

REPORT TO: POLICY COMMITTEE ON 30TH APRIL 2008

SUBJECT: DESIGNING BETTER SERVICES UPDATE

BY: CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Committee regarding progress on the Designing Better Services (DBS) Project.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section A(11) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to managing the finances of the Council.

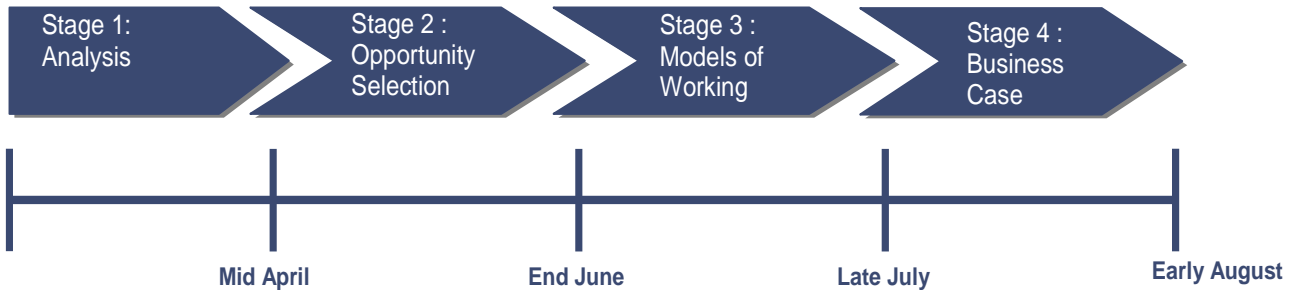
2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Committee note the progress, actions and allocation of resource in respect of the DBS Project.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The last 18 months have seen the emergence of a number of new national priorities relating to the reform of public services. Part of this agenda is real service improvements and efficiencies by **designing better services** through simplifying, standardising or sharing. Moray Council, along with 29 other councils, has been awarded a grant of £150K by the Scottish Government for a review of service delivery across the Council. This is one of the most fundamental reviews that has been undertaken in recent years, both within the Council and at a national level. The Council is being supported in this task by consultants PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). A key objective of the project is to identify potential service areas where simplification, standardisation or sharing activity will lead to service quality improvements and/or material efficiencies, all of which complements the ongoing work of the Moray Council's Efficient Government Working Group.

3.2 The project has four distinct stages as follows:



The first stage, Analysis, is now complete. The core project team has collected analysis data from across the Council. Stage 2 is 'Opportunity Selection', where the processes and tasks to be reviewed are identified and prioritised. With the aid of PwC consultants, those tasks that can be shared, standardised, merged or transferred will be taken forward to the next stage. Stage 3 is where the 'development of models' takes place. This is where the team will evaluate a system or model that will test any proposed new working arrangement. The fourth and final stage is the development of a business case to support the changes in working practice. This will pitch the potential capital costs of implementing the changes against the identified savings and service improvements. This final stage is expected to be completed by the end of August, and thereafter high-level recommendations will be presented to the Policy Committee.

4. **PROGRESS**

- 4.1 The DBS project is progressing well and in accordance with the project plan. The third milestone date - and a condition of the grant funding – is the return of data to the Scottish Government by 18 April 2008.
- 4.2 The next stage: “Stage 2 – Opportunity Selection” is to use our data to identify areas of our business to assess against other private and public sector lead principles to identify and analyse “gaps” – the difference in how and where we allocate our resource compared to others. These gaps together with other service improvement opportunities collected during the data capture process will form a long list that will then be prioritised to form high level business cases. The “gap analysis” is part-conducted through “cross-cutting” workshops drawing expertise from across the Council and PwC. We look to complete the workshops by the end of May 2008. Thereafter, we will continue to work with our own, and PwC, experts to develop the opportunities to be taken to the next level; this will be completed by the end of June 2008.

5. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan.

Undertaking the project should identify high level opportunities that assist the Council deliver service improvements and efficiencies.

(b) Policy & Legal

There are no policy and legal implications rising from this report

(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing & Property)

The project is being funded from the £150,000 grant from the Scottish Government and this is being supplemented by a significant amount of staff resources from the Council.

The budget for the Grant Funding is as follows:

	£000
Consultancy	105
Temporary Admin Support	15
Acting Up/Backfilling Costs for seconded staff	5
Office Equipment	6
ICT Equipment	2.5
Travel & Subsistence	1.5
Contingency	<u>15</u>
	150
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The staffing resources directly committed to the project are as follows:

Project Manager
 Education Services Officer
 Trading Standards Manager
 Business Support Unit Manager (Community Services)
 Project Co-ordinator
 Information & Research Officer
 Performance Management Officer

In addition there is a substantial commitment from the Project Board representatives and many other staff with the provision of information and attending the workshops referred to above.

(d) Consultation

The Corporate Management Team have been involved in the background to this report.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The DBS project is making good progress. It remains on target with regards to the project plan and within budget.**

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Background Papers:
Ref: MP/LMS/427306