

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EMERGENCY POWERS COMMITTEE - 7 AUGUST 2007

COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS TO EAST AYRSHIRE WOODLANDS

Report by Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Elected Member representation to the East Ayrshire Woodlands.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 East Ayrshire Woodlands was established on 1st March 1997, formalising the Management Group which had originally been formed to develop and make application to The Millennium Forest for Scotland Trust (MFST) and Forestry Commission Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS), for grant to deliver the Cumnock & Doon Valley Native and Community Woodland project.
- 2.2 The Project is a co-operation between key environmental and economic partners with complementary remits within Ayrshire. It is unincorporated and its constitution is in the form of a Minute of Agreement rather than Articles and Memoranda. Currently the Management Group comprises of representatives from the following organisations:

East Ayrshire Council* (3 Members, 1 Officer)
Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire (1)
The Forestry Commission (1)
Scottish Natural Heritage (1)
The Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (1)
The Scottish Wildlife Trust (1)

** East Ayrshire Council acts as the employing authority on behalf of the project staff and the contracting party on behalf of the co-operating partners.*

The structure of the Management Group also allows for community representatives or other relevant interested parties to be invited/co-opted on.

- 2.3 The strategic context for East Ayrshire Woodlands is now considered to be set by the Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Strategy since all partners endorse the overall vision, as follows:-

To develop the woodland of Ayrshire and Arran as a model of integrated and sustainable use of land that supports the local economy, contributes to community well-being and promotes environmental excellence.

2.4 Broad activity areas for the project can be summarised as:

- Develop and enhance urban fringe (WIAT) woodland and recreational greenspace facilities in priority communities
- Develop, interpret, promote and deliver a range of environmental education opportunities under the Forest Education Initiative and Forest School banners throughout the Project area
- Provide professional support to community groups prepared to actively participate in the management of local woodland and urban green spaces
- Develop and implement native (& designed landscape) woodland management projects as part of integrated habitat/landscape management initiatives.
- Develop and deliver a high quality, good value, woodland skills training and work experience programme for long-term unemployed residents in East Ayrshire
- Support local employment in forestry contracting, timber processing and rural craft sector, and promote the potential of products arising from effective native woodland management.

3. REPRESENTATION REQUIRED

3.1 At the Statutory Council meeting on 17 May 2007, the Council agreed to request an increase in the representation by the Council to a total of three Elected Members plus one Officer to the organisation.

3.2 The Project Manager has now written to confirm that this request for additional representation was acceded to by participant organisations at the East Ayrshire Woodlands Management Group meeting on Friday 29 June 2007. The Minute of Agreement will be amended to the effect that the Management Group will consist of nine voting members (Clause 3). Clause 4(i) will also be amended to read “.....and such appointed members shall total four from East Ayrshire Council, and one from each of the other participants”.

3.3 The Group has asked that Council Representatives be appointed at the earliest opportunity as the next meeting will be held on 29 August 2007 and has further enquired as to whether any of the appointed Representatives would consider seeking nomination as Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson.

4. **FINANCIAL/LEGAL/POLICY/COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS** - None arising directly from this report.

5. RECOMMENDATION

5.1 The Committee is asked:-

- (i) to consider the appointment of three Elected Members and one Officer to represent the Council on the Management Group of East Ayrshire Woodlands

Elizabeth Morton
Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

JMcG/SC
2 August 2007

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Letter dated 2 July 2007 from the Project Manager, East Ayrshire Woodlands.

Any person wishing to inspect the background paper relative to this report should contact Julie McGarry, Administration Manager on (01563) 576147. Any person wishing further information on this report should contact Elizabeth Morton, Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support.

Implementation Officer: Julie McGarry, Administration Manager