunbartonshire and ensure that forward plans are focused on addressing these bigger picture issues may severely impact on the Council's future sustainability but more importantly on the future regeneration of the West Dunbartonshire area.
- 6.2** In addition, strategic direction and leadership continues to remain an area of uncertainty within the Assurance and Improvement Plan and the absence of clear strategic priorities and plans which direct our decision making processes would continue to be a concern and attract adverse feedback from Audit Scotland and other external scrutiny bodies.

7. Equalities, Health & Humans Rights Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 7.1** No significant issues are identified at this stage regarding potential equality impact however an equalities impact screening and assessment will be undertaken within each project and programme of work.

8. Conclusions & Officer's Recommendations

- 8.1** The development of key strategic priorities for 2011/12, which provide a high level focus on the areas of importance for West Dunbartonshire and also directs future decision making by members, is a cornerstone in setting the Council's strategic direction for 2011/12.
- 8.2** Members are asked to:
- i. agree the strategic priorities for 2011/12 as outlined at 3.4
 - ii. agree the development of a decision making framework outlined within 3.5

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Date: 19 May 2011

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Appendix A: Strategic Priorities 2011/12

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: All