

West Dunbartonshire Council 14 February 2008

Budget Proposals for 2008/2009

The Labour Opposition's proposals for the
General Services Budget

14 February 2008

Delivering for West Dunbartonshire

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Introduction

This document sets out the Labour Opposition's budget proposals for 2008/2009. The budget will:

- Deliver a balanced budget
- Set the Council Tax for 2008/09
- Continue to meet the pledges set out in our manifesto "Delivering for West Dunbartonshire".

Delivering for West Dunbartonshire: Key Pledges

1. Labour will provide Best Value Services by our dedicated and professional leadership. We are committed to creating a Council where staff are highly motivated, respected, fulfilled and rewarded. We will protect livelihoods by ensuring that each individual has access to comprehensive and personalised career development opportunities.
2. Labour will keep the Council Tax as low as possible whilst enhancing front line services.
3. Labour will spend £1.3m on sports facilities for our school pupils and the wider community. This is in addition to the £2.5m of enhanced sports facilities provided by the Schools PPP programme.
4. Labour will drive forward with our economic regeneration efforts by active support and cooperation with Clydebank Rebuilt, Strathleven Regeneration Company and other partners. In creating prosperity, we will make West Dunbartonshire a more attractive place to live, work and invest.
5. Labour will put forward comprehensive plans for the regeneration of all Council Housing Stock for tenants to make a fully informed decision as to the way forward that THEY choose.
6. Labour will consult on the idea of a Common Housing Register that will encompass all Registered Social Landlords within West Dunbartonshire. Any Register will ensure that points systems, waiting lists and rent structures are open and transparent to all, with access to all providers from a single point of contact.
7. Labour will deliver a comprehensive strategic plan to develop our Primary Schools estate that will encompass every school within West Dunbartonshire.
8. Labour will ensure that the successful Early Intervention and Literacy Projects are professionally reviewed and a revised long-term sustainable model is introduced.
9. Labour will ensure that every school is modern and fully equipped in order to support our children to realise their potential.

10. Labour will enhance the status of Community Safety and embed its principles into mainstream policy making.

- **We will actively support our Partners in targeting Anti Social Behaviour in all its forms.**
- **We will increase both the numbers of community wardens and their hours of operation in order to provide cover for seven days a week and expand the area of operations with a designated mobile patrol for Clydebank, Dumbarton and the Vale.**
- **We will support and enhance diversionary activity for our young people such as 'The Pulse' initiative.**
- **We will continue to promote and resource a Zero Tolerance attitude towards litter and graffiti with a 7 day graffiti busting operation.**
- **In noting the imminent introduction in early 2008 of the new Licensing Scotland Act, we will work with the West Dunbartonshire Licensing Board and the Licensing Forum to ensure that the needs of our communities are at the forefront in tackling the scourge of under-age drinking.**
- **We will continue to increase spending on street lighting and other physical measures to help keep our streets safe.**
- **In recognising that more intensive estate management is necessary, we will manage our estates intensively and provide whatever resources are required to ensure that cleanliness and condition are maintained to acceptable standards.**

11. Labour will accept our moral obligation in the wider world to support efforts to the best of our ability to the 'Make Poverty History' Campaign. We affirm our commitments to Fairtrade, the Local Government Alliance for International Development and the UK Local Government Task Group on Sierra Leone and will work alongside Partners and Community Groups to support their efforts in this field.

Budget Pressures

The Council has three main sources of funding:

- Central Government for our AEF (aggregate external finance)
- The Council taxpayer
- Users of services which attract a fee.

By far the greatest source of funding is the AEF, which accounts for nearly £4 out of every £5 that we spend. This means increases in our spending plans can have a disproportionate affect on the council taxpayer. What might seem like relatively small growth in our budget can result in a significant increase in council tax. For example the council tax would have to be increased by 5% to cover only a 1% increase in our total budget. The Scottish Government has agreed that £210m will be made available to local authorities that do not increase council tax each year for the next three years. West Dunbartonshire Council will receive **£1.208m** this year if we agree to zero increase in Council Tax.

This is the first year of a three year finance settlement for local government and our total AEF allocation is **£196.649m**. The Council received the lowest increase in its settlement in the whole of Scotland. The removal of ring fencing is generally agreeable to elected members as it allows a degree of flexibility when it comes to setting a budget. However Labour Councillors do accept that it is appropriate for the Executive to allocate specific funding to key policy areas.

In preparation of this budget the Council has had to absorb a number of significant budget pressures. In particular, full provision has been made for officers estimated cost of securing a single status agreement in line with the proposals approved by Council on 27 June 2007. The Council has also had to absorb increases in pension costs and landfill charges and has addressed a number of previously unfunded burdens and cost pressures.

There are a number of areas that we do not have control over, for example:

- Requisitions to Police, Fire, SPT and Valuation Joint Board
- Remaining Specific Grants

These areas account for **16%** of our net budget.

This is the context for our budget. We reviewed every departments budget to make sure that:

- All known and foreseeable costs were included
- Only costs necessary to deliver the Council's policy or statutory commitments are included.

The outcome of this exercise is that it would cost us **£240.929m** to provide all of our services after taking account of fees and charges. Once the AEF is deducted this leaves **£44.187m** to come potentially from Council Taxpayers. Without making any efficiency savings or using reserves to part fund the budget, council tax increase of **15%** would be required. clearly this is not acceptable. Our key pledge is to keep council tax as low as possible while protecting front line services. And a **15%** increase would not deliver on that pledge. Over the past few months we have been working closely with officers to identify efficiency savings and enhancements to achieve that twin goal of keeping taxes low and increasing services. The rest of our proposals set out what we plan to do.

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Enhancements

The sources of funding set out in the previous section will allow us to continue to build in real growth to our budget for next year. In addition, there are a number of areas where services will improve without the need for additional budget provision because service development has been included in the base budget. This section sets out the enhancements which will help support our communities and to deliver on priority areas. The Labour Opposition is proposing a modest increase in the budget by **£120,395**. Part of this will assist with the Council's capital programme with a total additional investment of **£500,000 for capital spend**.

Enhancements Included in Base Budget

Educational Services	
Introduce a funding strategy to support the continuation of the dance studio at St. Andrew's High School	£72,380
Enhancement of transport provision for secondary pupils to include bus passes in appropriate cases	£59,000
Additional funding made available to primary and secondary schools through a centrally held budget to allow additional teaching support	£100,000
Additional funding to allow further development in the Council's pre-5 service in areas such as increased commissioned private placement hours, 3 additional early intervention teachers and sessional funding at 2 mobile crèche facilities	£370,000

Social Work and Health Improvement	
Additional provision to assist in sustaining service levels for an increasing number of mentally/physically disabled clients in residential care	£245,000
Additional provision to assist in sustaining levels of service for young clients within foster care	£247,000
Funding to allow pupil and family support partnership projects to continue beyond current funding streams. This will continue to provide timely support and intervention in order to increase long-term opportunities available for those children and families more at risk of exclusion	£70,000

Chief Executive and Corporate Services

Additional posts to enhance best value improvements within the Council – including health and safety, sustainable development and equal opportunities posts	£115,560
2 new Licensing Standards Officers to improve controls of adherence to licensing laws (e.g. age limits etc)	£68,680
Investment in consultation through training to improve the quality and effectiveness of consultation, leading to improvements throughout the Council	£14,000
To support the development of the use of Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) through corporate training and support, leading to improvements throughout the Council	£27,500
Additional support to allow the development of financial plans and controls to assist the Council in meeting statutory targets and help progress longer term financial sustainability.	£36,040

Housing, Environmental and Economic Development

Additional funding to enhance and develop the recycling service to allow West Dunbartonshire to continue to contribute and surpass the national targets	£122,000
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General

Further enhancements to the Best Value Improvement Plan.	£50,000
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New Enhancements Funded by Budget Growth**General**

The previous Labour Administration had agreed in principle to support a community facility in Milton Village for the benefit of local residents. Following a Motion from Councillor George Black, a resident of Milton, the Council has unanimously agreed to investigate possible options for this development. The Labour Opposition has listened to representations from other elected members and has agreed to provide the necessary revenue funding to support the running costs for a community facility for the benefit of Milton residents.	£50,000
Extend free swimming for West Dunbartonshire school children during school holiday periods. This would increase free access by another 32-35 days each year	£6,500

Increase the Provost Fund in order to allow To support St. Andrew's day celebrations throughout West Dunbartonshire	£4,500
Invest extra resources in sessional community education services in order to provide additional support to voluntary organisations and community groups. This service to be concentrated in areas of high deprivation and targeted at voluntary groups that provide a services to children and young people.	£9,395
Increased capital investment – this will be used to fund loan repayments under the prudential regime and allow us to increase our capital programme by £500,000.	£50,000
The Additional Capital will be spent as follows:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Labour Opposition will match the additional £200,000 that we made in disability access in 2007/2008. This investment resulted in an increase of accessibility from 34% to 39%. The additional investment this financial year will ensure that we increase accessibility of public buildings to 44% in 2008/2009. - £180,000 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Labour Opposition recognizes the increasing demand for more investment in special needs & adaptations capital and will use these extra resources to address the existing waiting lists. - £150,000 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over the past four years Labour has invested an additional £2m in street lighting in order to deter crime and make our communities safer. This extra investment will help the Council to continue upgrading our street lighting. - £75,000 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade outdoor recreation facility upgrades. - £50,000 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Events in Balloch Park are important in terms of tourism; business and cultural activities. This investment in much needed infrastructure improvements to Balloch park events arena will support future events. - £25,000 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a children's garden of remembrance at Clydebank Crematorium. - £20,000 	

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Efficiency Savings

We have identified efficiency savings and areas of income generation to the value of £4,684,985 and these are set out below.

Social Work and Health Improvement Department

West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will renegotiate external provision of care for some of our services to children.	£60,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will remove surplus unused hours that are contracted with the service provider for our short breaks service in learning disability.	£35,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will review the method of service delivery to produce a more efficient structure. There will be no effect on service levels and four staff redeployed.	£60,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will reduce staffing levels in group work.	£50,000

Social Work and Health Services Department (Cont'd)

West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will increase charges to people in receipt of free personal care but who have capital in excess of £20,000 and therefore pay for a proportion of service costs.	£63,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this department will increase Home Care charges.	£100,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will introduce charges for housing support services	£125,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will review sleepover arrangements for clients with learning disability	£80,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will close a residential home for children with a saving from 1 October 2008.	£160,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will delay filling new posts from development funding	£100,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will introduce a social worker trainee scheme with more opportunities for social care staff and a subsequent reduction in qualified social workers	£40,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will reduced the use of hotels to accommodate training. There will also be a reduction in short courses and conferences and reduced use of Tell Training.	£15,000

Social Work and Health Services Department (Cont'd)

West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will introduce a maximum level of service provision for care packages funded by the Council for community care groups	£200,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To address this the department will introduce new efficiencies and increased use of external providers for Home Care.	£100,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will remove one post in the Joint Future Team	£21,500
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will remove the vacant 10 hours on addiction support team	£8,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will merge two hospital based teams and consolidate team management structure.	£38,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will reduce funding in rehabilitation services which will result in the loss of one post.	£40,000
Sub Total	£1,295,500

Educational Services Department

West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will introduce a reduction of 10% to controllable non staffing budgets.	£15,380
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will reduce schools' centrally held resources in primary and secondary.	£23,130
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will reduce its arts budget by 5% of 2007/8 budget (excluding staffing).	£3,870
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will reduce the museums budget by 5% of 2007/8 budget (excluding staffing).	£1,550
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will reduce its Primary/Secondary flexibility budget.	£100,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will remove its Primary/Secondary hospital education budget	£20,220
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will remove its dedicated early years training budget.	£16,100
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will reduce its accessibility strategy budget. Additional resources will be provided through capital spend.	£120,000

Educational Services Department (Cont'd)

West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will remove the vacant childcare support and development worker post.	£30,310
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will introduce a modest increase in school meals charges.	£50,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will use the pre-5 budget to pay for 3 early intervention staff.	£111,590
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will reduce pre-5 adaptations budget.	£30,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will fund additional weeks provision at Council run nurseries from additional GAE funding.	£190,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will remove the five vacant posts in additional support needs.	£185,980
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will remove the 1.2 vacant posts in music and PE.	£44,640
Sub Total	£942,770

Corporate Services

West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will introduce general efficiencies identified within supplies and services budget lines.	£6,500
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West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will review licences and maintenance requirements.	£25,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will ensure that Public Relations change the method of publishing Council newspaper	£15,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will introduce efficiency targets in printing (£2,000) and occupational health (£5,000).	£7,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will reduce computer equipment budget in members services.	£4,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will merge the District Courts	£5,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will close the Alexandria registration office.	£20,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will remove one post in the Customer Services Section.	£35,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will reduce up to 3 posts following work stream reviews.	£75,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will remove the post of section head post in personnel.	£47,715

West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will extend the council letting charging policy to cover those groups that use the Town Hall. Eligible groups will receive discounted rates and may apply for grants.	£5,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will introduce charges for pest control treatment service.	£40,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will remove the town twinning budget.	£5,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will produce electronic payslips.	£5,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will introduce electronic remittance advices and save on printing and posting.	£8,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will reduce the cultural budget by 50%.	£60,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will reduce intervention services associated with Trading Standards.	£25,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. A proportion of the savings in Corporate Services are allocated to the non general services account.	(£165,800)
Sub Total	£222,415

Housing, Environmental and Economic Development Department

West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to introduce efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will introduce charges for potholing, repairs etc. to private lanes and other accesses.	£25,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will introduce a reduction in the Council's contribution to further traffic calming projects	£20,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. As a result the department will increase charges for commercial waste uplift and disposal..	£10,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will increase charges for footway crossovers.	£20,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will introduce charges for road markings arranged through private requests.	£5,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address close the business innovation centre.	£18,300
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will cease provision of hanging baskets in town centres.	£50,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will reduce one of the community lighting project from the annual programme.	£20,000

West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the department will ensure that grass verges and roadside areas are cut for safety rather than for aesthetic reason.	£20,000
Sub Total	£188,300

General	
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the Council will use capital fund repayment.	£1,000,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the Council will re-align the NPAF funding.	£250,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the Council will increase sales fees and charges on unprotected lines up to an average increase of 5%.	£250,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the Council will increase the statutory trading operation surplus.	£150,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the Council will reduce the provision to restore Prudential balances.	£236,000
West Dunbartonshire Council received the lowest settlement increase in the whole of Scotland this year from the Scottish Government. Had we received the average increase then the Council would be £2m better off. Unfortunately this unfair settlement means that the Council is forced to generate efficiency savings in order to bridge the funding gap. To help address this the council will introduce a targeted redundancy trawl.	£150,000
Sub Total	£2,036,000

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Council Tax

In section 2 of this document, we noted that without taking any action, a council tax increase of 15% would be required. Having outlined the savings we intend to make in section 4, we propose to freeze the council tax for 2008/09 at £1,163 (Band D). This will allow us to carry out the enhancements set out in section 3 whilst maintaining the council tax at its current level.

Although we propose to freeze council tax levels, we have no influence over the level of Scottish Water charges. Scottish Water charges will increase by 3.73% for 2008/09 and the impact on the overall tax bill is shown in the following table:

Council Tax Band	Annual Tax	Water & Sewerage Charges	Total
A	775.33	253.02	1,028.35
B	904.56	295.19	1,199.75
C	1,033.78	337.36	1,371.14
D	1,163.00	379.53	1,542.53
E	1,421.44	463.87	1,885.31
F	1,679.89	548.21	2,228.10
G	1,938.33	632.55	2,570.88
H	2,326.00	759.06	3,085.06

Known Risks

The Council has identified a number of strategic and operational risks that must be taken into account as we set the 2008/09 budget.

Details of the financial risks to the Council

The Council has not yet implemented the single status agreement therefore there remains uncertainty surrounding the costs associated with this. To date the Council has set aside a total of £21.3 million to cover the costs of single status. £5.9m in 2006/07; £7.1m in 2007/08; and £8.3m in 2008/09 in order to address this issue.

The Council is required to hold a prudential reserve of 2% which equates to around £4.3m. In March 2007 the available balance was £1.063m and the 2007 budget included a plan to increase this by a further £736,000. The draft budget for 2008 intended to add a further £736,000 to our balances but this will be reduced in order to minimise the effect of the Scottish Governments under funding of WDC.

The Council does not yet have a strategic plan for phase 2 of the schools regeneration. The report to Council in January identified £109m worth of required investment in the schools estate. However this was based on a number of closures and mergers which were not supported by Council, therefore the revenue and capital costs will increase further in the event that school communities opt for retention of their own school. In addition the costs outlined in the report were based on 2007 prices and contractor inflation is currently running at 9% per year.

The Council has agreed that Dumbarton Academy will be its number one priority for a large scale capital build project. A new school would cost around £25m. It would be unrealistic for the Council to try pay for the costs of this through its own resources, therefore the Council must consult with the school community; identify a suitable site, agree draft plans and seek funding support from the Scottish Government as a matter of the highest priority. This process must run separate to the phase 2 consultation process.

It is vital that the Council provides the correct 'balance of care' to meet the needs of our communities. This means that as well as supporting people to live in their own homes and to provide additional sheltered housing to meet rising demand. The Council will need to upgrade residential care homes to meet the care commission standards and the rising expectations of our communities.

The Scottish Government has removed ring fencing which means that that (i) the Community Regeneration Fund; (ii) the Working for Families Fund; (iii) the Not in Education; Employment or Training Fund; (iv) the Financial Inclusion Fund; (v) the Changing Children's Services Fund; (vi) the Workforce Plus Fund; and (vii) the Community Voices Fund, have been bundled up into the 'Fairer Scotland Fund'. However the Scottish Government has reduced the fairer Scotland Fund from £6.1m to £5.946m. This is a reduction of £250,000 on the Council's 2007/8 allocation. The Council's share of the Fairer Scotland Fund will be reduced by a further £439,000 in 2009/10 and yet another £440,000 in 2010/11.

The Council still has a number of equal pay claims outstanding which need to be settled. In March 2007 Labour set aside £1.2m to cover our liabilities. There remains £540,000 to meet outstanding liabilities

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Strategic Reviews

The Labour Opposition will set the strategic direction of the Council by initiating a series of reviews and bringing forward reports that will look at disposal of surplus assets and generating additional income for the Council. All savings and receipts are to be held in the Council's reserves and held to deal with strategic priorities such as single status and schools regeneration. (The figures set out below are illustrative only as any needs based review could result in additional expenditure).

Future efficiency Options	
Revenue: The former Supporting People Funding already has a surplus balance of £300,000 being carried forward into this financial year. In addition to this the in year planned review of services will be required to generate a minimum of £200,000 of savings in 2008/2009.	£500,000
Revenue: The Council is required to carry out a review of the criteria for the maintenance of open spaces.	£350,000
Revenue: The Council is required to carry out a full review of the Early Intervention Programme within 6 months. The primary aim of the review is to position the service in order to meet the identified needs of our communities.	£100,000
Revenue: The Council is required to carry out a full review of our Library service within 6 months. The primary aim of the review is to position the service to be best able to provide suitable library services to our communities.	£100,000
Revenue: The Council is required to carry out a full review of the Council's transport within 6 months. The primary aim of the review is to ensure that the Council's transport services are providing the taxpayer with best value services.	£100,000
Revenue: The Council absence levels remain higher than the Scottish average. This is an opportunity cost to the Council and significant action needs to be taken to properly support staff and promote an attendance culture. Improved support means improved attendance and savings achieved can be invested in services.	£100,000
Revenue & Capital: The Council to investigate the possibility of creating a Sport; Leisure and Cultural Trust for the benefit of West Dunbartonshire.	£50,000
Capital: The Council currently owns an interest of 19.4% in Clydebank Shopping Centre. The current market value of this is £25m. The Council is to bring forward a report that outlines the pros and cons of disposing of this asset. The primary driver for disposal will be to ensure that a strategic development plan for the shopping centre can be realised, guaranteeing the long term future of the shopping centre.	£25m
Capital: The Council holds physical assets valued at approximately £465 million. Of these £13.4m has been identified as surplus assets held for disposal. The Council is required to dispose of these surplus assets as a matter of priority in order to drive forward investment in West Dunbartonshire. Disposal of assets will be at market value except where the end use of the site has wider benefits for residents.	£13.4m

Conclusions and Recommendations

The proposals set out in this document will deliver:

- a balanced budget that will ensure financial stability
- a Council Tax freeze
- A programme of work that will aim to generate a significant in year surplus revenue and capital surplus to help us meet the challenges of modernising this Council

The key budget figures are summarised below:

■ General Services Budget

Net cost of current services	£240,929,680
Efficiency savings	(4,684,985)
Enhancements	<u>120,395</u>
	<u>£236,365,090</u>

■ Funded by:

AEF	£196,649,000
Additional AEF	1,208,000
Council tax	38,508,090
Balances	<u>0,000</u>
	<u>£236,365,090</u>

We commend the budget proposals set out in this document. Specifically, **we recommend that a net General Services Revenue budget of £236,365,090 should be approved.** This budget should be based on the draft estimates book issued by the Chief Executive to all Members in January 2008 as updated by the management adjustments detailed in appendix 1 of the Council report.

We recommend that the enhancements set out in section 3 and valued at £120,395 should be approved.

We recommend that the efficiency savings of £4,684,985 as described in section 4 should be approved.

We recommend that the 2008/09 band D council tax should be set at £1,163. This represents an increase of 0% and assumes a collection rate of 97%.