

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Chief Executive

Council: 30 June 2010

**Subject: Early Member Involvement in Decision Making –
Review of Strategic Priorities**

1. Purpose

1.1 This report provides the Council with proposals for the key strategic priorities which should provide the focus for the early involvement of Elected Members in decision making.

2. Background

2.1 Following the 1st Best Value Follow Up report in January 2008, members considered a number of proposals for improving the Council's approach to strategic leadership and decision making. These revised approaches were developed with support from the Improvement Service, and approved through reports to Council in November 2008, February 2009 and June 2009.

2.2 The agreed activity included:

- The revision of reporting formats to include option appraisal and impact assessment where relevant
- The development of approaches to scrutiny
- The use of briefing notes rather than council/committee reports where no decision was required
- The implementation of Continuous Professional Development (CPD), for Elected Members and training for managers
- The identification of 8 strategic priority areas for 2009/10, which would be subject to a revised process of decision making which encouraged early involvement by members. This revised process included:
 - Opening with a seminar involving all relevant members
 - Following through with opportunities for more detailed discussion
 - Use of pre agenda meetings as a 'testing & validation' opportunity
 - Maximizing the opportunities for any final questions or clarification well in advance of Council or Committee meetings
 - Presentation to Council or Committee

2.3 There is an immediate priority for Council to agree on issues of strategic priority which will be taken forward by the Strategic Leadership Workstream during 2010/11.

3. Main Issues

3.1 The progress towards delivering the 8 strategic priorities 2009/10 was the focus of a session on the first Members' Business Day on 14 April 2010. Workstream Lead Officers provided updates on the work undertaken to date. As members were particularly interested in developing the discussion on marketing West Dunbartonshire as a place to work, live and visit and addressing population decline, both of these topics were the subject of presentations at the Business Day.

3.2 Following the updates and presentations, suggestions were made as to which priority areas could be 'closed off' as it was determined that satisfactory progress was being made and those subjects no longer required the continued close level of scrutiny. Those which it was considered could be closed off were:-

- Waste management targets
- Models of integration with the NHS & CHP
- Adult Care Provision ;

Those which would carry forward into 2010/11 therefore would be:-

- Financial Pressures
- Schools regeneration
- SHQS
- Asset Management
- CVCPP Shared Services

3.3 Following the Business Day, suggestions were sought from Elected Members and senior managers for appropriate strategic priorities to be taken forward in 2010/11. These were discussed by the CMT and the areas identified to be taken forward in 2010/11 are:-

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

4. People Implications

- 4.1 Any people implications will be identified as the actions to deliver these high level priorities are developed through the Strategic Leadership Group.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Any financial implications will be identified as the actions to deliver these high level priorities are developed through the Strategic Leadership Group.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1 There is a risk that that failing to identify emerging issues and strategic priorities would cause the Council to fail to deliver its Corporate Objectives. In addition, such failures would continue to attract adverse comment on Strategic Leadership from Audit Scotland and others.

7. Equalities Impact

- 7.1 No significant issues are identified at this stage regarding potential equality impact of this action plan.

8. Conclusions & Officer's Recommendations

- 8.1 Members are asked to comment on the proposed Strategic Priorities identified for 2010/11.

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Date: 15 June 2010

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Background Papers: Report to Council on 24 June 2009 - Early Member Involvement in Decision Making - Key Strategic Issues

Wards Affected: All