

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 18 MAY 2011

COMMUNITY PLANNING RESIDENTS' SURVEY 2011

Report by Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present to Cabinet proposals for the commissioning of the East Ayrshire Community Planning Residents' Survey 2011.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The first joint East Ayrshire Community Planning Residents' Survey was commissioned in 2005.
- 2.2 The initial intention was that the Residents' Survey should be undertaken every four years; however, it was agreed by community planning partners on 6 November 2007, that since information dates quickly, and to ensure the currency of data to inform developing agendas, the frequency should be reduced to three-yearly. Consequently, the second Residents' Survey was commissioned in 2008.
- 2.3 The purpose of the Residents' Survey is to gain an increased understanding of local priorities and views on public service provision/satisfaction and inform reporting in respect of Community Planning and the associated Single Outcome Agreement.
- 2.4 The importance of Council's having good information about service users' and citizens' current and future needs was recently emphasised by Audit Scotland as part of its 2010 overview report of Local Government in Scotland.
- 2.5 The Residents' Survey results are utilised by Council and its Community Planning Partners to assist in directing and informing policies, strategies, programmes/initiatives and funding bids.
- 2.6 As part of the Residents' Survey commission in 2005, a Residents' Panel comprising a representative cross-section of East Ayrshire residents was recruited. A Panel refreshment exercise was undertaken in 2007 which increased the panel membership to 1,000.

3. RESIDENTS' SURVEY 2011

- 3.1 The commissioning of a third Residents' Survey in 2011 will be necessary to identify robust local trends over a six year period by allowing comparison with the 2005 and 2008 Surveys.
- 3.2 The implementation of the Survey in the context of Community Planning will further enhance partnership working and provide a range of inter-related information, which will feed into the planning and decision making of key partners, including the Council.

- 3.3 Furthermore, Audit Scotland and other inspection bodies have founded significantly on previous Residents' Survey results in making judgements in respect of the adequacy of Council services.
- 3.4 Up to date Survey information in respect of Council services will:
- highlight service areas where residents' satisfaction is low and improvement may be required; and
 - inform decision making in relation to the budget and underpin future budget consultations by providing evidence of the services which are important to East Ayrshire Residents;
- 3.5 In addition, provision of robust local information for East Ayrshire allows further analysis by multi-member Ward, Local Community Planning Forum area and Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) datazones. This facility allows the targeting of activity, where appropriate.
- 3.6 Given the current financial climate, consideration has been given to whether the forthcoming 2011 Census would supply adequate information and allow a saving to be made in this regard.
- 3.7 The national Census and the Residents' Survey are used by Community Planning Partners to gain increased information on the demographics of the East Ayrshire population and to plan and provide for future public services. However, there is little duplication between the two surveys, with the Residents' Survey results providing a wider range of information and an increased understanding of the local priorities and views of residents on public service provision/satisfaction.
- 3.8 Consequently, it is proposed that the Community Planning Residents' Survey be progressed in 2011.
- 3.9 In addition, it is proposed that the commission be utilised to establish a new representative Residents' Panel of 1,000 people.
- 3.10 The commissioning of the Residents' Survey 2011 and the establishment of a new Residents' Panel has been endorsed by the Community Planning Partnership Board at its meeting of 23 September 2010 and by the Council's Corporate Management Team.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The 2008 survey cost £37,450 and discussions will be held with interested companies with a view to identifying ways to minimise the cost for the 2011 survey.
- 4.2 Funding required for the commissioning of the Residents' Survey has been earmarked within Finance and Corporate Support balances.

5. COMMUNITY PLANNING/POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Both the Residents' Survey and Panel will serve to inform future improvements in service delivery and the development of strategies and policies related to Community Planning priorities.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The Cabinet is requested to:

- i) agree to the commissioning of the Residents' Survey 2011 and the establishment of a new Residents' Panel; and
- ii) otherwise note the content of the report.

Alex McPhee
Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support
4 May 2011

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Community Planning Residents' Survey 2005
Community Planning Residents' Survey 2008

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