

18 February 2008

Councillor Douglas Reid
East Ayrshire Council
Civic Centre North
John Dickie St
Kilmarnock
KA1 1BY

Dear Councillor Reid

COMMUNITIES SCOTLAND'S MEMBERSHIP OF CPP BOARD

I am writing to you to let you know formally that Communities Scotland will cease to be a member of East Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership as of 1 April 2008.

You will be aware that Scottish Ministers have concluded that Communities Scotland will be abolished as of Spring 2008, and that most of the Agency's housing and regeneration functions will be brought within the core Scottish Government. You will also be aware that Ministers have decided that Central Government should draw back from the local community regeneration role which Communities Scotland has been playing, in line with the Government's general approach of promoting local decision-making as far as possible. The intention is that these changes will be implemented as of 1 April 2008.

In addition, you will be aware that the Community Regeneration Fund and six other ring fenced funds will be replaced from 1 April 2008 by the new Fairer Scotland Fund (FSF). This fund will be deployed by Community Planning Partnerships, and current Communities Scotland Area Offices will have no part in its administration. Instead, Partnerships will link with a core team within the Scottish Government's Housing and Regeneration Directorate. Contact details will be included with performance management guidance for the FSF which will issue before the end of February.

In the light of these changes, it is clearly inappropriate for Communities Scotland (or its successor at a local level – Investment Delivery Division, within the Scottish Government's Housing and Regeneration Directorate) to continue to be a formal member of each CPP. However, we fully recognise the need to maintain good links with the Partnership in order to meet locally the Government's strategic objectives for housing and regeneration, in particular as set out in the Government's discussion

document "Firm Foundations: The Future of Housing in Scotland". In East Ayrshire we would expect to continue to ensure close liaison with the Council's department of neighbourhood services.

I should also emphasise that these changes, and in particular the withdrawal from a direct role on the CPP itself, are entirely without prejudice to the developing wider Scottish Government relationship with either local authorities or with CPPs. The Government takes those relationships extremely seriously, as I hope you will recognise, particularly in light of the Concordat with CoSLA, and the pivotal role that Community Planning Partnerships will play in developing and delivering Single Outcome Agreements. Colleagues in the Government's Public Service Reform Directorate are taking that wider engagement process forward.

In particular, the Scottish Government will continue to support the national Community Planning Network and, at a more senior level, the Airth Group on Community Planning. Both of these groups have a direct influence on policy development. The Scottish Government also envisages director level engagement with all CPPs from the Summer onwards.

It has been good to work with you and other colleagues on the CPP over the last few years and I wish you all well in the important work you will be undertaking in the future. Please feel free to contact me, or my Scottish Government colleagues listed below, if you need any further advice or clarification about these new arrangements.

Yours sincerely

Roger Popplewell
Area Director
South West Scotland

cc: Fiona Lees, Chief Executive
Gwen Barker, Community Planning Manager

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