

# WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

## Report by the Chief Executive

Council : 28 October 2009

---

### Subject: Developing the new BV Improvement Plan

#### 1. Purpose of Report

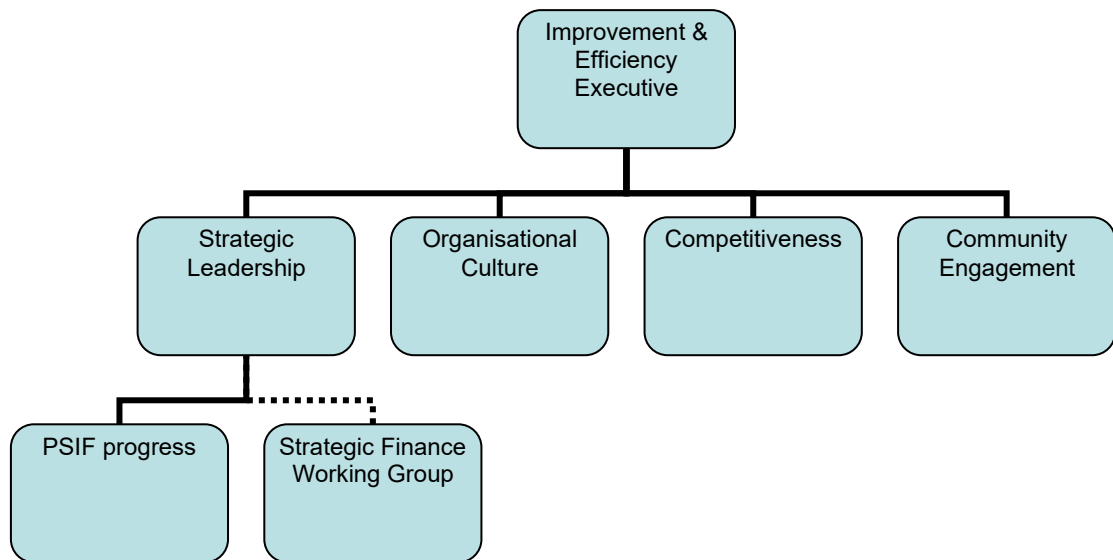
- 1.1 This report outlines further progress towards developing a Best Value Improvement Plan (BVIP).

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 The setting up of 4 new workstreams to progress the key priorities emerging from the latest BV Audit was agreed by Council on 30 September.
- 2.2 The CMT has considered the remits and memberships of these groups, and the first meetings of the new workstreams are now taking place as a matter of urgency.
- 2.3 Work is also continuing on the various elements of the previous BVIP which contribute to these new workstreams, however these actions are now being reviewed to identify areas where there may be gaps or areas where a new focus is required. This review process will also ensure that the actions link clearly to both the established Performance Indicators and any new performance Indicators which are required.

#### 3. Main Issues

- 3.1 The groups align with the 4 key priorities and the diagram below summarises the key proposed changes – with 4 key workstreams directly reporting to the I&EE.



3.2 The outline remits of the groups are shown below. These will be subject to refinement as the groups hold their first meetings.

Workstream	Remit
Strategic Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve relations with and between members</li> <li>• refine decision-making processes review the progress of the eight key strategic priorities and the two discussion areas</li> <li>• oversee better financial planning and develop linkages with the strategic finance working group</li> <li>• improve scrutiny arrangements</li> <li>• oversee the implementation of the PSIF</li> <li>• oversee utilisation of external peer support</li> </ul>
Competitiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• oversee the implementation of the corporate competitiveness action plan</li> <li>• Progress KPMG Audit Report Action Plan on competitiveness</li> <li>• Review Statutory and non-statutory Trading Accounts</li> <li>• set-up database of robust activity-based/unit cost indicators</li> <li>• improve benchmarking (research, data collection, training, updated guidance and analysis)</li> <li>• improve service-led option appraisal (training, guidance and analysis)</li> <li>• undertake peer-reviews of the individual service-led competitiveness and option appraisal studies</li> <li>• Integrate on-going work on 'shared services' into option appraisals</li> </ul>
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• implement outcomes from the culture web project</li> <li>• develop &amp; implement action plan resulting from 2009 staff survey</li> <li>• development &amp; implementation of 'strategic' personnel policies eg Dignity at Work, flexible working, absence</li> <li>• develop Senior Managers Network</li> <li>• review implementation of internal communications strategy</li> </ul>

Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• implement Community Engagement Action Plan including developing a range of community engagement opportunities, developing a more integrated partner approach, improving community capacity, inclusion of hard-to-reach groups and supporting voluntary sector activity</li> <li>• investigation of a potential role for a Petitions Committee</li> <li>• review and improve role of CPC, Community Councils and their current mechanisms</li> <li>• improve corporate approach to consultation (new database, training, assessment of outcomes, capacity building)</li> </ul>
----------------------	--

**3.3** The 4 workstreams are now meeting as follows:

- The Strategic Leadership group – comprising the CMT and Heads of Service holds its first meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> October
- The Competitiveness group has set-up a first full meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> October – following an initial meeting of the Chair and Lead Officer on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October.
- The Culture Group first met on 9<sup>th</sup> October
- The Community Engagement Group first met on 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

The development of the revised action plans – as outlined in paragraph 2.3 and 3.2 - is a priority for each of these groups, and the details will be reported to the November of the Improvement & Efficiency Executive.

**3.4** Strategic Leadership Workstream

The Strategic Leadership Workstream is the overarching mechanism within the workstream structure. It will have responsibility both for delivering the areas directly within its own remit, and also co-ordinating the areas within the other workstreams which contribute to the Strategic Leadership agenda. It is essential that this activity is embedded throughout the organisation. For this reason, it is critical that not only the CMT, but all Heads of Service are fully involved in delivering the BVIP. This was not the case for the previous BVIP. The first meeting of the workstream will therefore be a very focussed session, designed to ensure a common understanding of what needs to be achieved, and to develop a full action plan which will have the commitment of key officers throughout the organisation.

**3.5** To improve scrutiny and decision making, clear terms of reference, responsibilities and accountabilities will be designed for each layer of the structure with a procedure outlining the process.

**3.6** It is proposed that the Strategic Leadership Workstream will adopt the Public Sector Improvement Framework, (PSIF) as the tool for ensuring that necessary outcomes are achieved. This approach will ensure that Strategic Leadership is at the heart of the activity of the organisation, and that it will therefore provide the foundations that are needed to underpin everything else that we do. The goals of the Strategic Leadership Workstream will therefore be linked directly to the PSIF corporate self assessment which the CMT are undertaking on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

**3.7** The PSIF framework covers everything we do and achieve as a Council in the corporate assessment and will form the basis of our approach to strategic leadership:

- Leadership; includes visioning, planning, partnerships, consultation, scrutiny, decision making and systems for continuous improvement
- Service Planning includes performance management, benchmarking, competitiveness testing
- People Resources
- Partners and Resources
- Processes
- Customer Results
- People Results
- Community Results
- Key performance results

The corporate assessment, will generate a strategic Improvement Plan for the Council which can be incorporated as a series of medium term actions in the BVIP, however this will not replace the need for an immediate focus in the short term on the 4 priorities identified in the Audit report. The corporate assessment will be included as an action in the BVIP along with leadership development which would include peer review.

### **3.8** Competitiveness Workstream

The Competitiveness Workstream has a clear focus based on the activity set out in the previous BVIP, and the recommendations of a review of West Dunbartonshire Council's competitiveness arrangements by KPMG, (30.9.09). KPMG identified a number of areas of best practice and areas that still require development. This along with the Council's own Competitiveness Action Plan will shape the way forward to prove all Council services are delivering best value and are competitive in the current public and private sector markets. The membership of the group requires final confirmation, and this will be completed at the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> October. The Competitiveness action plan will be discussed and broken down into milestones and performance indicators which will be created and confirmed at this meeting. This will promote ownership and clear measures of success.

### **3.9** Organisational Culture Workstream

The Organisational Culture Workstream will take forward a stronger focus on changing the organisational culture, using the outcomes from the cultural diagnostics to drive forward practical projects of work which have the ability to facilitate positive change in our culture. A new membership for the workstream has been agreed, incorporating TU representation, and the first meeting of the group will develop its remit, development priorities, an action plan, and how the group will work together and across the other workstreams. In particular this group will

aim to develop a more joined-up approach which not only addresses the Best Value priorities but also integrates the outcomes of the cultural diagnostics and the 2009 employee survey, facilitating an inclusive approach to organisational culture change.

### **3.10 Community Engagement Workstream**

The Community Engagement Workstream held its first meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> October. It was agreed the membership of this group will be developed beyond Council officers to reflect the importance of a Partnership approach to Community Engagement. TU representation will also be incorporated. The first meeting agreed that the major focus for this group will be the delivery of the Community Engagement Strategy action plan. The named officers who will be responsible for the various elements are currently being clarified and this information will then be added to the covalent system to allow monitoring as part of the BVIP. The other elements of the outline remit, as noted in paragraph 3.2 are being progressed in the same way.

### **3.11 Peer Support**

Colin Mair and/or Mark McAteer of the Improvement Service have agreed to attend a meeting or meetings of both the I&EE and the Strategic Leadership Group as 'peer support'. These arrangements will be finalised before mid-October.

## **4. Personnel Issues**

4.1 There are no personnel issues.

## **5. Financial Implications**

5.1 There is currently a budget of £105,000 set-aside for funding the BV Improvement plan. To date £18,400 has been spent (mainly carry-over from 08/09 activities).

## **6. Risk Analysis**

6.1 Strategic Risk SR012 (Poor reports from external sources) currently has a score of 9 (significant impact, very high likely likelihood of occurring). The target was to reduce the overall score to 4 by 30/9/09. The agreement by the Council of the new BVIP by that date is a key component of meeting this risk reduction target.

## **7. Conclusions & Recommendations**

7.1 **Officers are conscious that this report does not include a detailed action plan at this stage, however it is felt that the new structures will be essential to the effective delivery of the new BVIP – and it is critical that these structures allow the full participation of everyone who will be responsible for delivery. The structures were agreed on**

**30<sup>th</sup> September, and are now being taken forward as a matter of urgency, nevertheless it is important that the new participants are involved in the review of the action plans and performance indicators.**

- 7.2 Members are asked to review and comment on the progress of developing governance arrangements and outline remits.**
- 7.3 That the next meeting of the Executive in November review the detailed Improvement Plan before being submitted to Council at the end of November.**

.....  
**David McMillan**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Date: 14 October 2009**

---

**Person to Contact:** David Webster, Manager, Improvement & Performance. Telephone 01389 73714  
E-mail: [david.webster@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:david.webster@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)  
(re BVIP)

Liz Cochrane, Head of Service, Policy & Performance Telephone 01389 737271  
E-mail: [liz.cochrane@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:liz.cochrane@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)  
(re Strategic Leadership and Community Engagement Workstreams)

Tricia O'Neill, Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development  
Tel: 01389 737584  
E-mail: [tricia.o'neill@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:tricia.o'neill@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)  
(re Culture Workstream)

John McKerracher, Head of Property & Technical Services. Telephone 01389 737270  
E-mail - [john.mckerracher@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:john.mckerracher@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)  
(re Competitiveness Workstream)

**Appendix:** None

**Background Papers:** Report to Council on Developing the new BV Improvement Plan 30 September 2009  
Report to Council on Best Value Audit Report 26 August 2009

**Wards Affected:** All