

APPENDIX1

- 1. Q -To what extent are we planning for services beyond 2010/11, taking full account of financial projections and other intelligence?**

A – The Council has developed a 10 year financial strategy last year and now revises this plan annually. A draft of the current long term plan was discussed at the Strategic Finance Working Group held in May 2010. The plan takes full account of the projected financial and non-financial factors. We have identified funding gaps for the next three years to 2013/14 and are committed to reviewing the projections through the SFWG on a 6 monthly basis.

- 2. Q – How robust are plans to achieve the savings required to meet our priorities?**

A – Plans are being implemented to deliver the savings required in 2010/11. The Corporate Management Team and the Strategic Finance Working Group are reviewing the priorities going forward and evaluating the potential options for closing future projected gaps. There is work being carried out relation to the schools programme and the management of care homes. We are also revising the charging policy and considering options for additional income streams. Within the strategic leadership (financial planning priority) we are committed to revamping our budget process.

- 3. Q - To what extent do we have a clear plan for achieving the most appropriate size of workforce and skills needed to deliver our goals?**

A – A workforce plan has been developed and it is the first overarching plan produced for the whole Council. The process concentrated on establishing the methodology and introducing an understanding of workforce planning within departments. During the next year the plan is to strengthen, refine and improve the process. Work will also take place to develop the workforce plans to ensure alignment of the process to current planning and budget setting cycles. This plan was presented at the Corporate & Efficient Governance Committee on 26 May and Elected Members have been asked to provide feedback on the draft plan. In the future progress on the implementation of the workforce plan will be reported to the Corporate Management Team on a twice yearly basis.

- 4. Q – To what extent do we have a clear plan for ensuring that expenditure and investment in our asset base achieves value for money and most appropriately supports the delivery of our goals?**

A – A 3 year Capital Plan is in place and organisational requirements are prioritised by category. Return on investment is evaluated as part of this process. The Council recently commissioned a report from CIPFA on a review of operational property asset management planning structure and procedures and is currently considering a report/action plan in relation to the

findings. We could also highlight the development plans with both Clydebank Rebuilt and the Strathleven Regeneration Companies. We are committed to meeting the requirements of the Standard Delivery Plan, the Housing partial stock transfer has been agreed by Council and there is a plan for a replacement leisure centre in Clydebank.

5. Q – How clear are we about the priorities of local people?

A – Through its Best Value Improvement Plan, the Council is now coordinating its entire community engagement agenda. Generic engagement structures such as the Citizens Panel will be linked to departmental processes such as tenant involvement or parent/pupil involvement. In addition the Council's engagement structures will be coordinated alongside its CPP partner agencies through a Community Engagement Coordinating Group, and the development of a community engagement plan. The Council is completing a tender for new enhanced community engagement services through the CPP. Already in the CPP there are 21 community residents involved in the design, implementation and monitoring of public services – through the West Dunbartonshire programme model, managed by six thematic groups and the Strategic Board. There are also opportunities for 18 elected members to participate in community planning structures.

6. Q – How good is our information on performance and the costs of providing different levels and quality of services to assist us in setting priorities and taking decisions?

A – The Council has a robust Performance Management System (Covalent) which provides transparency of all the key performance indicators. In this coming financial year the Council will be prioritising services and competitively testing various services.

7. Q - What action are we taking to prioritise spending?

A – Work is underway to consider statutory and non statutory requirements and prioritising services to be delivered for the future. The Council has agreed to pilot zero based budgeting. The Strategic Finance Working Group will be considering prioritised budgeting, zero based budgeting and key priority areas for spend.

8. Q – How aware are we of the relative risks and rewards associated with our decisions, and how well placed are we to manage identified risks?

A – Strategic risks have been identified both for the Council and the Directorates. A recent external review has been carried out on our strategic risk processes and actions are being reviewed to identify and manage the identified risks. Further work will be undertaken during 2010/11 on ensuring Departmental risks are identified and managed.

9. Q – To what extent are we considering the impact of the recession on our service outcomes and our commitments in our Single Outcome Agreement?

A – The impact of the recession is a focus for the relevant CPP thematic group – Regenerating and Growing our Local Economy. The relevant programmes are Employability and Sector Development. These programmes are the agreed model to deliver the SOA in partnership. The Employability programme is currently under review and its initial phase will end in July. A new programme that reflects the current economic and financial situation will be developed. The Sector Development programme focuses on business growth and development, including attracting new employers to the area. The Financial Inclusion programme, also managed through this thematic group, addresses the immediate impact of unemployment, multiple debt and wider poverty.

The SOA will end in March 2011. Leading up to this period, the CPP will lead a review of priorities in service design and delivery, that will inform the new SOA from April 2011.

10. Q – How are we comparing our service outcomes with others, for example by benchmarking?

A – Performance indicators are compared to other local authorities in Scotland and ranked in the upper and lower quarters, and regularly reviewed by the Audit & PR Committee. We have developed a competitiveness framework and 21 areas are currently being reported through committees

11. Q – What evidence do we have that our service outcomes represent best value?

A – This is an area requiring further development. However, there is significant benchmarking of the key performance indicators and statutory performance indicators.

12. Q - How well are we kept informed of the impact of the recession on our finances and service performance?

A - The Council reviews the financial performance monthly and regularly reviews that revised forecasts are carried out. These consider the impact of the recession and other known factors.

13. Q – How effectively are we monitoring and planning for changes in demand for services?

A – Demographic shift and population decline will significantly impact the demand for services in the area. This is monitored by the Policy Unit and reported to Elected Members. The phase 2 school regeneration programme is

based on estimated projection of school rolls, similarly some of the forecast homecare projections take account of increasing demand.

14.Q – Are our training and development needs fully addressed?

A – WDC is participating in the Improvement Service's pilot project 'The Political Skills Framework' for Elected Member development. This framework encompasses 80 key behaviours and skills considered essential for the Elected Member role. It encourages members to undertake a self-assessment process (against the key behaviours) with the option to include 360° assessment involving six peers of their choice.

Currently 50% of members within WDC are participating in this framework with the majority also undertaking 360° assessment. Following the initial self assessment (and 360° where selected) each member has been issued with a confidential personal profile report and this feedback discussed through a 1-2-1 meeting with the Organisational Development Manager. The discussion outcomes have been summarised within a Personal Development Review and are now being recorded within Personal Development Plans (PDP).

A number of strands exist to support the personal development of Elected Members and ensure members have the flexibility to access development through a variety of mechanisms including:

- **Workbook series:** *combine case studies, self-reflective exercises, reference materials, and interactive exercises, and presented in a format which is flexible and manageable for members to use. Current topics include Promoting Change and Improvement, the Effective Communicator, and Personal Effectiveness.*
- **Briefing Notes:** *The Improvement Service has also established an Elected Member Briefing Series, to help Elected Members keep pace with key issues affecting local government.*
- **Masterclass events:** *The Improvement Service has launched a second series of Masterclass events. These events are an opportunity for members across Councils to explore in depth the key issues and challenges confronting local government. The events are led by the Improvement Service and function on a cross council and cross party basis encouraging a highly discursive and interactive development session.*
- **In-house development programme:** *the Organisational Development team and Legal Services are liaising on developing more practical development sessions for Elected Members, focused on equipping members with operational knowledge and skill enabling them to undertake the more practical aspects of their role. An assessment of the relevant development areas will be completed over the next few*

weeks inviting members to express areas of interest; subsequently this feedback will be used to develop a programme of short events delivered in-house. It is planned that these short development sessions will be incorporated within the programme of member's Business Days.

- ***Business days:*** *a programme of business days for Elected Members has been have been established to facilitate protected time for members to participate in short personal development sessions, strategic discussion on corporate issues, and develop collaborative forums for wider member engagement and involvement.*

15.Q – How well are we working with our partners and/or neighbours to deal with pressures caused by the recession?

A – The CPP is currently approving a new advanced Partnership Agreement that provides the framework for challenging partnership work to address the additional pressures caused by this current recession. The existing CPP structures, developed over the last year, and the programme model for service delivery also contribute to an improved landscape for partnership activity.

16.Q – Are we exploring all possible options for the delivery of local services?

A – The CPP is planning a series of development session, facilitated by CIPFA that will focus on good governance in partnership and addressing the current strategic and operational challenges.

Following the publication of the Clyde Valley Review report in November 2009, the Council is participating in 6 workstream areas with the other seven Councils and other public bodies where relevant. The outputs from this work may in due course provide options for delivery of services on a shared basis.

17.Q – What quantifiable efficiencies or improvements are resulting from working with others?

A – The CPP has adopted the Council's Covalent performance management system to monitor the progress and outcomes of its 20 multi-agency programmes. In addition the CPP has adopted shared financial controls to improve efficiency and value for money. These new processes will assist in quantifying the improvements resulting from working in partnership.