

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 28 SEPTEMBER 2007

BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPROVEMENT AGENDA

Report by the Chief Executive

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Committee of the progress which has been made against each of the detailed improvement action plans which underpin the Council's Improvement Agenda resulting from the Best Value and Community Planning Audit.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Accounts Commission published its report on the findings arising from the East Ayrshire Audit of Best Value and Community Planning in September 2006.
- 2.2 The conclusions arising from the audit, and the Council's proposed response to the Accounts Commission, were considered at the Special Meeting of the Council on 20 September 2006. In summary, the Council agreed to accept in whole the findings arising from the audit, including the Improvement Agenda.
- 2.3 The Policy and Resources Committee of 7 February 2007 considered and agreed the detailed improvement action plans, and that they would be forwarded to the Accounts Commission for information and noting. It also agreed to assist the follow-up review by External Audit. The Chief Executive forwarded the improvement action plans to the Secretary of the Accounts Commission on 8 February 2007.
- 2.4 The Policy and Resources Committee also agreed to receive annual update reports in respect of the implementation of the action plans.
- 2.5 Following the restructuring of the Council's decision-making structures in June 2007, it was agreed that update reports in respect of progress against the action plans should be submitted to the Governance and Scrutiny Committee.

3. THE COUNCIL'S IMPROVEMENT PLANS

- 3.1 This report provides an update on current progress on taking forward the 14 Improvement Agenda areas. The 14 detailed improvement action plans are included as an appendix to this report. An additional column has been added to each plan to allow action owners to provide an update against the plans to 31 August 2007.

4. PROGRESS

- 4.1 There has been excellent progress against many of the actions contained in the action plan, and most actions have been fully achieved against the agreed deadline. However there has inevitably been some slippage on actions that have been affected by the Council's departmental restructuring. None of the slippage has been critical.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.2 East Ayrshire Council has a statutory duty under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to consider the Accounts Commission's Report on the Audit of the Council's Best Value and Community Planning Position and to act on its findings.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The detailed actions set out within the appendix to this report demonstrate the Council's continued commitment to Best Value and continuous improvement, including the links to the East Ayrshire Community Plan.
- 7.2 The Council's Corporate Management Team has considered and approved the contents of this report.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Committee is asked to:-
- (i) consider the progress that has been made against the detailed improvement plans contained within the appendix to this report;
 - (ii) agree to assist the follow up review by External Audit;
 - (iii) agree to receive a further annual update report in respect of the implementation of the improvement plans, around September 2008 and;
 - (iv) otherwise note the terms of this report.

Fiona Lees
Chief Executive
6 September 2007

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. The Council's Best Value/Community Planning Audit Submission Document, January 2006.
2. East Ayrshire Council – The Audit of Best Value and Community Planning, prepared for the Accounts Commission by Audit Scotland, September 2006.

Any person wishing to inspect the above background papers or seeking further information on this report should contact Jim Farrell, Performance, Development and Projects Manager, (Tel: 01563 576223).

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: Performance, Development and Projects Manager

KEY:  Shading indicates actions 'Fully Achieved'

Action Owners

EHF&AM: Executive Head of Finance and Asset Management

HDS: Head of Democratic Services

CE: Chief Executive

HLP&RS/SC: Head of Legal, Procurement and Regulatory Services / Solicitor to the Council

HP: Head of Personnel

HH: Head of Housing

EDNS: Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL: BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING AUDIT, SEPTEMBER 2006

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

No 1. Effective Use of Resources

Purpose of Action: Effective use of resources: ensure maximum efficiency across Council services, maintain accurate information on activity costs and redistribute resources in line with community plan priorities. Address recommendations arising from the current spending review. (Owner: Chief Executive)

Action		Action Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
1.1	Carry out a detailed review of GAE and grant.	EHF&AM	March 2007	FULLY ACHIEVED For all GAE Programmes with spending levels £500k and /or 10% over GAE.
1.2	Carry out a fundamental review of council spending.		March 2007	FULLY ACHIEVED Further work flowing from review in progress. Departmental level meetings, including Professor Midwinter, scheduled, with the objective of reporting to Cabinet on 24 October, and with outcomes feeding into 2008/09 budget process.
1.3	Integrate Service Planning and Budgeting processes, in line with core Council business and Community Plan priorities.		March 2008	EXCELLENT PROGRESS - ON SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETION MARCH 2008 Pilot project in progress; draft template designed and being tested with Leisure Services. Once pilot complete, evaluation will take place with view to roll out across Council. (See also 2.2)

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IMPROVEMENT PLAN

No 2. Performance Management

Purpose of Action: Consolidate the various elements currently used for managing performance to provide a more consistent and streamlined system, including: clearer links between service plans and community plan priorities, customer feedback and resources; and better utilisation and development of the Executive Directors' Performance Review process. (Owner: Chief Executive)			
Action	Action Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
2.1 Review and add to the current portfolio of local service related performance indicators to reflect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance against strategic / service plan objectives. • Performance against operational objectives (monitoring of day to day management information systems). • Performance against meeting stakeholder expectations. 	Heads of Service supported by EHF&AM	Review to be completed by August 2007 for inclusion in "Performance Review Template for Executive Directors" in September 2007	VERY GOOD PROGRESS - ON SCHEDULED TO BE COMPLETED IN DECEMBER 2007 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The outputs from this project will help to populate both the new Service Plan template as described in 2.2 below, and the revised Chief Executive's Performance Review Template in 2.3. • It is anticipated that the pilot will be completed by December 2007, with a roll out across the Council to commence early in 2008.
2.2 Further develop consistent individual Service Plans across the Council to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links to Community Plan objectives • Analysis of consultations with stakeholders • Statutory and local performance indicators (from 2.1 above) • Analysis of current and future service pressures • Public Performance Reporting 	Heads of Service supported by EHF&AM	Annually from October 2007 with in-year monitoring	VERY GOOD PROGRESS - PILOT UNDERWAY, ROLL OUT EARLY 2008 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A template has been developed, in consultation with the Head of Leisure, which incorporates all elements described in column 1. • This template will be piloted within Leisure Services and, on successful completion of the pilot, will be rolled out across the Council. • The outcomes of the work being carried out in 2.1 above, will help to populate the performance information contained in the Service Plan. • The results produced as part of the annual Service Planning process will contribute to the information needed for 2.3 below.

Purpose of Action: Consolidate the various elements currently used for managing performance to provide a more consistent and streamlined system, including: clearer links between service plans and community plan priorities, customer feedback and resources; and better utilisation and development of the Executive Directors' Performance Review process. (Owner: Chief Executive)

	Action	Action Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
2.3	Develop the content and utilisation of the Performance Review Template for Executive Directors.	Heads of Service supported by EHF&AM	September 2007	<p>FULLY ACHIEVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the current Template was carried out by the Chief Executive. This resulted in an additional 6 sections being added. These sections cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Residents Survey. ○ The Efficient Government Agenda. ○ Public Performance Reporting. ○ Actions Outstanding from the Strategic Self Assessment of services. ○ Best Value and Community Planning Improvement Agenda. ○ Performance Accountability. • In parallel to the above, the Executive Head of Finance and Asset Management is carrying out a further review of the Template, with the aim of providing a layered structure appropriate to the seniority of audiences. The process and draft document will be subject to evaluation in due course.

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IMPROVEMENT PLAN

No 3. Public Performance Reporting

Purpose of Action: Improve Public Performance Reporting throughout the Council in line with statutory guidance. (Owner: Chief Executive)				
Action		Action Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
3.1	Undertake a mapping exercise in relation to current Public Performance Reporting throughout the Council.	EHF&AM	April 2007	<p>FULLY ACHIEVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The online resource was reviewed in light of new departmental structures, and formed the basis of the wider consultation exercise conducted through the Public Performance Reporting Officer Working Group. Each Department has now completed pro formas in respect of the Public Performance Reporting undertaken by each of their services. The collated responses will allow for the identification of any gaps in current practice. This will be completed by September 2007 and the results from this exercise incorporated into a report to the CMT.
3.2	Further develop and improve the Council's Public Performance Reporting in line with Statutory Guidance and Best Practice nationally.	EHF&AM	September 2007	<p>FULLY ACHIEVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A report to the Corporate Management Team on 18 April 2007 provided a review of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recommendations arising from the Council's Best Value and Community Planning Audit Report, the initial response to the Audit Report and feedback to the 2006 Public Performance Report, current Statutory Guidance in relation to Public Performance Reporting, a summary of Best Practice in terms of other Scottish local authorities, national and international public sector organisations. Issues arising from this exercise are being incorporated into the 2007 Public Performance Report and will also inform the development of the Council's Public Performance Reporting Strategy. Again, these issues will be presented within a report to the CMT.
3.3	Produce a Public Performance Reporting strategy for the Council.	EHF&AM	September 2007	<p>EXCELLENT PROGRESS - STRATEGY DUE FOR CABINET DECEMBER 2007</p> <p>The Council's application to consult with residents of East Ayrshire through the Community Planning Residents' Panel has been approved, and consultation with focus groups from the Residents' Panel will take place in September 2007.</p>

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IMPROVEMENT PLAN
No 4. Equal Opportunities

Purpose of Action: Improve the accessibility of buildings for people with physical disabilities in line with statutory requirements and mainstream equal opportunities requirements more effectively into the Council's operational planning and performance management framework, ensuring that impacts are monitored. (Owner: Depute Chief Executive / Executive Director of Corporate Support)

Action		Action / Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
4.1	Put in place comprehensive Asset Management arrangements and procedures to ensure access for everyone, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring each new build and altered building project is fully accessible. Identifying any access issues and producing upgrading proposals as appropriate. Making provision in the Capital Programme for upgrading work. 	EHF &AM	December 2007	FULLY ACHIEVED <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Database designed to capture DDA information on all Council buildings. Management Statements are completed by all service managers to ensure alternative means of service delivery are examined. Buildings meeting accessibility criteria increased from 41% in 2005/06 to 46% in 2006/07. CMT agreed (27.06.07) that information from work done to produce the Public Access SPI should be used to inform the Capital Investment Programme.
	<i>Further develop Council's Equality and Diversity Action Plan by:</i>			
4.2	Preparing a Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan.	HP	December 2006	FULLY ACHIEVED Update to be submitted to Cabinet November 2007 and published December 2007 in accordance with statutory requirements.
4.3	Preparing Gender Equality Scheme and Action Plan.		April 2007	FULLY ACHIEVED Scheme and Action Plan submitted to and approved by Committee on 21 st June 2007.
4.4	Preparing a Corporate Training Plan.		April 2007	FULLY ACHIEVED An equalities training sub group established in April 2007 to progress the Corporate Training Plan. Equalities training programme will be delivered on a rotating timetable commencing October 2007.

Purpose of Action: Improve the accessibility of buildings for people with physical disabilities in line with statutory requirements and mainstream equal opportunities requirements more effectively into the Council's operational planning and performance management framework, ensuring that impacts are monitored. (Owner: Depute Chief Executive / Executive Director of Corporate Support)

Action		Action / Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
4.5	Putting in place appropriate equalities and diversity scrutiny arrangements.	HP	December 2007	GOOD PROGRESS As part of the Council's overall decision making processes, effective equalities structures to be explored and findings to be reported to Cabinet in December 2007.
4.6	Implementing Impact Assessments.		December 2007	EXCELLENT PROGRESS - ON SCHEDULE FOR TARGET DATE The Community Plan Impact Assessment Toolkit covering Disability, Gender and Race Equality Duties has been developed. Initial pilots to be conducted throughout August-October with a view to adopting a final toolkit in January 2008.

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No 5. Political and Management Structures

Purpose of Action: Review these in the context of the 2007 local authority elections and prepare appropriate member development programmes. (Owner: Depute Chief Executive / Executive Director of Corporate Support)				
Action		Action Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
5.1	Analyse past local election results to predict potential make up of Council/multi-member wards at 2007.	HDS	June 2006	FULLY ACHIEVED
5.2	Review management structures to determine if fit for purpose/achieved aims.	CE	February 2007	FULLY ACHIEVED
5.3	Develop a protocol for the operation of multi-member wards, emphasising the focus on addressing community needs.	HDS	March 2007	GOOD PROGRESS Protocols in place for Members' Services staff. Development work continuing with a view to consolidating existing processes and procedures. Discussions ongoing through SOLAR Best Practice Group.
5.4	Review role/function of each element of existing structures and review and analyse traditional and alternative decision making structures. Consider options for the management and governance of Council business taking into account a multi-member ward structure and consider governance implications of options. Key elements will cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political leadership. • Community leadership. • Scrutiny. 	HDS	March 2007	FULLY ACHIEVED <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report submitted to Council on 17 May 2007 introducing a new Cabinet style decision-making structure. • <i>Key outcomes already achieved through the introduction of the Cabinet are:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Increased transparency of decision making process;</i> ○ <i>Increased accountability of leadership;</i> ○ <i>Better co-ordination of cross-departmental themes/working;</i> ○ <i>Streamlining Council business;</i> ○ <i>More informed, and rigorously debated decision making;</i> ○ <i>Greater emphasis on strategy, vision and planning; and</i> ○ <i>Clear cut scrutiny and performance review (through Governance and Scrutiny Committee)..</i>

Purpose of Action: Review these in the context of the 2007 local authority elections and prepare appropriate member development programmes.
 (Owner: Depute Chief Executive / Executive Director of Corporate Support)

	Action	Action Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
5.5	Put in place a Member Development Programme for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward Management Initiatives. • Member Training and Development Scheme. • Individual Member's Training Plan. 	HDS	August 2007	GOOD PROGRESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward Management Initiatives - Investigation of range of potential systems has been carried out. Suitable, bespoke system has been identified and will be procured following final demonstration of system at another local council. • Member Training and Development Scheme and Member's Training Plan - Draft Needs Analysis scheme in place, and Professional and Personal Development Planning process under review.

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No 6. Asset Management

Purpose of Action: Effectively implement the Corporate Asset Management Strategy and maintain system in accordance with good practice. (Owner: Chief Executive)				
	Action	Action Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
	<i>In line with the Council's Asset Management Strategy, develop a comprehensive Corporate Asset Management Plan for adoption by the Council by:</i>			
6.1	Reviewing property portfolios to identify future property requirements and resultant surplus assets for disposal.	EHF&AM	March 2008	FULLY ACHIEVED Property portfolios reviewed as part of individual Capital Programme meetings with Executive Directors.
6.2	Establishing a Capital Investment Strategy.			EXCELLENT PROGRESS Consultation is currently being carried out with service departments on Capital Investment needs.
6.3	Establishing a Capital Receipts Strategy.			FULLY ACHIEVED Capital Receipt strategy in place. Will be reviewed as part of 6.1 and 6.2 above.
6.4	Developing and introducing detailed project Option Appraisal procedures for use by service departments.			EXCELLENT PROGRESS - SCHEDULED TO MEET MARCH 2008 TARGET DATE Optional appraisal model currently being tested using proposed capital projects.
6.5	Developing and introducing procedures for shared use/development with external partners/agencies.			EXCELLENT PROGRESS The Co-location Board provides the forum for discussing potential projects.
6.6	Developing and introducing procedures for Community Management of Council assets.			EXCELLENT PROGRESS Discussions are being held with Head of Community Support to test options.

Purpose of Action: Effectively implement the Corporate Asset Management Strategy and maintain system in accordance with good practice. (Owner: Chief Executive)

	Action	Action Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
6.7	Demonstrating, through the introduction of a training programme, clear roles for Elected Members and Officers, in relation to all matters connected with asset management.	EHF&AM	March 2008	SOME PROGRESS A 'Framework for Scrutiny' toolkit, which defines roles and responsibilities of the Governance and Scrutiny function, has been developed and consultation is taking place. Training programme will be developed once design of Asset Management processes and procedures are completed.
6.8	Implementing the Council's Corporate Asset Management I.T. system, which will provide information that will ensure effective and efficient use of the Council's assets.			EXCELLENT PROGRESS - DUE FOR COMPLETION ON SCHEDULE Officers seconded to set up and manage the project. Procedures for populating Asset Management database currently being developed.

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No 7. Procurement

Purpose of Action: Achieve efficiencies through the application of modern procurement / purchasing methods, including e-procurement and more effective use of consortia arrangements. (Owner: Depute Chief Executive / Executive Director of Corporate Support)			
Action	Action Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
7.1	HLP & RS/SC	March 2007	<p>FULLY ACHIEVED</p> <p>EPS Pilot successfully completed during period of December 2006 through March 2007. Update to P&R Committee March 2007. Rollout to revised Corporate Support Structure to be completed by September 2007. Thereafter work to include integration with new finance ledger and education SEEMIS system to ensure system compatibility and efficiency. Subject to compatibility and progress, planned roll out to ESS beginning April 2008.</p>
7.2		March 2007	<p>FULLY ACHIEVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centralisation of purchasing of photocopiers, letter headed paper, corporate printing, Vehicle and Plant Hire has brought financial savings and improved management information. Plans for the creation of a Corporate Purchasing Unit within the Corporate Procurement Section are in the process of being finalised as an integral part of the Corporate Procurement Strategy. It is intended that these proposals will be issued for consideration within the next two months. • <i>Actual outcomes achieved to date:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The manually operated consolidated purchasing exercises which have been undertaken so far (with specific reference to corporate print and photocopiers) have delivered £240,000 in efficiency savings as at the end of 2006/07. Internally, it is therefore anticipated that the ongoing process to identify additional commodities combined with the EPS rollout across individual service units will generate further efficiency savings in the future. Externally, the ongoing procurement planning activities by both the Scottish Procurement Directorate and the Scotland Excel project team are projected to result in significant levels of efficiency savings for all participating authorities.</i>

7.3	Review and analyse report recommendations with a view to localised implementation of, and future participation in, the McClelland Programme.		December 2007	<p>FULLY ACHIEVED EAC is committed to the Scotland Excel project and is signed-up to the National Business Charter and actively participates in Scottish Local Government Procurement Forum. McClelland recommendations being addressed by review of the Corporate Procurement Strategy which contains annual Action Plan which addresses the recommendations in line with the Procurement Checklist recently issued by Scottish Local Government Chief Auditors Group as part of the McClelland recommendations for annual review.</p>
7.4	Review and identification of potential 'off contract' commodity/service spend to inform and direct future strategic procurement activity.	HLP & RS/SC	December 2007	<p>FULLY ACHIEVED The centralisation and aggregation of outsourced corporate printing services resulted in a formal EU compliant Framework utilising mini-tenders for all printing requirements. ePS system has been expanded to include non-contract spend suppliers to allow the spend to be tracked and contracts put in place once the scope and nature of the requirement has been established. The Scottish Government has recently asked all 32 local councils to analyse all spending, track the spending to suppliers and categorise suppliers. It is hoped that since all councils will have access to each other's information, collaborative procurement will result. The model being used for this exercise is known as Spikes Cavell.</p>
7.5	Review progress towards implementation of priority actions identified in the Council's existing Procurement Strategy document whilst ensuring that any such actions remain consistent with national and sectoral procurement developments.		October / November 2006, initially, completed by March 2008	<p>FULLY ACHIEVED The Corporate Procurement Strategy has been the subject of a complete review, including annual Action Plans to address the issues raised from the Procurement Checklist. The Strategy along with other documents (Contract management Procedures and web-based Vendor Appraisal System) to go before Council later in the year.</p>

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IMPROVEMENT PLAN

No 8. Housing Repairs

Purpose of Action: Improve response times and the quality of work carried out to address customer dissatisfaction (Owner: Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services)				
Action		Action Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
8.1	Submit report to Housing Committee on outcomes of review of joint officer and tenant representative group. Recommendations to improve housing repairs service approved May 2006.	HH	May 2006	FULLY ACHIEVED
8.2	Establish a Cross Cutting Best Value Service Review of Property Maintenance services including housing repairs.		May 2006	FULLY ACHIEVED
8.3	Appoint consultancy support to assist the work being undertaken in the Cross Cutting Best Value Service Review.		September 2006	FULLY ACHIEVED <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Vanguard experiment now includes the Irvine and Doon Valley areas and void and new tenant work. • The experiment has expanded into the Cumnock Area from 13 August 2007. • Gas repairs have been incorporated from the 13 August 2007. • A Helpline / Out of Hours pilot is in progress.
8.4	Project Plan designed to manage and implement an improved Housing Repairs Service.		March 2007	FULLY ACHIEVED Project Plan updated as required In light of 8.3 above.
8.5	Put in place "fit for purpose" IT solution needed to manage the Housing Repairs Service.		March 2007	EXCELLENT PROGRESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Repairs procedures designed and tested through work of Vanguard (8.3 above). Early results from a recent customer survey are highly encouraging. • Servitor system has been tested for its capability to subsume new Repairs procedures.
8.6	Implement all recommendations arising from Cross Cutting Best Value Service Review of Property Maintenance.		September 2007	GOOD PROGRESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value-added systems (eg. Scheduler system for tenant appointments) being developed for integration by Servitor.

Purpose of Action: Improve response times and the quality of work carried out to address customer dissatisfaction (Owner: Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services)

Action	Action Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
		HH September 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to validate the revised composite schedule of rates and benchmarked prices is underway via an officer working group which is supported by Technical Services and monitored by Internal Audit. • A Draft “Modernising Agreement” has been issued to the trade unions for consultation. • All recommendations will be implemented following approval of the completed Best Value Service Review by Cabinet in November 2007. • <i>The new Repairs Experiment has already delivered excellent outcomes and impacts on the community. Performance outcomes include:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Repairs 'Right First Time' - from 47% (at the beginning of the experiment) to 92%.</i> ○ <i>No access to properties - from 5% to 2%.</i> ○ <i>Demand for additional services due to failure of service - from 5% to 2.2%.</i> ○ <i>Result of customer satisfaction survey, 'fairly or very satisfied' - from 56% (2004) to 73% (2007).</i>

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IMPROVEMENT PLAN

No 9. Sustainability

Purpose of Action: Better mainstream sustainable development across Council services to achieve improved outcomes. (Owner: Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services)			
Action	Action Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
<i>East Ayrshire Council has formed a Sustainable Development Working Group to co-ordinate the Council's approach to sustainability issues. The key areas for improvement identified are: Biodiversity, Waste Minimisation, Sustainable Procurement and Energy Efficiency. The Group's actions include:</i>	EDNS		
9.1 Undertake a comprehensive Sustainability Audit.		Feb 2007	FULLY ACHIEVED Audit questionnaires were circulated throughout the Council, and have been completed by all services. Examples of best practice have been highlighted and will be pursued with individual services.
9.2 Identify and extend areas of good practice from within and out-with the Council.		April 2007	FULLY ACHIEVED Examples of good practice gathered through the survey process have been shared with the Working Group.
9.3 Produce a Sustainability Strategy.		April 2007	GOOD PROGRESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sustainability strategy is subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) under the terms of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. A Screening Report has been submitted to the SEA Gateway as the first stage of the SEA process. A Scoping Report is being prepared and will be submitted following receipt of responses to the screening by the SEA Gateway. (SEA Gateway is an agency that includes representation from Historic Scotland, the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, and Scottish National Heritage). An Environmental Report to accompany the strategy will be prepared. It is anticipated that the Strategy will be completed by December 2007.

Purpose of Action: Better mainstream sustainable development across Council services to achieve improved outcomes. (Owner: Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services)

Action		Action Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
9.4	Develop a sustainability action plan that links to the Community Plan, statutory guidance and local and national strategies. The action plan will have smart objectives and measurable outputs.	EDNS	June 2007	<p>GOOD PROGRESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An action plan derived from the strategy (following review and endorsement by SEA Gateway) will be produced by January 2008. The action plan will support the delivery of the strategic objectives. • <i>Excellent progress has already been made in relation to sustainability outcomes and impacts on the community. These include:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>37% of municipal solid waste collected through kerbside collection and recycling centres from a position of 7% in 2003/04, and against a Scottish Government target of 30% by 2008.</i> ○ <i>New LED Christmas lights purchased for Kilmarnock, using 10% of the energy needed for current illuminations.</i> ○ <i>Green travel plans will be produced for 30% of all schools by April 2008.</i>
9.5	Effectively communicate the sustainability agenda within and out-with the Council.		March 2008	<p>GOOD PROGRESS</p> <p>Arrangements for publicity and advertisement as required by the 2005 Act are being developed by the officer working group.</p>

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IMPROVEMENT PLAN

No 10. Challenge and Review

Purpose of Action: Increase the deployment of the best value review programme around cross cutting priorities and implement more systematic use of benchmarking and other comparative analyses. (Owner: Chief Executive)				
Action		Action Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
10.1	Review the implementation of the current 2004 – 2007 Best Value Service Review Programme for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress against programme. • Outcomes achieved. 	EHF&AM	Review to be completed by April 2007	FULLY ACHIEVED <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An update on progress in implementation of the Best Value Service Review programme was provided to the Corporate Governance committee meeting of 16 February 2006. • Each Department has now provided their own position statements (as at 31 March 2007), and these have been incorporated into a report to the CMT – 29.08.07. • Arrangements for reporting to Committee now agreed. Executive Directors will be responsible for ensuring that results of Service Reviews are reported to Cabinet (when recommendations contain significant structural and/or resource implications) or Governance and Scrutiny (when recommendations do not contain significant change).
10.2	Review the Council's current policy on Cross-Cutting Service Review as set out in August 2004 Guide to Best Value Review and Corporate Management Team report of 26/4/05. <p>Priority areas identified by CMT as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Work Training and Development, linking to Corporate Support Personnel Service Unit. • The reviews for the Education Service and Corporate Personnel should be co-ordinated as regards personnel issues. <p>Give consideration to a major Council-wide cross-cutting cost based review to inform the Council's 2008/11 Revenue Budget process, all linked to SR 2007.</p>		December 2007	EXCELLENT PROGRESS - WILL COMPLETE ON SCHEDULE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot underway to establish feasibility of carrying out Service Reviews across the remit of each Head of Service. • The review of the Council's Revenue Budget is now complete. • Progress concerning the Strategic Review of Revenue Budget is reported at Action 1 above. • The Corporate Personnel Review, addressing the priority areas, is complete. The results of the Review will be reported to Cabinet in December 2007.

Purpose of Action: Increase the deployment of the best value review programme around cross cutting priorities and implement more systematic use of benchmarking and other comparative analyses. (Owner: Chief Executive)

	Action	Action Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
10.3	<p>Co-ordinate the development of a new Best Value Review Programme (2007 - 2010) covering all Council Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Directors to Review Service Unit configurations in light of Council restructuring. • CMT to determine opportunities for cross departmental reviews. • CMT to consider and agree a revised Best Value Programme. 	All Executive Directors	December 2007	<p>EXCELLENT PROGRESS - WILL COMPLETE ON SCHEDULE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A consolidated report was discussed at the CMT meeting of 29 August. Discussion included potential changes to the Service Unit configurations, as approved by Executive Directors. • The departmental restructuring, which has broadened the scope and responsibilities of Executive Directors, is facilitating a cross-cutting approach to reviews at Service Unit level. • The process for compiling and agreeing a new Best Value Review Programme (2007-2010) has commenced. This will be submitted to CMT in due course, and thereafter to Governance and Scrutiny for approval.
10.4	<p>Extend the use of benchmarking and other performance related comparative analyses in Best Value Service Reviews conducted within the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review current benchmarking / performance activity and ensure that this is implemented on a systematic basis in future reviews. 			December 2007

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IMPROVEMENT PLAN

No 11. Scrutiny

Purpose of Action: Develop more systematic scrutiny arrangements to maximise member challenge of performance and decisions made. (Owner: Depute Chief Executive / Executive Director of Corporate Support)				
Action		Action Owner	Time/Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
11.1	Review existing scrutiny arrangements and consider whether: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are fit for purpose following/as part of Review of Political Structures; and, • Consider further options for change and consider governance implications of any change. 	HDS	August 2007	FULLY ACHIEVED Report submitted to Council on 17 May 2007 introducing a new Cabinet style decision-making structure. This new decision-making structure has introduced a Governance and Scrutiny Committee with more robust system for scrutiny of decisions.
11.2	Review Elected Member development and support mechanisms to ensure maximisation of existing or revised arrangements.			EXCELLENT PROGRESS As 5.5 above. The introduction of a Councillors' Information Portal is due to be launched in September 2007.

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IMPROVEMENT PLAN

No 12. Human Resource Management

Purpose of Action: develop the staff appraisal system around core competencies and develop a more robust approach to longer-term corporate-wide workforce planning. (Owner: Depute Chief Executive / Executive Director of Corporate Support)				
Action		Action owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
12.1	Develop a staff Competence and Appraisal Framework.	HP	March 2007	FULLY ACHIEVED Pilot Framework and proposals for roll out within Building and Works endorsed by CMT in April 2007.
12.2	Implement the Competence and Appraisal Framework.		April 2007	FULLY ACHIEVED Pilot Framework, revised EAGER documentation and supporting training programme for managers and employees complete. Implementation of first tranche within Building and Works scheduled for September 2007. Proposals for Council wide implementation to be considered by CMT, and thereafter to Cabinet.
12.3	Implement Single Status Agreement.		April 2007	FULLY ACHIEVED <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single Status Pay and Grading Scheme implemented 1 April 2007. GOOD PROGRESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conditions of Service to be developed by December 2007.
12.4	Prepare a Workforce Planning Strategy.		December 2007	GOOD PROGRESS Work has commenced on preparation of Workforce Planning Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Competence Framework / EAGER Review. ○ Pay and Grading Scheme implemented. • Equalities Agenda - Race/Gender Schemes in place. • Shared Services – Two contracts awarded. • Employee Focus Groups' reports concluded.

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IMPROVEMENT PLAN

No 13. Trading and Competitiveness

Purpose of Action: effectively use review, benchmarking and option appraisal to improve competitiveness (Owner: Chief Executive)			
Action	Action Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
13.1	EHF&AM	December 2007	<p>FULLY ACHIEVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leisure Management, Outdoor Amenities, Refuse Collection, Refuse Disposal, Onsite Services (Catering / Cleaning / School Crossing Patrols) - all ceased trading classification from April 2006. Building and Works - turnover etc. level requires operation under Trading operation guidelines. <p>EXCELLENT PROGRESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicle Maintenance, Roads, Street Lighting - Best Value Service Review nearing completion. Recommendations include declassification as trading units. Review will be submitted to CMT in due course, and thereafter to Cabinet for approval.
13.2		December 2007	<p>FULLY ACHIEVED</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services (with Roads services to follow, following Council restructuring) complete.</p>
13.3		December 2007	<p>FULLY ACHIEVED</p> <p>Educational and Social Services completed December 2006.</p>

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IMPROVEMENT PLAN
No 14. Risk Management**

Purpose of Action: Further strengthen the effectiveness of controls for identifying risks and reporting on actions taken in response. (Owner: Chief Executive)				
Action		Action Owner	Time / Target	Updated Position at 31 August 2007
14.1	Review the existing Risk Management Strategy to ensure compliance with best practice.	EHF&AM	December 2006	FULLY ACHIEVED
14.2	Promote the effective utilisation of the new electronic Risk Management System.		Review September 2007	FULLY ACHIEVED
14.3	Monitor and maintain the Council's effective partnership with our insurance provider.		During and following Insurance Contract tender discussions. New contract effective October 2007.	FULLY ACHIEVED
14.4	Report progress periodically to the Council's Risk and Audit Scrutiny Group.		Twice per year.	FULLY ACHIEVED

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