

# **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**CABINET: 29 JUNE 2011**

## **BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE REGENERATION DISCUSSION PAPER**

### **Report by Depute Chief Executive / Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1** To present for consideration and approval a response to the paper recently issued by the Scottish Government entitled "Building a Sustainable Future."

#### **2. INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1** The discussion paper is intended as a starting point for a wider debate about regeneration in the current climate. This debate is appropriate as there have been major changes to the policy and funding environment for regeneration in recent years. For example the commitment to an outcome focussed approach, reform of the enterprise networks and the three social policy frameworks – Achieving our Potential, Equally Well and the Early Years Framework. In addition the economic crisis and recession with the decision by the UK Government to reduce substantially public funding are having, and will have, significant impacts on the ability of the Scottish Government, East Ayrshire Council and local communities to address and overcome the effects of deprivation and inequality.

- 2.2** The discussion paper is not an exhaustive review of regeneration policy but concentrates on identifying key challenges, opportunities and priorities going forward. The importance of 'greenspace' in regeneration or other design and place making initiatives is not covered for example. It also has a predominantly urban focus but recognises that fragile rural areas can experience similar symptoms. Examples and lessons from rural areas are provided where relevant.

- 2.3** Tackling deprivation and inequality requires partnership working across disciplines. For this reason this report brings together the views of a number of services within East Ayrshire including the Community Planning and Partnership Unit, Housing Services, Community Support, Education and Planning and Economic Development.

#### **3. STRUCTURE OF THE DISCUSSION PAPER**

- 3.1** There are four chapters to the discussion paper. Chapter one considers what has been learned from previous regeneration initiatives

and highlights where more needs to be done to achieve key regeneration outcomes; chapter two considers how future regeneration initiatives can be funded in the current economic climate; chapter three explores the rationale and options for community led regeneration and chapter four reflects on the role that mainstream policies, programmes and services play in tackling regeneration at the local level. A summary of questions is provided at the conclusion of each chapter.

**3.2** A very brief digest of the contents of each chapter and a summary response to each is provided below. Detailed responses to all of the questions posed within each chapter are included in appendix 1.

#### **4. CHAPTER 1: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNT AND WHAT SHOULD OUR PRIORITIES BE?**

##### **4.1** Summary

The need for a combined physical, social and economic approach to regeneration is well proven but there has been more progress in physical than social regeneration thus far. “Trickle down” economic policies have been widely discredited. Addressing ‘worklessness’ is key but a better understanding of wider economic and spatial factors at play in this area is required. Partnership working over extended time periods is needed with strong involvement by local communities. Previous development funding models are no longer viable. In an era of constrained budgets there is a need to maximise resources and new and sustainable ways of funding physical regeneration need to be considered. More needs to be done to tackle the deep rooted social problems of Scotland’s disadvantaged areas with an increased focus on delivering a range of inter-related outcomes with funds and activity directed through local services to bring about improvements in employment, health, education, crime and the environment.

##### **4.2** Summary of Response

- The findings from previous regeneration initiatives are well made and the list of challenges is agreed however there is a need to better combine national policies and programmes and associated funding with local initiatives to maximise impact on the ground. It is important that prioritisation of actions should be locally informed and be evidence based and, as appropriate, receive sufficient support from national programmes. Such an approach does point to the need for national programmes to be flexible in response to local circumstances.
- East Ayrshire Council welcomes the steps that have been taken to rationalise performance reporting requirements for example through the development of the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA).
- There is a need to tackle increasing levels of youth unemployment. Within East Ayrshire the links between education and learning and employability have recently been strengthened to begin to tackle this issue. The Council is working to build a strong partnership between the

University of the West of Scotland, Kilmarnock and Ayr Colleges, secondary schools and local business partners. National support for these initiatives would be welcomed.

## **5. CHAPTER 2: INVESTING IN THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF OUR COMMUNITIES**

### **5.1 Summary**

The first part of the chapter focuses on the challenges facing the development industry. The paper argues that these challenges, combined with limited public sector resources, means that new approaches and models for funding physical regeneration are needed. There are difficult choices and decisions to be made about where investment is made to maximise impact and return. The importance of town centres to the economic, social and cultural fabric of communities is emphasised. Whilst European investment through ERDF, ESF, RSA will remain priorities and Urban Regeneration Companies will be supported the report recognises that they will now of necessity be more limited in scope or application. New innovative approaches to project funding are outlined and include JESSICA, Tax Incremental Financing (TIF), Local Asset Backed Vehicles, and Business Improvement Districts. The role of the planning system in ensuring that decisions are made faster and new development is directed to the right locations is also discussed. The importance of housing is identified and how housing associations could assist in delivering and meeting local outcomes and working with Community Planning arrangements is explored. Community Benefits in procurement and building the capacity of local businesses to help them bid for development contracts is also discussed. Finally the role of Scottish Enterprise and Local Authorities in supporting the delivery of regeneration and local economic activity is examined.

### **5.2 Summary of Response**

- Within East Ayrshire Community Planning provides an excellent mechanism for the Scottish Government and its economic development agencies to support ongoing regeneration activity locally.
- East Ayrshire's Community planning partners are committed to addressing needs where they arise (on the basis that 65% of income deprived people for example live out-with the most deprived areas as defined in the SIMD index) and whilst we will take advantage of any opportunity within East Ayrshire to create sustainable jobs and employment the principal focus in relation to job creation is on our principal towns..
- Whilst the Council understands why the Affordable Housing Investment Programme through the Investment and Innovation Fund has been substantially reduced the Council and RSLs will be required to competitively bid for funds for one year only – a framework that allows for no sustained forward planning. Further financial support from

Scottish Government in support of new affordable housing in East Ayrshire is urgently required.

- New and innovative funding models such as JESSICA and TIF may have a funding role to play in a very few, choice, locations within East Ayrshire that could possibly generate the required revenues. However many areas within East Ayrshire will not be able to meet the funding criteria. East Ayrshire Council would generally support greater flexibility in funding from the Scottish Government to support local partnerships.
- Implementation of the Integrated Urban Development Plan, which has been produced by the Make It Kilmarnock Board as a response to the withdrawal of Diageo from Kilmarnock and the consequent loss of some 700 jobs, will require Scottish Government support. In particular support will be required (1) to improve traffic circulation and where appropriate re-introduce two way movements within the town centre, (2) for the consequent streetscape and public realm improvements, and (3) to assist with the preparation and redevelopment of the Diageo site and other key town centre sites that can be brought forward as a result of the adjustments to traffic circulation.

## **6. CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY-LED REGENERATION**

### **6.1 Summary**

Scotland's communities are a rich source of creativity and talent. Communities coming together to work on the things that matter to them is a key way of unlocking that resource. Many will need support to unlock that potential and the need for high quality community capacity building is even more important today. Various schemes showing how the Scottish Government has backed its commitment to community empowerment are listed and include the Climate Challenge Fund, LEADER, the Town Centre Regeneration Fund and Planning Aid. The challenges for the future include how leadership for championing community-led solutions is embedded within the public sector, how cultures can be changed within the public sector so that supporting community-led solutions is a part of mainstream business rather than an occasional project, and how the public sector can be resourced to support community based organisations. The transfer of assets to local community organizations is also examined and in particular the role of the Development Trust Association, the BIG Lottery and JESSICA.

### **6.2 Summary of Response:**

- Effective community engagement lies at the heart of the Community Planning Process in East Ayrshire and the Council believes that building the capacity of community representatives on the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board, Local Community Planning Forums and the Federations of Community Groups is fundamental to ensuring embedded and sustained community ownership and leadership in regeneration.

- Effective community leadership can best be developed and enhanced where communities are involved with successful projects. The Council has a long history of establishing and working closely with community groups to deliver community based projects.
- The Council has first hand experience of using the “charette” methodology through partnership working with the Princes Foundation for the Built Environment.
- It is clear that a number of community and voluntary groups operating in our communities have the vision and enthusiasm to pursue a range of projects but may lack the capacity to take them forward. In a move towards community resilience the challenge will be to build on existing arrangements in respect of community support and facilitate community groups to plan, fund and manage appropriate projects/services, through which the benefit to community assets could be considerable.
- Resources both national and local to provide a range of support mechanisms to build capacity within communities will be essential.
- The East Ayrshire Minerals Trust Fund has supported numerous community based regeneration projects and the Renewable Energy Fund which has been recently established by the Council has the potential to do likewise.

## **7. CHAPTER 4: TACKLING AREA BASED DEPRIVATION – LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

### **7.1 Summary**

Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs) set out a vision for each local area capturing it in a series of local outcomes and related targets that are linked to national objectives. SOAs provide the freedom for Community Planning Partnerships to tailor how national priorities are achieved taking account of local circumstances and priorities. The majority of Scotland’s social problems – unemployment, poor health, crime, drugs, and antisocial behaviour – are considerably more acute in a small number of areas. Allocating relatively small amounts of funding to stand alone projects will not achieve the far reaching change in life outcomes needed. There is a need to consider how mainstream Scottish Government funds can be combined with resources targeted at local areas to maximise impact and drive change. Current examples of where national and local funds are being combined include Keep Well Health Checks, Violence Reduction and Early Years Interventions.

### **7.2 Summary of Response:**

- East Ayrshire Council would support the development and implementation of place based targeted interventions around local communities linked to the Community Plan. In this regard national government support for Community Planning Partners to explore opportunities for shared/pooled/aligned budgets would be beneficial. In

view of the current economic downturn and reducing public sector budgets joined up working has never been more important.

- East Ayrshire's Community Planning Partnership Board recently commissioned an independent review of the work of offices where services from a variety of Community Planning Partners and not just East Ayrshire are co-located. Overall it was concluded that the co-location of services in East Ayrshire has been a significant success that embodies Community Planning in Action and gives communities access to integrated public services under one roof appropriate to their needs. However on the back of its conclusions it has been agreed that each co-located office should review
  - the joined up approach to the delivery of public services at a local level
  - the strategic direction for services within the facility
  - how the facility can be further promoted as a service hub in the community;
  - the utilisation of space from a Council perspective and then from the wider partnership perspective to ensure that we are maximising the benefit of the local resource
  - the opportunities for shared management/shared services delivery arrangements and
  - how to promote further partnership working.
- It is disappointing to note that housing fails to feature in the list of inequalities recorded as passing from one generation to another, particularly within deprived communities.
- The Community Plan is the sovereign planning document for the East Ayrshire area and has been recognised as such by all the Partners. Community Plan objectives are fully integrated across all Council budgets. The Council has established robust and proper monitoring arrangements to ensure and demonstrate that funds are spent appropriately.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**8.1** There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

## **9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

**9.1** There are no personnel implications directly arising from this report.

## **10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**10.1** There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

## **11. COMMUNITY PLANNING/POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

**11.1** There are no direct policy or Community Planning implications arising from this report. However it is likely that the discussion paper will be used as a springboard for a wider debate and discussion nationally about regeneration priorities. Any consequent adjustments to

regeneration policy and practice arising from the debate will likely have a significant bearing on the content and associated action plans of any future Community Plan.

## **12. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

**12.1** There are no risk management implications directly arising from this report.

## **13. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **13.1 Cabinet is asked to**

- (i) agree the summary responses and detailed responses contained within appendix 1 to the questions posed in the Regeneration Discussion Paper;**
- (ii) agree that this report is forwarded to the Scottish Government as the Council's formal response to the Regeneration Discussion Paper; and**
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of the report.**

**Elizabeth Morton  
Depute Chief Executive/  
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services**

**30 May 2011 (KD)**

### **Background Papers**

1. Building a Sustainable Future, Regeneration Discussion Paper, The Scottish Government, February 2011.  
(<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/340876/0113159.pdf>)

## **CHAPTER 1: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNT AND WHAT SHOULD OUR PRIORITIES BE?**

### Questions:

- *Are there other key issues from previous regeneration initiatives we should take into account that are not reflected above?*
- *Do you feel the list of challenges is the right one?*
- *Are there other regeneration priorities you feel the Government should be addressing?*

### Response

The findings from previous regeneration initiatives are well made and agreed. As is discussed elsewhere in the discussion paper there is a need to better combine national policies and programmes with local initiatives. It is important that prioritisation should be locally informed and be evidence based and as appropriate receive sufficient support from national programmes. Such an approach does point to the need for national programmes to be flexible in response to local circumstances.

East Ayrshire Council welcomes the steps that have been taken to rationalise performance reporting requirements for example through the development of the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA). In East Ayrshire over the last year work has been taken forward to align and streamline Community Planning/SOA reporting arrangements. Going forward East Ayrshire will continue to look at areas to further streamline our Community Planning Arrangements.

It is acknowledged that traditionally funded regeneration models are no longer sustainable in the current financial market and that consideration must be given to innovative methods of working with private sector and other funding sources. However, elements of good working practice developed over many years through traditionally funded models should find a place within new funding frameworks rather than seek to start afresh where sustainable best practice working has already been established.

It is considered that the list of identified challenges is entirely relevant. Within the context of worklessness there is a need to tackle increasing levels of youth unemployment. Within East Ayrshire the links between education and learning and employability have recently been strengthened. The Council is working to build a strong partnership between the University of the West of Scotland, Kilmarnock and Ayr Colleges, secondary schools and local business partners to help our young people develop an enterprising culture and to acquire the skills necessary to gain employment. National support for these initiatives would be welcomed. Within primary and secondary schools

there is a strong focus on enterprise through the Determined to Succeed and More Choices:More Chances programmes.

There is also the issue of under-employment where people are employed in part time jobs and are unable to find full employment and in-work poverty where the rising cost of living is having a disproportionate impact on low income levels.

## **CHAPTER 2: INVESTING IN THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF OUR COMMUNITIES**

Questions:

- *Should regeneration activity remain something which takes place in marginal communities or should we widen our scope? What else should we consider?*
- *Which funding models do you feel have the most potential to deliver regeneration projects in the future?*
- *What other innovative approaches to funding development and infrastructure should we be considering and how would these be funded?*
- *Given the reliance on core public sector grant funding, is the URC model the most sustainable model to deliver regeneration in the longer term?*
- *How should spatial regeneration priorities be selected in the future?*
- *How can we encourage private sector investment in regeneration in the future and how far should the public sector go in securing this, i.e., should the public sector minimise risk and provide a guaranteed return?*

Response

East Ayrshire's Community planning partners are committed to addressing need wherever it exists. Interventions continue to be needs led rather than strictly geographically based. As is generally recognized around 35% of all income deprived people for example live in the 0-15% most deprived areas, leaving approximately 65% income deprived people living out-with these areas.

The Council does recognise that developing the local economy is a significant challenge and that it needs to develop projects and programmes that will be successful. Where opportunities exist to create new jobs the Council will exploit them even if they are out-with areas of deprivation and will always try to secure maximum leverage from private and other sources of funding however the principal focus in relation to job creation is on our principal towns.

East Ayrshire Council would generally support greater flexibility in funding from the Scottish Government to support local partnerships rather than providing support to specific ventures and initiatives.

Whilst the Council understands why the Affordable Housing Investment Programme through the Investment and Innovation Fund has been substantially reduced the Council and RSLs will be required to competitively bid for funds for one year only – a framework that allows for no sustained

forward planning. In addition all projects are to be front funded, as in the Council house building programme, so that grant payments of £40,000 per unit will be made on completion of any development works to include the provision of affordable housing. This change to the funding model not only impacts on RSL cash flow in terms of the draw down of grant versus private finance and its associated capitalised interest, it also impacts on the local authority where it has disposed of land in which to accommodate new build housing as any receipt will not be paid until completion of the works. Given the increased role local authorities are anticipated to assume in terms of funding the short term National Housing Trust initiative and other proposals as set out in the Scottish Governments strategy 'Homes Fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century', the impact on cash flows will be significant. Further financial support from Scottish Government in support of new affordable housing is urgently required.

With regard to new and innovative funding approaches such as JESSICA and TIF the Council is of the view that these have their place but are likely to be successful in areas that are less marginal and more robust economically than East Ayrshire. Whilst they cannot be discounted without further examination the Council is of the view on the basis of the information it has that they would be unlikely to be pursued within much of East Ayrshire as the required returns would likely not be sufficient to pay back the loan. There may be only a very few locations in the Kilmarnock area that could potentially generate the returns required but further work would be required to confirm. Local Asset Backed Vehicles can only be successful if the local authority has an asset of sufficient strength to lever in private sector funding. East Ayrshire would consider bonds as a funding option if sufficient flexibility is built into the funding mechanism to allow a range of regeneration activities to be undertaken.

The Council is supportive of the principle of URC but is concerned about the high level of funding that they absorb at the present time. A wider distribution of such funds to projects in a larger range of areas would be supported by the Council.

The Council supports that spatial regeneration priorities should be identified through the National Planning Framework. Consideration however needs to be given in the NPF to the funding of these priorities and the impact that these may have on more local regeneration priorities.

In July 2009 Diageo announced plans to close its Hill Street plant in Kilmarnock with the loss of some 700 jobs. As a direct response, 'Make It Kilmarnock', a strategic public private sector initiative which included Diageo was established. The 'Make it Kilmarnock' programme is a key focus of the Delivering Community Regeneration Action Plan and local priorities have been identified around four themes namely town centre regeneration, business nurture, visitor attraction and education innovation. The involvement of Diageo has been beneficial to the preparation of a draft Integrated Urban Development Plan for Kilmarnock and in taking forward key elements of the plan such as the relocation of Kilmarnock College to the Hill Street site.

Implementation of IUDP and achievement of its objectives will require Scottish Government support. In particular support will be required to (1) improve traffic circulation and where appropriate re-introduce two way movements within the town centre, (2) for the consequent streetscape and public realm improvements, and (3) assist with the preparation and redevelopment of the Diageo site and other key town centre sites that can be brought forward as a result of the adjustments to traffic circulation.

Question:

- *How can we encourage RSLs to play a greater role in local regeneration strategies?*

Response:

In the context of Community Planning within East Ayrshire housing matters are represented by officials from the Housing Service of the Council in the Delivering Community Regeneration Action Plan group. It is accepted that RSLs have useful experiences of working across agencies and in undertaking partnering activities within their local communities to create training and employment opportunities including working with other RSLs. There is potential therefore for representation of RSLs operating in East Ayrshire to participate in the thematic group.

Question:

- *Are there any procurement issues or other barriers which prevent you using local goods and services?*

Response:

In terms of Community Benefit clauses the Council is pleased to confirm that this work is supported through its successful Council house building programme and recent TCRF contracts.

Issues and challenges have been identified in respect of small businesses in East Ayrshire securing public and other contracts. The process of establishing a tendering co-operative will be examined by the Council.

Questions:

- *How could the Scottish Government and its economic development agencies best support regeneration activity in the future?*
- *Have we got the balance right between supporting investments which stand to make the greatest contribution to the Scottish economy and delivering local and regional regeneration projects?*
- *What more could the Scottish Government do to support its regeneration delivery partners and ensure practitioners have the necessary skills and knowledge needed?*

Response:

Within East Ayrshire Community Planning provides an excellent mechanism for the Scottish Government and its economic development agencies to support ongoing regeneration activity locally. The Council would welcome greater involvement in the Community Planning process by Scottish Enterprise. Whilst it is accepted that their focus is on projects that hold the greatest prospect of making an additional impact on the Scottish economy there needs to be a greater level of involvement by the agency in assessing opportunities within areas such as East Ayrshire. The potential of the single user site to the North of Kilmarnock is a case in point.

The Ayrshire Economic Partnership has been established by the 3 Ayrshire Councils to provide a strategic overview of economic development opportunities in the county. Four key strategic sectors with the potential for future growth have been identified namely food and drink, for which East Ayrshire has assumed lead responsibility, renewables, the coast and marine environment and engineering.

Community Planning Partners in East Ayrshire are committed to developing the local economy. A range of local outcomes to contribute towards economic growth has been identified through wide ranging consultation with our communities and stakeholders. Our Delivering Community Regeneration Action Plan contains a range of economic development activity to achieve these local outcomes including programmes to encourage business growth, investments to attract business, support for business start-ups, employability, skills and training programmes, tourism, environmental and transport projects and regeneration of our town centres and the built environment generally.

Overall the Council recognises that economic development is a long term issue and that the biggest challenge it faces is to ensure that it provides a supportive environment for a strong recovery so that local businesses can respond to the economic upturn. The discussion paper's acknowledgement of the long term nature of economic development is therefore strongly supported.

East Ayrshire Council welcomes the work of SLAED and the Improvement Service and recognises that the work will assist in co-ordinating priority outcomes for economic development.

### **CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY-LED REGENERATION**

Questions:

- *What do you think might realistically and practically be done to promote and support leadership in community-led regeneration in the public sector, the third sector and in communities themselves?*
- *What do you think the key issues for governance in relation to community empowerment might be?*

Response:

At its most powerful leadership is distributed across all levels of staff in the public sector. It is particularly important in staff that are on the frontline of delivering services.

Effective community engagement lies at the heart of the Community Planning Process in East Ayrshire and building the capacity of community representatives on the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board, Local Community Planning Forums and the Federations of Community Groups is fundamental to ensuring embedded and sustained community ownership and leadership. In addition, the support provided to the Children and Young People's Forum and Equalities Forum, and engagement with East Ayrshire Tenants and Residents Federation, is essential in ensuring effective community engagement in the overall process.

The Federations of Community Groups continue to systematically be involved in the Community Planning process through their participation in the CPP Board.

In respect of the voluntary sector, work is being taken forward in East Ayrshire to further develop the relationships between the third sector, the Local Authority and the Community Planning Partnership, which will further strengthen the third sector's role in delivering local outcomes. This work is facilitated through the involvement of a range of third sector organisations actively involved in the Community Plan Action Plan Working Groups and the Local Community Planning Forums. In addition, work is ongoing to ensure appropriate Third Sector Interface with the CPP. The issue of leadership will be examined through the Interface and how leadership within communities can be supported and developed. In taking any programme forward the Council is conscious of the need to be clear about why leadership in communities is important – there is a danger in the current climate that it is seen as the public sector transferring responsibility from themselves to communities at a time of budgetary restrictions.

Effective community leadership can best be developed and enhanced where communities are involved with successful projects. The Council has a long history of establishing and working closely with community groups (such as for example Auchinleck Community Development Initiative and Catrine Community Council) to deliver community based projects. This does require commitment and support by officials over many years but the Council is of the view that the benefits are substantial in terms of the projects delivered, partnership and in the capacity of the community to undertake similar projects.

For leadership in communities to be sustainable there needs to be further programmes which support leadership in schools and curriculum for excellence provides a strong foundation to enable this to be taken forward.

Key issues for governance in relation to community empowerment include the following:

- Systematic involvement of community representatives in the planning and decision making process;
- Ensuring clear lines of accountability for outcomes and equalities and fairness;
- Establishing appropriate and robust monitoring and scrutiny arrangements;
- Ensuring that decisions and relevant information are cascaded to partners, community/voluntary groups and communities;
- Establishing a focused range of effective reporting arrangements to report progress to key stakeholders and communities.

Questions:

- *How could community-led solutions best be incorporated into mainstream services and the community planning process and how would this affect organisational structures and delivery?*
- *How might we disseminate learning more effectively and bring together practitioners to share skills and discuss approaches including, for example, peer support?*
- *What more could national and local government alongside the wider public and third sectors do to support community organisations?*

Response:

The Council recognises that the involvement of local people in making decisions about their local area and East Ayrshire as a whole, and in shaping the development and delivery of the services which impact on their lives, is essential. Robust systems are in place to promote and support the involvement of local people in decision making at both the strategic and local levels within the Community Planning process, including Local Community Planning Forums, the Federations of Community Groups, the Equalities Forum and Equalities Networks and the Children and Young People's Forum. The application of the National Standards for Community Engagement across all community engagement activity ensures an effective approach.

In East Ayrshire we have an active community and voluntary sector, including two local Federations of Community Groups, which work closely with the Council and its Community Planning Partners to ensure that the needs and views of local residents are at the heart of our local decision making structures.

However, as indicated above, there is no substitute to working with local community groups to realise local projects that they have identified as important. The Council has changed its project development procedures so that officers work with community groups and organisations to help them define the need, develop and refine the concept to address that need, develop the project taking account of funding and potential revenue implications, assemble the funding package and manage implementation. At all stages officers are there to facilitate and inform and not to dictate. It needs to be

recognised that community led solutions take time and nurturing and a recognition by statutory sectors that taking a risk is part of this. Culture change needs to be embraced from the top down and vice versa.

The Council has first hand experience of using the “charette” methodology at Cumnock in relation to the proposed Sustainable Communities Initiative development at Knockroon, Cumnock, promoted by The Princes Foundation for the Built Environment and in the 4 Towns of Mauchline, Auchinleck, Cumnock and New Cumnock and would support the process being rolled out throughout Scotland. The charette process is an effective way of local communities and public and other organisations to better understand their respective needs and constraints. It is easy to focus on the barriers to delivering identified goals within each partners own sphere of influence and to lose sight, and fail to fully understand the impact of constraints imposed on others’ environments. Without an ability to continue to acknowledge the threats to successful regeneration for all partners positive results will seldom be achieved or sustained for the benefit of the community or wider neighbourhood(s).

Peer support networks and on-line forums are valuable resources for the dissemination of learning. Staffing implications and other resource constraints may limit attendance at relevant learning seminars/events, which are normally convened in venues in Glasgow or Edinburgh. In this regard, it would be more practical to provide a range of on-line resources which are well publicised and can be accessed as required, with an ongoing commitment to develop these resources over time.

It is clear that a number of community and voluntary groups operating in our communities have the vision and enthusiasm to pursue a range of projects but may lack the capacity to take them forward. In a move towards community resilience the challenge will be to build on existing arrangements in respect of community support and facilitate community groups to plan, fund and manage appropriate projects/services, through which the benefit to community assets could be considerable.

Resources to provide a range of support mechanisms to build capacity within communities will be essential. It would be unfair and impractical to expect to expect the community to lead on regeneration without the support to do so. This is particularly relevant in respect of the most disadvantaged communities where the need for regeneration is greatest.

In addition to specific project support mentioned above East Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership has provided funding and resources over a number of years to ensure that a comprehensive package of support is available to the two Federations of Community Groups and the community representatives on the CPP board, including

- Dedicated Consultation and Engagement staff who provide a range of support and guidance;
- Dedicated Federation Support staff;

- ICT equipment and services, including internet access;
- Individual training programmes for members; and
- Community representatives' expenses encompassing travel, loss of earnings, subsistence and care allowance.

This dedicated programme of support has facilitated capacity building within each of these organisations. In this regard east Ayrshire North Communities Federation is fully involved in the ongoing work to regenerate Kilmarnock and the surrounding area and successfully implements a 'Shopmobility' scheme in Kilmarnock town centre in partnership with East Ayrshire Council. The Coalfield Communities Federation operates in the south of the authority and manages the highly successful Coalfield Community Transport Initiative. In addition both Federations manage their own premises and a complement of dedicated support staff.

Through a range of media formats awareness raising of successful community led initiatives could potentially facilitate support for community led regeneration. It would be beneficial for information in this regard to be targeted at local people to highlight to residents what can be achieved as well as providing ideas to take forward.

Question:

- *What other innovative ideas do you have for resourcing support for community-led regeneration?*

Response:

The Council operates two innovative funds – the Renewable Energy Fund (REF) and Minerals Trust Fund (MTF). The REF has only recently been set up but the MTF has been in existence for many years. The REF has the potential to support a wide variety of regeneration projects. The MTF has enabled communities affected by open cast coal operations to fund or match fund many projects.

The REF was developed through the East Ayrshire local plan. Policy CS15 requires that windfarm operators contribute on an annual basis to the REF for each windfarm that is constructed and becomes operational. The fund can be accessed by local community groups and organisations to fund or part fund sustainable community environmental projects. Eligible categories of projects include community renewable energy projects (e.g. installation of wind turbines/solar panels/bio fuel plant for community owned facilities), environmental projects (e.g. woodland planting, landscaping and public art works), environmental education projects, improvements to local service provision, and feasibility studies. The MTF which is community run and controlled has a wider scope and utilises contributions made by open cast coal operators to compensate, to some degree, for the environmental disturbance and loss of amenity to nearby residents. There are many examples of the MTF supporting community based projects that contribute in no small way to regeneration.

## CHAPTER 4: TACKLING AREA BASED DEPRIVATION – LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

### Questions:

- *What would facilitate further targeting of mainstream resources on the issues faced by our most disadvantaged communities, especially in relation to delivering early intervention and prevention programmes?*
- *How can we move away from funding pilots and demonstration projects to a broader and more mainstream approach to fostering change?*
- *What should the Scottish Government's approach and role be in fostering change in future?*
- *How could we improve accountability of public sector services in the context of regeneration and area-based issues and problems?*
- *How can we support learning and sharing of information to ensure practitioners have the skills and knowledge they need to tackle area based deprivation?*

### Response:

The commitment of national and local government to the longer term outcomes contained within SOAs should facilitate the targeting of mainstream resources to our most deprived communities. In East Ayrshire shared high level outcomes were agreed for each of the themes of the Community Plan by the Community Planning Partnership Board in June 2010. The focus of the Community Planning Partners going forward will be on embedding an outcome based approach to planning and resourcing services in all partner organisations.

East Ayrshire Council would support the development and implementation of place based targeted interventions around local communities linked to the Community Plan. In this regard national government support for Community Planning Partners to explore opportunities for shared/pooled/aligned budgets would be beneficial. In view of the current economic downturn and reducing public sector budgets joined up working has never been more important.

East Ayrshire's Community Planning Partnership Board recently commissioned an independent review of the work of offices where services from a variety of Community Planning Partners are co-located. Overall it was concluded that the co-location of services in East Ayrshire has been a significant success that embodies Community Planning in Action and gives communities access to integrated public services under one roof appropriate to local needs. However on the back of the conclusions of the study it has been agreed that each co-located office review

- the joined up approach to the delivery of public services at a local level;
- the strategic direction for services within the facility;
- how the facility can be further promoted as a service hub in the community;

- the utilisation of space from a Council perspective and then from the wider partnership perspective to ensure that we are maximising the benefit of the local resource;
- the opportunities for shared management/shared services delivery arrangements; and
- how to promote further partnership working.

East Ayrshire's focus on early years and early intervention (through for example its GIRFEC programme) will mean a shift in resources from dealing with symptoms to addressing the root causes of problems such as poverty and inequalities. The Council recognises that this is a long term approach. However it believes that prevention and early intervention will reduce the demand on specialist services reducing costs in the long term. National government has a key role to play in building an objective, comprehensive evidence base of what works and what offers value for money over the medium to long term.

It is disappointing to note that housing fails to feature in the list of inequalities recorded as passing from one generation to another, particularly within deprived communities.

In East Ayrshire as part of the four yearly review of the Community Plan in 2010/11 a comprehensive strategic review of the projects/initiatives/services funded through the Fairer Scotland Fund was completed and as a consequence of this these resources were fully integrated with Council departmental budgets. However there will always be a place for pilot initiatives to test new and innovative approaches to regeneration. The important point is to effectively evaluate such initiatives and ensure that the lessons learned are disseminated fully.

The Community Plan is the sovereign planning document for the East Ayrshire area and has been recognized as such by all the Partners. East Ayrshire Council believes that this approach should be adopted more widely and would assist the Scottish Government's approach to funding regeneration in the future.

Decision making in East Ayrshire has benefited greatly from the active engagement of local communities and we can highlight tangible examples of comprehensive and meaningful engagement with local communities.

The Community Planning Partnership Board comprises representation at chief executive level (or equivalent) from the Core Partner organisations and community representation from the Federation of Community Groups. Chaired by the Council Leader the Board sets the strategic direction for Community Planning in East Ayrshire and ensures effective partnership working. In addition planning and decision making are influenced both strategically and locally by four Community Planning Forums, the Children and Young Peoples Forum and the Equalities Forum.

Effective corporate governance and scrutiny is assured through the Council's Cabinet and Governance and Scrutiny Committee, the Boards of individual partner agencies and the Community Planning Partnership Board as well as the various community groups affiliated to the Community Federations.

As a grant recipient for funds allocated under the auspices of Community Planning the Council has established robust and proper monitoring arrangements to ensure and demonstrate that funds are spent appropriately. Elected members have a scrutiny role in respect of these funds. Funding allocated to initiatives led by partners is subject to relevant agency's monitoring and scrutiny arrangements, with overall review and scrutiny undertaken by the Community Planning Partnership Board.