

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET: 2 APRIL 2008

REVIEW OF PREVIOUSLY RINGFENCED GRANT

Report by Chief Executive

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To advise of the review process and to seek approval for the establishment of a Member/Officer Review Panel, to carry out a review of projects which were funded by ringfenced grant prior to 2008/09 and where the funding is now rolled up as part of the Council's Block Grant.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The Cabinet at its meeting on 24 January 2008 were advised that under the Grant Settlement for 2008/09 to 2010/11, a Concordat signed by the Scottish Government and COSLA had resulted, amongst other things, in a significant reduction in ring-fenced funding arrangements. As a consequence the Council is now in a position to agree spending proposals based on the pursuit of desired outcomes, rather than in accordance with Central Government prescription.

- 2.2** In order to minimise any turbulence that could be caused by immediate changes in resource allocation, the Revenue Budget for 2008/09, approved by Council at its meeting on 14 February 2008, included an allocation of funding related to previously ring-fenced areas at a level equivalent to previously firm costed commitments at 2007/08 levels. For years beyond 2008/09 such funds will not be separately identified and the Cabinet noted that a review of spending against priorities would be carried out by Departments.

3. FAIRER SCOTLAND FUNDING

- 3.1** Cabinet will also be aware that the Scottish Government replaced the undernoted funding streams with the Fairer Scotland Fund:

- Community Regeneration Fund;
- Community Voices Programme;
- Working for Families;
- Changing Children's Service Fund – Social Inclusion element;
- Financial Inclusion Fund;
- Workforce Plus – New Futures Fund element; and
- More Choices, More Chances.

- 3.2** The Fairer Scotland Fund is allocated to each Community Planning Partnership and the East Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Board, at its meeting on 6 March 2008, agreed that full reviews of the projects currently funded under the above mentioned funding streams, be carried out. The review process described by this paper will be mirrored closely by that to be proposed to Community Planning Partners for the Fairer Scotland Funded projects.

4. REVIEW PROCESS

- 4.1** The proposed review process covered by this paper will entail the establishment of a Review Panel, which will consider individual project activity, performance, staffing and financial requirements. This information will be presented to the Review Panel in the form of a Project Workbook. The individual projects will be grouped and presented to the Review Panels under Cabinet Portfolio headings.
- 4.2** It is recognised that there is a need to engage Elected Members participation in the review process and, accordingly, it is proposed that the Review Panel will comprise of both Elected Members and Officers. The Elected Member representation on the Review Panel will be the Leader of the Council, who will also Chair the Review Group, together with the relevant Portfolio holders (who will be determined by the projects under review), and Councillor Jackson as the opposition spokesperson on the Cabinet. Appropriate Officers would also be appointed depending on the relevant portfolio projects under review.
- 4.3** It is anticipated that each review meeting for the relevant Portfolio Groups of projects can be carried out within one working day.
- 4.4** Projects under appropriate Portfolio Groupings are detailed under Appendix 1.
- 4.5** It is anticipated that the review process will be concluded in June 2008.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** There are no specific financial implications for the establishment of the Review Panel, but the total funding amount under review is £18.7m.

6. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** The review process will provide for the Council to focus on the key priorities of the Community Plan, which in turn already covers all of the five strategic objectives of the Scottish Government.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Cabinet is requested to:

- (i.) note the proposed review process as detailed within paragraph 4 of this report;
- (ii.) agree that a Member Officer Review Panel, as outlined in paragraph 4.2 above, be established;
- (iii.) remit arrangements for the review process to the Chief Executive, including appointment of relevant Officers to the Review Panel; and
- (iv.) otherwise note the contents of the report.

Fiona Lees
Chief Executive
27 March 2008

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil.

Any person wishing further information should contact Bill Walkinshaw, Head of Democratic Services on Telephone Number (01563) 576135.

Formerly Ringfenced Grant
Community Wellbeing
National Accommodation for Sex Offenders
Supporting People Grant
Homelessness Task Force
Furniture Grant
Private Landlord Registration
Antisocial Behaviour Funding
ASB Neighbourhood Noise Grant
Community Safety Partnership
Mental Illness
Improving Fostering Services
Delayed Discharges
Environment and Regeneration
Strategic Waste Fund
School Travel Co-ordinators
Lifelong Learning Portfolio
National Priorities Action Fund
Changing Childrens Services Fund
Management and Resources
Social Work Training
Early Years and Childcare Workforce Development Fund