

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING: 6 DECEMBER 2007

DEVELOPING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Report by Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To present for Council's consideration a proposed initiative to further develop community engagement and links with the Council's Community Planning structures.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** Within the Accounts Commission's Best Value and Community Planning report, it was recognised that the Council wished to build on its achievements in engaging with the community by making engagement more systematic and more integral to driving improvements in service quality. Further, the Council also recognised that the development of local community planning may have the potential to increase community engagement and make the community planning process and, as a consequence, Council services more responsive to localised needs and aspirations.

- 2.2** One example of how the Council engaged with its community was the Local Committee network. However, the existing Local Committee network that comprised of seven Local Committees, was based on geographical boundaries that no longer exist following the introduction of larger multi-member wards. Further, it is suggested that the formalised structure of Local Committees impacted adversely on the ability to maximise community engagement.

- 2.3** The national standards for community engagement adopted by East Ayrshire Council and its Community Planning Partners defines community engagement as:-

“developing and sustaining a working relationship between one or more public body and one or more community group, to help them both to understand and act on the needs for issues that the community experiences”.

To be effective in all aspects of community engagement, community views should genuinely influence the planning and development of both policy and services; this can be better achieved through a more modern/revised structure.

- 2.4** Accordingly, with the introduction of the nine new wards and with the issues identified within the Best Value and Community Planning Audit Report, referred to above, the Council at its meeting on 17 May 2007 agreed that there was an opportunity to develop the role of new Local Forums to

maximise community involvement in community planning and Council/Partner Agency services.

- 2.5** The Council agreed, in principle, to establish the undernoted three Local Community Planning Forums, to provide for effective community engagement and setting and influencing local/strategic priorities and improving service delivery and development:

Northern Local Community Planning Forum: Wards 1 and 6;
Central Local Community Planning Forum: Wards 2, 3, 4 and 5; and
Southern Local Community Planning Forum: Wards 7, 8 and 9.

- 2.6** The proposals were to be subject to consultation with finalised proposals being reported back to Council and with any new arrangements being implemented by 1 April 2008. In the interim and primarily to provide for the expenditure of community grants with existing Community Representative involvement, the three Local Community Planning Forums have operated under existing Local Committee Terms of Reference.
- 2.7** The Council agreed to give consideration to any new proposals at its meeting on 6 December 2007.

3. CONSULTATION

- 3.1** As part of the Council's review of its decision making structure and development of community engagement, the Council embarked on a consultation exercise in respect of the proposals to develop three Local Community Planning Forums.

- 3.2** Initially, the Chief Executive wrote to all existing Local Committee Community Representatives and Substitutes summarising the Council's considerations and a report providing greater detail on the initiative was submitted to the first meetings of the interim Forums. As part of the consultation exercise all Community Representatives, their respective Community Groups and Community Councils were invited to respond, in writing, to the process, by 30 November 2007. An email address facility was also established to assist in the submission of comments.

- 3.3** In addition, to provide an opportunity for existing Representatives on the former Local Committees to shape the development of the proposed Forums, four Local Community Planning Forum consultations took place in July and August. All former Local Committee Community Representatives and their Substitutes, who made up the membership of the interim Local Community Planning Forums were invited to attend and put forward their views in respect of the future format and purpose of the Forums. A total of 33 Community Representatives/Substitutes attended the consultation events.

3.4 Findings

- 3.4.1** At each meeting, Representatives were given an overview of the proposals and had an opportunity to discuss a range of matters including:-

- Strengths and weaknesses of the former Local Committees;

- Purpose and form of the new Local Community Planning Forums, including geographical areas covered; and
- The effectiveness of the Council's Community Grants Scheme.

3.5 A summary of the common issues arising from all the consultation meetings is detailed below.

New Local Community Planning Forums should be:-

- Democratic;
- High level (strategic in their thinking and in the topics that they deal with);
- Participative (the Agenda should be influenced not only by Community Planning Partners but by the community);
- Achievement driven (people should see the benefit of their participation and feedback on progress against agreed actions provided);
- Innovative in their approach to encouraging contributions from local communities;
- More flexible in the way they conduct their business (move away from formal meetings with papers);
- Have a scrutiny role.

Representatives also thought that there needed to be:-

- Opportunities for village/community issues to be progressed (either via the new Local Community Planning Forums or separately);
- Greater clarity about the future role of Community Councils;
- Consideration given to working across the Forum's geographic boundaries;
- A review of the application/scoring criteria and operating arrangements of the Community Grants Scheme and that perhaps the future disbursement of grants should sit separately from the proposed Forums; and
- A strengthening of the role of the Coalfield Communities Federation and North Communities Federation.

3.6 Representatives initially expressed concern about the geographical make-up of the proposed Local Community Planning Forums. After discussion, most of these concerns were allayed, but Officers agreed to give further consideration to this matter.

3.7 Following on from each of the consultation events, to assist Representatives feedback the proposals to their host organisations, a summarised note of the main points raised was prepared and issued to all existing local Community Representatives and their Substitutes along with background information on the proposals. A total of 1,027 information notes were issued.

3.8 To date, 15 written submissions have been received. A summary of the points made are detailed within Appendix I. **A copy of all written submissions made have been placed in the Members Information Point for Members attention. Appendix I will be updated throughout the consultation period.**

3.9 Arrangements have been made for two further consultation events to be held in Kilmarnock (Wednesday 21 November 2007: evening) and Cumnock (Monday 26 November 2007: afternoon), to present the proposals contained within this report which will be circulated to all existing Representatives and Substitutes in advance of the events. Representations raised at these events will be reported to Council at its meeting on 6 December 2007.

4. THE NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

4.1 Community Planning Partners in East Ayrshire have adopted the National Standards and agreed that to ensure effective community engagement is carried out consistently and to the highest possible standards, the National Standards for Community Engagement, should underpin the way in which all engagement with communities should take place.

4.2 The principles and commitments set out in the National Standards have therefore informed our proposals for the development of the new Local Community Planning Forums, as follows:

4.3 National Standard Principles

- Fairness, equality and inclusion must underpin all aspects of community engagement, and should be reflected in both community engagement policies and the way that everyone involved participates.
- Community engagement should have clear and agreed purposes, and methods that achieve these purposes.
- Improving the quality of community engagement requires commitment to learning from experience.
- Skills must be exercised in order to build communities, to ensure practise of qualities principles to share ownership of the agenda, and to enable all viewpoints to be reflected.
- As all parties to community engagement possess knowledge based on study, experience, observation and reflection, effective engagement processes will share and use that knowledge. All participates should be given the opportunity to build on their knowledge and skills.
- Accurate, timely information is crucial for effective engagement.

4.4 National Standard Commitments

Involvement: we will identify and involve the people and organisation who have an interest in the focus of the engagement.

The Local Community Planning Forums should have a core representation however will have the ability to expand participation on the Forum for themed events and meetings.

Support: we will identify and overcome any barriers to involvement.

The Local Community Planning Forums should operate in a flexible and accommodating manner and seek to address any barriers to effective involvement.

Planning: we will gather evidence of the needs and available resources and use this evidence to agree the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement and the actions to be taken.

Local Community Planning Forums should have responsibility for setting their own agenda. Appropriate information on needs and resources will require to be made available to assist Local Community Planning Forums make informed decision.

Methods: we will agree and use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose.

The Local Community Planning Forums should identify the agenda for each Forum and utilise a range of engagement methods to ensure they secure the maximum benefit from their work together.

Working Together: we will agree and use clear procedures that enable the participants to work with one another effectively and efficiently.

The Local Community Planning Forums should develop a clear set of operating arrangements that ensure they work together effectively and that all participants know how to influence the overall agenda.

Sharing Information: we will ensure that necessary information is communicated between the participants.

The Local Community Planning Forums should review the current exchange mechanisms, including ICT arrangements, 'the Grapevine' and 'the Partnership' and adapt to suit their future needs.

Working With Others: we will work effectively with others with an interest in the engagement.

The Local Community Planning Forums should draw in expertise as appropriate to assist them realise their ambitions.

Improvement: we will develop actively the skills, knowledge and confidence of all the participants.

The Local Community Planning Forums should have the opportunity to participate in a bespoke 'Working together Learning together' training programme to ensure an increase in knowledge, skills and confidence. The Local Community Planning Forums should have the opportunity to consider and create, if appropriate, an ongoing training and development programme tailored to suit individual representatives.

Feedback: we will feed back the results of the engagement to the wider community and agencies affected.

The Local Community Planning Forums should develop a range of methods to ensure that the result of their work is fed back to local communities and agencies.

Monitoring and Evaluation: we will monitor and evaluate whether the engagement achieves its purpose and meets the national standards for community engagement.

Partners will utilise a range of methodologies to ensure that the Local Community Planning Forum's work is effective, including, for example: the Partnership Assessment Scorecard; focus groups.

5. PROPOSALS

Local Community Planning Forums

- 5.1 The results of the consultation exercise have been utilised to inform the overall development of the following proposals.
- 5.2 Geographical Boundaries: consideration has been given to alternative geographical layouts. However, bearing in mind the proposals, viable options are limited if Local Community Planning Forums are to be effectively supported and resourced by the range of Community Planning Partners.
- 5.3 One option that has been considered is to split the interim Central Local Community Planning Forum area into two on a North/South basis. This could be achieved as follows:-

Option 1

Central North Local Community Planning Forum: Kilmarnock North Ward 2 and Kilmarnock East and Hurlford Ward 4

Central South Local Community Planning Forum: Kilmarnock West and Crosshouse Ward 3 and Kilmarnock South Ward 5

Option 2

Central North Local Community Planning Forum: Kilmarnock North Ward 2 and Kilmarnock West and Crosshouse Ward 3

Central South Local Community Planning Forum: Kilmarnock East and Hurlford Ward 4 and Kilmarnock South Ward 5

- 5.4 It is suggested that the creation of a maximum of four Local Community Planning Forums as identified, is considered the best "fit" for effective policy and strategy development at a local level. The boundaries of the former seven Local Committees no longer exist and any Forums based on the existing nine multi-member wards are not considered sustainable in terms of effective partnership working with Community Planning Partners. Notwithstanding the above, the aim is to make operational arrangements of the new Local Community Planning Forums flexible in order that they can

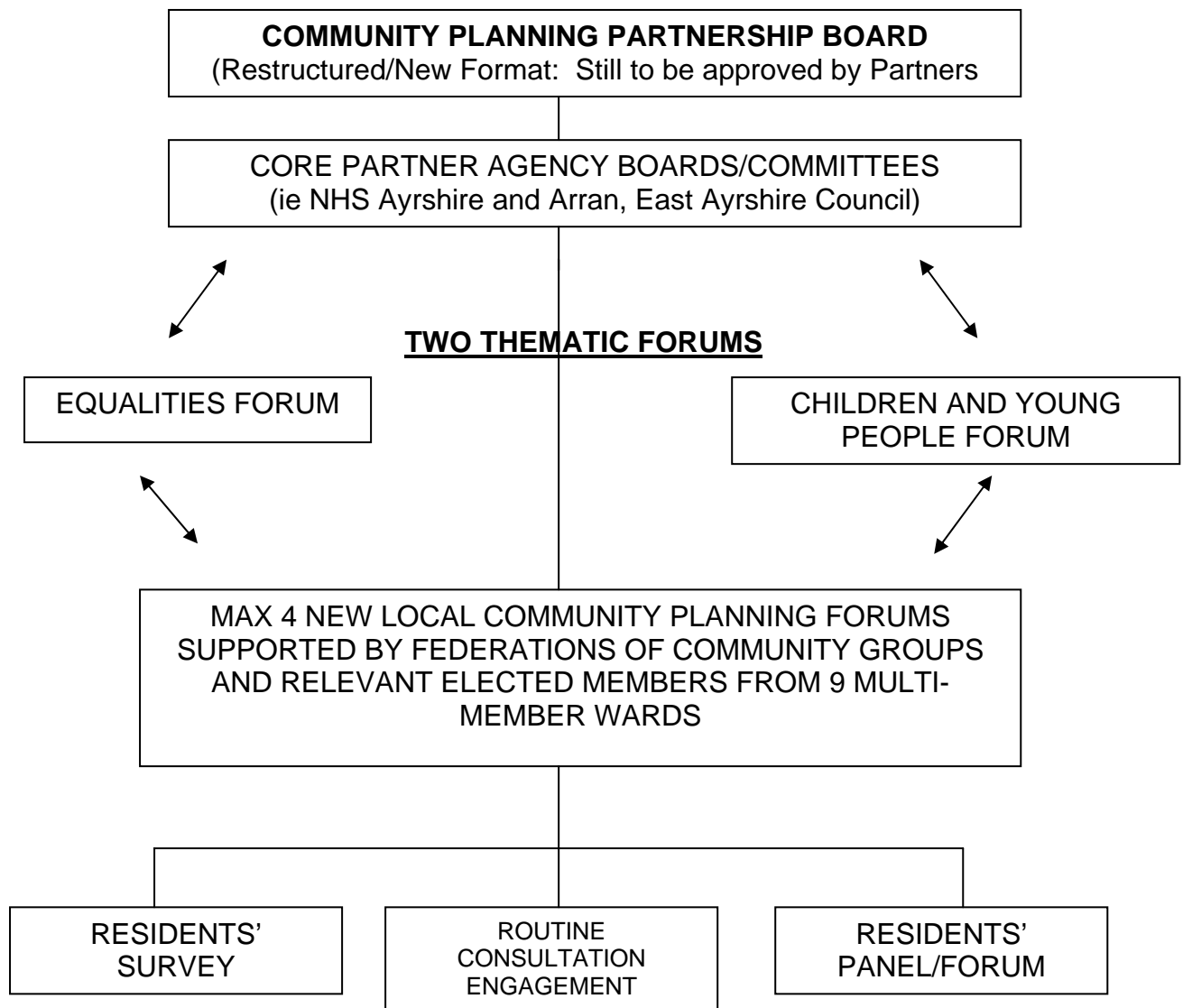
respond to localised needs. For example, if issues were identified that affected only the Kilmarnock South ward area, then consideration could be given by the Central South Local Community Planning Forum to hold a meeting/event to which relevant local groups would be invited to participate.

5.5 The purpose of creating the proposed Local Community Planning Forums is to:-

- Ensure local people and communities are genuinely engaged in the decisions made on public services which affect them (Local Government in Scotland Act 2003);
- Develop greater engagement (including Elected Members) in the Community Planning process;
- Ensure that Community Planning objectives are fully integrated into mainstream service provision; and
- Increase community engagement and make the Community Planning process more responsive to localised needs and aspirations.

Structure

5.6



Format

- 5.7** The proposed format of meetings of the Local Forums will be totally different from what has gone before. The aim is to establish a format where everyone can participate effectively. The meetings will be flexible to allow for creative thinking and will focus on strategic issues. It is proposed to move away from the “standard Committee” arrangements and provide the opportunity for workshop activity, themed events and meetings on topics of interest/priorities that have been previously identified by the Local Community Planning Forum Members. The Forums, therefore, will not be constituted in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as formal Committees of the Council and as such will provide for greater flexibility in opening up participation to all members of the Local Community Planning Forum. Such flexibility will provide the possibility of rotating Chairs from within the Community Planning Forum membership for individual meetings/events as determined in advance by the Forums. The role of the Chair would be to promote and facilitate discussion at the meetings/events in terms of identifying local Community Planning Forum priorities.
- 5.8** The Equalities Forum will follow a similar format to that of the Local Forums, however, will differ in that the Equalities Forum will be supported by 4 Equality Networks covering Disability, Gender, Black and Ethnic Minority Communities and Older People. It is proposed that the Equalities Forum will be made up from representatives from each of the Networks along with Elected Members and Officers. The Equality Network membership will consist of local Community Representatives, Community Groups and relevant partners, where appropriate. Officers will manage the transition from the existing structures to the proposed new structure.
- 5.9** Prior to the start of each financial year (February), an exercise would be carried out with each Local Community Planning Forum to identify their priority issues for discussion that year. As a result of this exercise a proposal paper would be developed outlining how the issues could best be progressed, for example: individually within each Local Community Planning Forum; in conjunction with other Community Planning Forums, if they have identified similar issues; by the preparation of a discussion paper; or by organising a themed event/meeting. It is proposed that the Equalities Forum and the Children and Young People Forum will be involved as appropriate in the planning exercise in February each year to identify the main issues.

Themed Events/Meetings

- 5.10** It is proposed that themed events/meetings would be organised where Forum Representatives and Equality Representatives wished to focus on a particular issue, for example anti-social behaviour, health or housing. The event could be organised for one or more Forums depending on the relevance of the theme. In addition, where considered appropriate, the event will be broadened out to include representatives of the wider community as determined by the Forums with the support of Officers.

Example: Anti-Social Behaviour

- Joint presentation by colleagues from Strathclyde Police, Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team and Leisure Service to demonstrate the pro-active work being carried out;
- Opportunity for Questions;
- Opportunity for discussion and debate within Forum/Partnership Working Groups;
- Identification of key issues on the way ahead;
- Key issues submitted to Cabinet/Board for consideration/action, for example, Improving Community Safety Working Group, Council Department, relevant Council decision making body and Community Planning Partnership Board; and
- Report on progress back to relevant Forum.

Reporting Process

- 5.11** As previously intimated, the Forums will not be formally constituted Committees of the Council in terms of the prevailing legislation and therefore the normal Standing Orders, recording of Minutes and Committee protocols will not apply. The outcomes and discussions of the Forums will be recorded and the relevant papers will be directed to the relevant decision making body within the Community Planning framework. This will include the Cabinet or relevant Council Departments, the Community Planning Partnership Board or direct to Community Planning Partners. All Community Planning Forum Members will be kept informed of the decisions/outcomes and progress on the issues identified. Progress on the issues will be monitored and the final outcomes reported back to the Community Planning Forums at the end of each financial year. Community Representatives will require to develop their role in ensuring that they keep their communities informed of the work of the Local Community Planning Forums. The issues identified in Paragraph 5 in terms of the National Standards for Community Engagement recognises that further support will be provided to assist the Federations of Community Groups and voluntary sector in this area.

Participants

- 5.12** It is suggested that membership of the Local Community Planning Forums provides for balanced participation from Elected Members, the Federation of Community Groups and the voluntary sector, and Community Planning Partners.

Community Planning Partners

- 5.12.1** Each core Community Planning Partner would be a member of the Community Planning Forums namely Strathclyde Police, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire, Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport and Communities Scotland. It is envisaged that

Representatives from Strathclyde Police and NHS Ayrshire and Arran would attend regularly, with other Partner Representatives attending as required.

Federations of Community Groups and Voluntary Sector, Equalities Forum and Children and Young People Forum

5.12.2 It is suggested that Community Representatives be appointed from the Federations of Community Groups with further representations from the Equalities Forum. Initial Community Representation would be set at four Representatives from the Federation Groups (with a view to building up to six Community Representatives) and four Equality Forum Representatives (to take account of the four equalities strands - gender, disability, race and older people) to serve on each of the Local Community Planning Forums. Key to developing effective community engagement will be to seek to encourage Community Groups within East Ayrshire to register with the Federations of Community Groups. It is recognised that the Federations of Community Groups will need support in developing their role within the new Local Community Planning Forums and Officers will work together with the Federations of Community Groups to achieve this end.

In terms of engaging with young people, it is recognised that the previous Local Committee arrangement was problematic in terms of sustaining young peoples involvement. Proposals are underway to provide for the establishment of a Children and Young People Forum and to ensure their input to the development of these proposals, a consultation event has been convened for Wednesday 7 November 2007. Following conclusion of all consultation activity, a report on the proposed Children and Young People's Forum will be submitted to Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 9 January 2008. The format and operation of the new Local Community Planning Forums will allow for relevant and regular engagement with Members of the Children and Young People's Forum.

Elected Members

5.12.3 Elected Members have a key leadership role to play in community planning both at a strategic and local level. This reflects the dual nature of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. The two key aspects of the duty placed on Local Authorities and their partners are:-

- To ensure effective partnership working; and
- To engage communities in the Community Planning process.

Accordingly, the development of Local Community Planning Forums will provide the opportunity for greater member involvement in the Community Planning process and consideration requires to be given to identifying the most appropriate interface between Elected Members and the Forum.

It is therefore suggested that Local Elected Members be appointed to serve on their respective Local Community Planning Forums as outlined below. This number would provide for sufficient Elected Member representation to ensure effective partnership working between the Council, Community Planning Partners and the community, and allow for greater engagement with Community Representatives through the proposed more flexible

working/event management arrangements of the Local Community Planning Forums.

- Northern Local Community Planning Forum: Members from Wards 1 and 6;
- Central North Local Community Planning Forum: Members from **Option 1** Wards 2 and 4 or **Option 2** Wards 2 and 3;
- Central South Local Community Planning Forum: Members from **Option 1** Wards 3 and 5 or **Option 2** Wards 4 and 5; and
- Southern Local Community Planning Forum: Members from Wards 7, 8 and 9.

5.12.4 In terms of Member representation in the Equalities Forum, it is suggested that seven Elected Members be appointed on a 3:3:1 basis in terms of the overall proportionality of membership within the Council. It is further suggested that as portfolio holder for Equalities, the Forum be Chaired by the Leader of the Council.

Meetings Calendar

5.13 It is suggested that there be four scheduled meetings of each Local Community Planning Forum within each financial year. Meetings would be held in February, May, August and November. Additional meetings would be organised as required. The scheduling of the Forum Meetings as detailed above provides for reporting to the quarterly meeting of the Community Planning Partnership Board which meets in March, June, September and December. In terms of reporting to the Cabinet, meetings are held fortnightly, and there is therefore ample opportunity for reports from the Community Planning Forums to be submitted within a reasonable timescale.

5.14 The Equalities Forum will meet bi-annually in February and August, this will allow the Forum to impact on the Agenda setting and budgetary decisions which will be fed directly into the Community Planning Partnership Board or relevant partner agency as appropriate.

5.15 In order that Members of the Local Community Planning Forums can schedule meetings/events in their diaries, it is proposed to include dates of Local Community Planning Forum meetings in the Council's Meetings Calendar. However, the nature of the Community Planning Forums business may require amendments to those scheduled dates to provide for meetings/events in the evenings or at weekends. Appropriate notification will be given in the normal way.

Local Issues

5.16 Whilst the format of the new Local Community Planning Forums will be participative, innovative, democratic and focus on strategic issues, the consultation exercise has identified a wish from Community Representatives to retain the opportunity to progress "village/community issues" including raising issues with Strathclyde Police. Accordingly it is proposed to provide a facility for Community Representatives to raise such issues in advance of each Local Community Planning Forum meeting/event. This will allow for written responses to be prepared and presented to Community

Representatives at the end of each Forum meeting/event. This facility will provide for quick responses to Community Representatives and allow Forums to focus on strategic issues.

Terms of Reference

- 5.17** It is proposed that the Local Community Planning Forums at their training events, referred to at Paragraphs 5.43 and 5.44 determine their terms of reference, taking cognisance of the National Standards for Community Engagement principles and the aims and objectives outlined in this paper.

Community Grants

- 5.18** A major activity carried out by the former Local Committees was the consideration of applications for Community Grant Funding. The consideration and debate on Community Grants could, on many occasions, take up a considerable amount of time at Local Committee meetings. In addition, as Community Representatives did not have a “vote” on the final outcome in respect of awards, Community Representatives felt frustrated at the lack of opportunity, as they sought, to participate in reaching a decision. The operation of Local Committees varied from Local Committee to Local Committee, with many Community Representatives feeling that they were less able to participate than others.
- 5.19** In terms of Section 57 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, East Ayrshire Council determined that Local Committees would be responsible for dispensing local community grant funds. Accordingly, under the former make up of Local Committees, only Elected Members at the Local Committee had the authority to make decisions as the Local Committee.
- 5.20** As the principal aim of the new Local Community Planning Forums is to be more democratic and participative, and to focus on strategic issues that reflect the priorities identified by Local Community Planning Forum Members, it is suggested that the consideration of community grants be dealt with by a separate Local Grants Committee.
- 5.21** In terms of how a separate Local Grants Committee could operate, consideration requires to be given to:-
- a single or four individual Local Grants Committees;
 - the frequency of meetings; and
 - the role of Community Representatives.

A Single Grants Committee

- 5.22** A single Local Grants Committee would have the advantage of carrying out its consideration of grants in a consistent way. However, a single Grants Committee may not be viewed by communities as sufficiently “local” to ensure that appropriate local considerations are made.

- 5.23** In addition, the membership of a single Local Grants Committee would have to provide for appropriate representation from the four new Local Community Planning Areas and if all Elected Members wished to participate the Committee would be overly large.

Four Individual Local Grants Committees

- 5.24** Four individual Local Grants Committees established in accordance with the new Local Community Planning Forum boundaries would provide for all local Elected Members participation in the process and provide for appropriate local considerations as required, i.e.

- Northern Local Grants Committee, Wards 1 & 6 - 7 Members;
- Central North Local Grants Committee, **Option 1** Wards 2 and 4 or **Option 2** Wards 2 and 3 - 7 Members;
- Central South Local Grants Committee, **Option 1** Wards 3 and 5 or **Option 2** Wards 4 and 5 - 7 Members; and
- Southern Local Grants Committee, Wards 7, 8 and 9 - 11 Members.

Frequency of Meetings

- 5.25** In terms of the frequency of meetings, it is suggested that the Council determines as part of its normal administrative arrangements, the frequency of the Local Grants Committee(s) at which applications for grants may be considered. It is suggested that Local Grants Committee(s) should meet on a quarterly basis, namely February, May, August and November which would provide for appropriate consideration of what can be referred to as seasonal applications. The Scheme of Delegation also provides for Officer delegated authority in respect of other applications outwith such times. In addition, there is also the facility to hold additional meetings in terms of any issues that require to be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

- 5.26** A Review of the Local Community Grants Scheme has been carried out and a report on the review process will be considered by the Governance and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 23 November 2007. A separate report on the outcome of the review with recommendations will be submitted to Council for consideration at its meeting on 6 December 2007.

Operation of Local Grants Committee(s)

- 5.27** Whilst recognising that Local Committees in the past have determined how to dispense their grant allocation, it is suggested that with the creation of dedicated Local Grants Committee(s) focusing on the new Local Community Planning Forum boundary areas, the consideration of grant applications should be dealt with throughout the financial year at the scheduled meetings and not at any one meeting. This would avoid applications from one part of a Community Planning Forum Area being dealt with separately due to past practice and requiring identification of separate grant allocations. The aim is to integrate the new Community Planning Forum Areas into distinct areas which will support the development of community engagement and provide a focus for identifying key community planning priorities for further consideration. The grant process can be used to support such initiatives in

terms of identifying appropriate groups for support within each of the relevant Grant Committee's Community Planning Forum Area.

Community Representatives

- 5.28** The key role for Community Representatives is their participation within the new Local Community Planning Forums as outlined above and in light of the legislative constraints on Community Representatives participating in the decision making process under the present membership levels when grants are submitted for determination, together with the frustration experienced by Community Representatives, it is suggested at this stage no Community Representatives be appointed on the Local Community Grant Committee(s).
- 5.29** The development of Community Representatives participation within the new Community Planning Forums will form a key proposal in developing community engagement and as such, it is suggested that efforts should concentrate in supporting the development of Community Representatives in this role, particularly during the initial year of the development of the Local Community Planning Forums.
- 5.30** One of the recommendations in respect of the developing community engagement initiative is to provide for a further review after one year of operation. At this time, consultation can take place with the Federations of Community Groups in respect of whether they see a role for Community Representatives to play in the Local Community Grant Committee(s).

Support and Development Work

- 5.31** To ensure the effective operation of the Local Community Planning Forums now and in the future, it is proposed that Democratic Services staff be supported by the Community Planning and Partnership Unit, representatives of the Community Planning Consultation and Engagement Working Group and colleagues from Community Learning and Development.
- 5.32** Therefore a team of staff would have responsibility for developing the appropriate methodologies to ensure the agenda set by each Local Community Planning Forum is addressed. It is proposed that the staff group become a sub-group of the Community Planning Consultation and Engagement Working group.
- 5.33** Democratic Services staff will play a major role in the Sub-Group and continue to deal with all organisational aspects of the Local Community Planning Forums.
- 5.34** To assist this Group operate as a cohesive unit and develop a flexible and innovative approach to the development and ongoing operation of the Forums, it is proposed that they have the opportunity to participate in two training and development courses, as follows:

Aspirational Learning

- 5.35 Participation in the Aspirational Learning Programme has the potential to equip staff with the thinking skills and knowledge to deal with issues such as rapid change, confidence, self-esteem and stress, and to set and achieve challenging goals in their personal and professional lives. It promotes new ways of thinking and works on the premise that in order to do differently we need to be able to think differently.
- 5.36 Participation in Aspirational Learning will also develop a common vocabulary for planning within the community planning framework, which will encourage aspirational thinking and goal setting.
- 5.37 In addition, delivery of the aforementioned training programmes will promote networking and build a firm foundation for partnership working.
- 5.38 Identified staff will have the opportunity to participate on the Aspirational training programme over a four day period, two days in December 2007 and two days in January 2008.

IAP2 Certificate Training Course In Public Participation

- 5.39 The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) is an association of organisations which seeks to promote and improve the practice of public participation in relation to individuals, governments, institutions and other entities that affect the public interest in nations throughout the world.
- 5.40 IAP2's Certificate Training Course in Public Participation is internationally accredited and offers a clear and thoroughly tested approach to building personal and organisational skills in engaging people in a meaningful way.
- 5.41 Delivery of the training to the staff group, who will support the local community planning forums, will develop a common approach to community consultation and engagement within the community planning framework.

'Working Together Learning Together'

- 5.42 Finally, it is important that members of the new Local Community Planning Forums are provided with an opportunity to understand, develop the new concept and shape the agenda for 2008.
- 5.43 It is therefore proposed that the Scottish Community Development Centre be invited to deliver and develop a two day 'bespoke' training and development programme for all representatives on the new Local Community Planning Forums in March 2008.
- 5.44 Time will be provided to explore, the overall purpose of the Forums, roles and responsibilities of participants and identify the main agenda items for 2008.

Timescale

- 5.45 Subject to Council approval, the new Local Community Planning Forums would be operational from 1 April 2008. In terms of processing grant

applications, as grant expenditure within this financial year has been made under the three interim Local Community Planning Forum areas, i.e. the Northern (wards 1 & 6); Central (Wards 2, 3, 4 & 5) and Southern (Wards 7, 8 & 9), it is proposed that for the remaining period of this financial year that three interim Local Grants Committees corresponding to these areas continue to operate with no Community Representatives. The new four Local Grant Committees would commence operation from 1 April 2008. Meeting details are provided within Appendix II.

- 5.46** Training for Elected Members and Community Representatives would be held in March 2008 and further training would be provided on an on-going basis. The Equalities Forum and Children and Young People Forum will also be involved as appropriate in the proposed March training session.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** Initial training costs have been approved by the Community Planning Joint Officer Group and further funding for Member and Community Representative training is provided within the Council's Democratic Services budget.

7. POLICY/COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** The Community Plan is the Council's sovereign document and the development of the proposed Local Community Planning Forums will enhance community and Local Member engagement in the Community Planning process and ensure that the people, communities and their Representatives will be fully involved in the decision making structures.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS - Nil.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1** It is recommended that Council:-

- (i) approve the development of four Local Community Planning Forums in terms of the undernoted areas and in terms of the Central North and Central South areas, determine preferred option:-

Northern Local Community Planning Forum: Members from Wards 1 and 6;

Central North Local Community Planning Forum: Members from **Option 1** Wards 2 and 4 or **Option 2** Wards 2 and 3;

Central South Local Community Planning Forum: Members from **Option 1** Wards 3 and 5 or **Option 2** Wards 4 and 5; and

Southern Local Community Planning Forum: Members from Wards 7, 8 and 9;

- (ii) approve the development of an Equalities Forum and appoint seven Elected Members to the Forum (3/3/1) and to confirm the Leader of the Council as Chair;
- (iii) approve the operation of the Local Community Planning Forums as outlined in Paragraph 5 of the report;

- (iv) remit to the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support to invite nominations for representation on the Local Community Planning Forums from the Federations of Community Groups, Equality Forum and Community Planning Partners;
- (v) approve the development of four Local Grants Committees in terms of the undernoted areas and in terms of the Central North and Central South areas, determine preferred option:-

Northern Local Grants Committee, Wards 1 & 6 - 7 Members;
 Central North Local Grants Committee, **Option 1** Wards 2 and 4 or **Option 2** Wards 2 and 3 - 7 Members;
 Central South Local Grants Committee, **Option 1** Wards 3 and 5 or **Option 2** Wards 4 and 5 - 7 Members; and
 Southern Local Grants Committee, Wards 7, 8 and 9 - 11 Members.
- (vi) agree the Terms of Reference to the Local Grants Committee as detailed under Appendix III and appoint Chairs and Vice-Chairs;
- (vii) that the new arrangements detailed under (i) to (vi) above take effect from 1 April 2008;
- (viii) that for the remaining period of this financial year three interim Local Grants Committees, corresponding to the interim Local Community Planning Forum areas, namely Northern (Wards 1 & 6); Central (Wards 2, 3, 4 & 5) and Southern (Wards 7, 8 & 9) continue to operate with no Community Representatives, in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the new Local Grants Committees as detailed in Appendix III;
- (ix) appoint Chairs and Vice-Chairs for the interim Local Grants Committees until 31 March 2008;
- ix) agree that for the first year of operation of the Local Grants Committee, there be no Community Representatives;
- (xi) agree that consideration of grant applications be dealt with at scheduled meetings throughout the financial year and not at any one meeting;
- (xii) note the support and development work outlined in Paragraph 5.31 - 5.46;
- (xiii) agree that the operation of the Local Community Planning Forums and Local Grants Committees be reviewed after one year of operational experience;
- (xiv) approve the Meetings List as detailed under Appendix II;
- (xv) amend the Scheme of Delegation accordingly to reflect the operation of the new Local Community Planning Forums and Local Grants Committees as detailed within this paper; and

(xvi) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

Elizabeth Morton
Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

19 November 2007
BW/SR

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Various consultation replies from Community Representatives and Community Groups.

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers relative to this report should contact Bill Walkinshaw, Head of Democratic Services on Tel No (01563) 576135. Any person wishing further information on this report should contact Bill Walkinshaw, Head of Democratic Services on Tel No (01563) 576135.

Implementation Officers: Gwen Barker, Community Planning and Partnership Manager and Bill Walkinshaw, Head of Democratic Services.

APPENDIX I

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION SUBMISSIONS

- Membership of existing interim Forums too large and should be scaled down;
- Local Committees were undemocratic, no recording of Community Representatives' comments;
- Recognised proposed flexibility of joint Community Planning Forum meetings beneficial;
- Related documentation should be issued in sufficient time to allow consultation with parent groups;
- Evening meetings to provide for greater participation;
- Voting rights for Community Representative Spokespersons;
- Agendas sent to all member groups to allow Representatives to attend Forum Meetings with a mandate;
- Grant applications take up too much time - decisions made by Elected Members - not enough time for discussion of local issues/concerns;
- Guidance book should be developed for new members coming to the local Community Forums;
- Remove consideration of grants from Forum system and deal with by an independent body - a Board Meeting bi-annually/annually;
- Possible setting up a Special Grants Committee, with efficiency and streamlining resulting in less Committee time consuming process;
- Proposed alternative to interim Central Local Community Planning Forum:
 - a North/Central Local Community Planning Forum; and
 - a South/Central Local Community Planning Forum.

NB: The proposed Forums are based on Community Council areas not Ward areas. Two Community Council areas are covered by both proposed Forums. A part of one Community Council area is covered by a totally separate Community Planning Forum area.

- Further two comments suggesting two Forum areas for Central Local Community Planning Forum area;
- Developing effective community engagement requires avoiding use of jargon and ensuring new Forums are conducted in a mode of everyday unambiguous manner of speech;
- Proposals as discussed at Consultative Meetings will give access to discussions with decision makers, with Agenda that reflects real local issues;
- Two comments supporting in principle, the proposals;
- Geographical coverage - each Ward has its own peculiarly either by populations, industry employment/lack of - could be an issue if one community was allowed to swap decision making;
- All Local Members being present and acting without political bias;
- Local knowledge key strength;
- Public question and answer session often too short to allow all questions to be tabled;
- Local issues continued for lengthy periods - no explanation to progress;
- Kilmarnock Central Local Committee operated relatively effectively;
- Ensure all participants are able to make their feelings heard;
- More time for local issues;

- Further education on the purpose of Community Planning;
- Ensuring all sections of the community feel they have representation on the Forums; and
- Recognised importance of Elected Members Surgeries for raising local issues.
- To facilitate community empowerment and make sure that the views of the community are listened to and fed onwards to the appropriate authority.
- A couple of comments suggesting maintaining the status quo.
- Some concern expressed that with establishment of interim arrangements no opportunity for change.
- Concern expressed that certain localities will have different local concerns/issues.
- A view expressed that the Forums are distancing themselves from the current principle of “local” and that there is an air of a decision already having being made.

SUBMISSIONS FROM:-

Kerr and Smith; Jean Smith; James Murray; Riccarton West Tenants and Residents Group; Newmilns and Greenholm Community Council; Mary Fraser; New Farm Loch Community Council; Grange/Howard Community Council; Moscow and Waterside Community Council; Maurice Ashbridge, Kilmarnock North Elderly Forum and East Ayrshire Elderly Forum; John L Howells, Muirkirk Elderly Forum; and William Lees; Churched together in Stewarton.

APPENDIX II

MEETINGS CALENDAR: JANUARY - DECEMBER 2008

DATE/TIME OF MEETING	NAME OF FORUM/CTTEE ETC
<u>FEBRUARY</u>	
THURS 14/2/2008 1400 HOURS	INTERIM NORTHERN LOCAL GRANTS COMMITTEE
TUES 19/2/2008 1400 HOURS	INTERIM CENTRAL LOCAL GRANTS COMMITTEE
THURS 21/2/2008 1400 HOURS	INTERIM SOUTHERN LOCAL GRANTS COMMITTEE
<u>MAY</u>	
THURS 8/5/2008 1400 HOURS	NORTHERN LOCAL GRANTS COMMITTEE
TUES 13/5/2008 1400 HOURS	CENTRAL NORTH LOCAL GRANTS COMMITTEE
WED 14/5/2008 1400 HOURS	CENTRAL SOUTH LOCAL GRANTS COMMITTEE
THURS 15/5/2008 1400 HOURS	SOUTHERN LOCAL GRANTS COMMITTEE
TUES 20/5/2008 1400 HOURS	CENTRAL NORTH LOCAL COMMUNITY PLANNING FORUM
THURS 22/5/2008 1400 HOURS	NORTHERN LOCAL COMMUNITY PLANNING FORUM
TUES 27/5/2008 1400 HOURS	SOUTHERN LOCAL COMMUNITY PLANNING FORUM
WED 28/5/2008 1400 HOURS	CENTRAL SOUTH LOCAL COMMUNITY PLANNING FORUM
<u>AUGUST</u>	
THURS 7/8/2008 1400 HOURS	NORTHERN LOCAL GRANTS COMMITTEE
TUES 12/8/2008 1400 HOURS	CENTRAL NORTH LOCAL GRANTS COMMITTEE
WED 13/8/2008 1400 HOURS	CENTRAL SOUTH LOCAL GRANTS COMMITTEE
THURS 14/8/2008 1400 HOURS	SOUTHERN LOCAL GRANTS COMMITTEE
TUES 19/8/2008 1400 HOURS	CENTRAL NORTH LOCAL COMMUNITY PLANNING FORUM
THURS 21/8/2008 1400 HOURS	NORTHERN LOCAL COMMUNITY PLANNING FORUM

DATE/TIME OF MEETING	NAME OF FORUM/CTTEE ETC
<u>AUGUST (Con't)</u>	
TUES 26/8/2008 1400 HOURS	SOUTHERN LOCAL COMMUNITY PLANNING FORUM
WED 27/8/2008 1400 HOURS	CENTRAL SOUTH LOCAL COMMUNITY PLANNING FORUM
<u>NOVEMBER</u>	
THURS 6/11/2008 1400 HOURS	NORTHERN LOCAL GRANTS COMMITTEE
TUES 11/11/2008 1400 HOURS	CENTRAL NORTH LOCAL GRANTS COMMITTEE
WED 12/11/2008 1400 HOURS	CENTRAL SOUTH LOCAL GRANTS COMMITTEE
THURS 13/11/2008 1400 HOURS	SOUTHERN LOCAL GRANTS COMMITTEE
TUES 18/11/2008 1400 HOURS	CENTRAL NORTH LOCAL COMMUNITY PLANNING FORUM
THURS 20/11/2008 1400 HOURS	NORTHERN LOCAL COMMUNITY PLANNING FORUM
TUES 25/11/2008 1400 HOURS	SOUTHERN LOCAL COMMUNITY PLANNING FORUM
WED 26/11/2008 1400 HOURS	CENTRAL SOUTH LOCAL COMMUNITY PLANNING FORUM

APPENDIX III

LOCAL GRANTS COMMITTEES: SCHEME OF DELEGATION EXTRACT

(a) **Membership**

(i) **Northern Area**

Wards 1 & 6 (see page for breakdown of areas covered).

No. of Councillors - 7 (3 a quorum).

Councillors Rose-Ann Cuninghame, John MacKay, John McGhee, Alan Brown, Stuart Finlayson, Bobby McDill and Provost Stephanie Young.

(ii) **Central North**

No of Councillors - 7 (3 a quorum).

Option 1 Wards 2 and 4: Councillors Helen Coffey, Willie Coffey, Maureen McKay, Jim Buchanan, John Campbell, Gordon Cree and Drew McIntyre.

See page for breakdown of areas covered.

Option 2 Wards 2 and 3: Councillors Helen Coffey, Willie Coffey, Maureen McKay, Tom Cook, Robert Keohone, Iain Linton and Douglas Reid.

See page for breakdown of areas covered.

(iii) **Central South**

No of Councillors - 7 (3 a quorum).

Option 1 Wards 3 and 5: Councillors Tom Cook, Robert Keohone, Iain Linton and Douglas Reid, John Knapp, Hugh Ross and Jim Todd.

See page for breakdown of areas covered.

Option 2 Wards 4 and 5: Councillors Jim Buchanan, John Campbell, Gordon Cree, Drew McIntyre, John Knapp, Hugh Ross and Jim Todd.

See page for breakdown of areas covered.

(iv) **Southern Area**

Wards 7, 8 and 9 (see page for breakdown of areas covered).

No. of Councillors - 11 (4 a quorum).

Councillors Eric Jackson, Jimmy Kelly, Neil McGhee, Jim Roberts, Billy Crawford, Barney Menzies, Kathy Morrice, Eric Ross, Elaine Dinwoodie, Drew Filson and James Sutherland.

(b) Terms of Reference

To receive, consider and make decisions about Community Grant applications relevant specifically to the Local Grants Committee's Area.

(c) Delegated Powers

Processing applications for financial assistance relevant specifically to the Committee's area, including Housing Association Grants.