

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 29 MAY 2009**

#### **MATTERS ARISING UPDATE REPORT**

##### **Report by the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support**

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

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with a consolidated response to information requests made by Members at previous meetings.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 As Members are aware, during the course of discussions at meetings of the Governance and Scrutiny Committee, Members, from time to time, seek information or clarification from Officers on particular matters which requires to be provided after the meeting. Such requests arise from, and reflect, the role of the Committee in respect of its scrutiny function.
- 2.2 The Committee at its meeting held on 3 April 2009 agreed that, in future, a report be submitted to the Committee to consolidate all responses to information requests made by Members of the Committee at previous meetings or, otherwise, provide an explanation as to why the relevant information is not yet available. This approach will formalise the various matters arising into report format thereby facilitating presentation of the information to Members and recording of the origin and progress of the issues raised.

#### **3. UPDATE**

- 3.1 The outstanding matters arising from previous meetings of the Committee and the current position with regard to the provision of information relative to each item is set out in detail in Appendix I to this report.

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

#### **5. RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 The Committee is asked to note the information provided in response to the matters arising as set out in Appendix I.

Elizabeth Morton  
Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

18 May 2009  
SN/SR

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS - NIL**

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

**Implementation Officer: Stuart Nelson, Administrative Officer.**

APPENDIX I

<u>NO</u>	<u>ORIGIN</u>	<u>ISSUE</u>	<u>UPDATE</u>
1.	Governance & Scrutiny Committee, 13 March 2009 (Item 1.1.2(ii), Page 650, 07/12)	<p><b><u>Monitoring of Attendance of Pupils Engaged in Training for Work</u></b> - Agreed that the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services would pursue with the College Principals, the establishment of a means of recording information on absences relating to pupils engaged on training for work type initiatives at the colleges and would issue this information to Members when available.</p>	<p>The Executive Director of Educational and Social Services advises that specific measures have now been agreed with Kilmarnock College and Ayr College as follows, namely:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools will be telephoned daily if pupils do not attend college courses;</li> <li>• Schools will receive a weekly attendance report for all pupils attending college courses;</li> <li>• Appropriate Officers will follow up matters of non-attendance with schools, parents and pupils;</li> <li>• Schools will receive an annual report detailing pupil attendance and qualifications gained; and</li> <li>• When course attendance figures are low, the future provision of this course will be discussed with all partners at the school/college partnership meeting which takes place regularly throughout the year.</li> </ul>

<u>NO</u>	<u>ORIGIN</u>	<u>ISSUE</u>	<u>UPDATE</u>
2.	Governance & Scrutiny Committee, 13 February 2009 (Item 8(iii)), Page 609, 07/12)	<b><u>Affordable Housing Review: Update Report: Investment in Difficult to Let Housing</u></b> - Agreed that the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services provide information to Members of the Committee on the housing areas to be included within the Council's proposals for investment in difficult to let housing, and the average cost per house.	This information was set out in a Briefing Note by the Head of Housing on this matter which was circulated to Members on 30 April 2009, has been placed on the Members' Information Portal and is provided at Annex 1.
3.	Governance & Scrutiny Committee, 3 April 2009 (Item 7(ii)), Page 675, 07/12)	<b><u>Planning and Listed Building Consent Appeal Decisions - 1 May 2007 to 31 January 2009</u></b> - Agreed that the Head of Legal, Procurement and Regulatory Services provide information to Members of the Committee on the amount of expenses awarded to the Council arising from the application by AMEC Project Investment PLC for a Windfarm at Kyle Forest, near Dalmellington.	The Head of Legal, Procurement and Regulatory Services advises that the costs arising from this application are currently being assessed by an independent Law Accountant and this will form the basis of the Council's claims for expenses.
4.	Governance & Scrutiny Committee, 1 May 2009 (Item 4, Page , 07/12)	<b><u>Concluded Property Transactions: Disposal at Meiklewood Road, Kilmarnock</u></b> - Noted that the Head of Legal, Procurement and Regulatory Services would confirm to Members the sale price previously reported to Committee in respect of this disposal.	The Head of Legal, Procurement and Regulatory Services advises that the sale price in respect of this transaction previously reported to Committee in November 2008 was £90,675.00, being 90% of the actual sale price of £100,750. This discrepancy had arisen since an initial amount of 10% of the sale price had been paid upon conclusion of the contract with the balance paid at settlement.

<u>NO</u>	<u>ORIGIN</u>	<u>ISSUE</u>	<u>UPDATE</u>
5.	Governance & Scrutiny Committee, 1 May 2009 (Item 4(v), Page , 07/12)	<u>Department of Educational and Social Services: Standards and Quality Report for 2008</u> - Agreed that the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services advise Members of the Committee, in due course, of the number of visits made to the Standards and Quality Report 2008 on the Council's website.	The Executive Director of Educational & Social Services indicates that a report on this matter will be submitted to Governance & Scrutiny Committee in December 2009.

18 May 2009  
SN/SR

**BRIEFING NOTE****FOR ELECTED MEMBERS INFORMATION PORTAL****AFFORDABLE HOUSING REVIEW  
UPDATE REPORT – INVESTMENT IN DIFFICULT TO LET HOUSING****30 APRIL 2009****1. Background**

At the meeting of the Governance and Scrutiny Committee held on 13 February 2009 it was agreed that further information would be provided to Members on the housing areas to be included within the Council's proposals for investment in difficult to let housing and the average cost per house.

**2. Housing Initiative Areas**

The Council has previously recognised that clusters of long term difficult to let properties have a negative impact on neighbourhoods and their long term sustainability. In some areas, due to issues surrounding property type and/or location and following community consultation with existing residents, Cabinet has established "initiative areas" for redevelopment in response to established local housing needs. These initiative areas include:

- Longpark
- Riccarton West
- Chapel Lane, Galston
- Bellsbank, Dalmellington
- New Cumnock

Each of these sites are included in the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2009/2010–2013/2014 agreed by Cabinet on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008 for submission to Scottish Government. Funding has recently been allocated by Scottish Government to continue the ongoing new-build programme within Longpark and, following significant demolitions in both areas, work is ongoing with partners to finalise the details of the proposed new build housing projects in Riccarton and Galston subject to the availability of funding from Scottish Government. In New Cumnock, a significant programme to demolish long term difficult to let properties is near completion and in Dalmellington, considerable progress has been made to establish private sector interest in acquiring and redeveloping the site at Mossdale Terrace.

**3. Difficult To Let Housing**

Outwith the identified initiative areas, the problem with difficult to let housing can arise in any neighbourhood. The reasons for this can be linked either to the condition of the individual property, type of property itself, or wider

neighbourhood issues. Local area Housing Teams have identified a number of neighbourhoods where pockets of difficult to let housing exist and this often entails the need to apply additional resources either to manage the areas or to improve the condition of individual properties as they become empty to improve their attractiveness to new prospective tenants.

Those letting areas where particular pockets of difficult to let housing are known to exist are set out in the table below together with an indication of the average cost of void house repairs as recorded over the last two years.

<b>Letting Area</b>	<b>Average Cost</b>
Stoner Crescent, Glenshamrock Drive areas, Auchinleck	£3,860
Shawwood Housing Scheme, Catrine	£3,014
Keir Hardie Hill, Cumnock	£2,822
Smallburn Housing Scheme area, Muirkirk	£3,871
Bellsbank Housing Scheme, Dalmellington	£3,396
Rankinston	£4,411
Altonhill, Kilmarnock	£2,853
Knockinlaw, Kilmarnock	£2,682
Onthank, Kilmarnock	£3,357
Lainshaw, Rigghead, Stewarton	£3,857
Central North, Kilmarnock	£1,714
Gilfoot, Masonholm, Queens Crescent, Strath Crescent, Newmilns	£1,896

**Chris McAlevey**  
**Head of Housing**

30 April 2009