

# WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

## Report by the Chief Executive

Council: Wednesday 28 May 2008

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**Subject: Budget 2008/09 – Additional Departmental Savings**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on developments to address the budget decision to identify a further 1% efficiency savings by April 2009.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The budget agreed by Council on 14 February 2008 included a requirement to “reduce departmental annual revenue expenditure by 1% by April 2009”, (paragraph 33).
- 2.2 At its meeting on 26 March 2008, Council considered a report which outlined the current activity on the issue and the further developments required to address the Council budget decision. On the basis of this report Council agreed that the Chief Executive should prepare a report to a future meeting of Council giving further detail of the options for the development of a strategic approach to identifying efficiencies. It was further agreed that reports on this issue should be submitted to Council on a monthly basis.
- 2.3 At its meeting on 30 April 2008, Council agreed a strategic approach to identifying and delivering savings. This will be overseen by the structures previously established to deliver the Best Value Improvement Plan, and the Efficient Government workstream has been given specific responsibility for taking this forward.

### **3. Main Issues**

- 3.1 Previous reports have identified the range of work currently underway which will help deliver on this objective. This issue is now on the agenda of the Efficient Government workstream, which will be developing activity at a range of levels at its next meeting.
- 3.2 Three main levels of activity have been proposed as part of this approach:
- The identification of ‘quick wins’ – most likely based on experience and evidence from developments in other local authority areas
  - The continued development of current activity, (most particularly the NSS Diagnostics work, which has the scope to identify potential for savings at a number of operational levels). Nevertheless it is recognised that most of this work will not show significant benefits until 2009/10 and beyond

- The development of a more strategic approach to identifying future opportunities

**3.3** It has been recognised that it is essential to ensure the full involvement of the Corporate Management Team (CMT) at this stage in agreeing both the opportunities and priorities for 'quick wins', and the longer term opportunities and priorities for investigation at a more strategic level. Arrangements have been made to develop this at a facilitated session early in June.

**3.4** The outcome of this process would be considered by the Improvement & Efficiency Executive, and in the monthly update to Council. At a later stage, in the case of the strategic level, this is also likely to involve exploring options with Community Planning Partners, particularly focussing on the priorities established in the Single Outcome Agreement.

#### **4. Personnel Issues**

**4.1** There are no immediate Personnel issues arising from this report.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

**5.1** There are no financial implications at this stage.

#### **6. Risk Analysis**

**6.1** There is a risk that if we do not take a strategic approach to identifying opportunities for efficiencies, we will be unable to demonstrate continuous improvement, and will not meet the aspirations of the people of West Dunbartonshire. This would also impact on the reputation of the Council.

#### **7. Conclusions**

**7.1** The opportunities to reduce departmental revenue expenditure by 1% are being considered through a number of mechanisms.

- The opportunities and priorities for 'quick wins' will be explored in a facilitated session with the CMT in early June.
- It is likely that, in the first instance, the NSS Diagnostics Project is best placed to identify operational possibilities across all departments. The diagnostic work is taking place during 2008/09, however it is unlikely that this will result in implementation of options in time to generate significant savings in the current financial year.
- The opportunities and priorities at a longer term strategic level will also be explored in the facilitated session with CMT members in early June.

7.2 Members will be involved in developments through the Improvement & Efficiency Executive, and will be kept informed by means of the monthly updates to Council.

## 8. Recommendations

8.1 Council is asked to consider and make comment on the current activity.

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**David McMillan**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Date: 19 May 2008**

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**Appendices:** None

**Background Papers:** Report to Council 26.3.08  
Report to Council 30.4.08

**Wards Affected:** All