

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – 23 AUGUST 2005

ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES BUDGET 2005-2006

Report by Executive Director of Development and Property Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval for projects in 2005/2006 through the Planning, Development and Building Standards Division, under the Environmental Initiatives Budget 2005-2006. The report also seeks Committee approval for amendments to the projects being progressed under the Derelict Property Revolving Fund.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Planning, Development and Building Standards Division are responsible for co-ordinating a programme of Environmental Initiatives. The programme utilises funds from the Development and Property Services Miscellaneous Property Budget, the Scottish Executive's Quality of Life Funding, and a Quality of Life carry forward from 2004/2005. Allocations under the Quality of Life Funding 2003/2004 – 2005-2006 were agreed by the Development Services Committee on 20 May 2003.
- 2.2 The Development Services Committee of the 14 December 2004 agreed a list of projects to be implemented under the Environmental Initiatives Budget for 2004/05. This included projects under the Derelict Property Revolving Fund, which is funded from the Quality of Life Funding. The Committee also agreed that amendments to the Derelict Property Revolving Fund be delegated to the Executive Director of Development and Property Services in consultation with the Chair of Development Services Committee and the relevant local member.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES PROJECTS 2004/2005

- 3.1 The projects being funded from the Environmental Initiatives Budget have previously been broken down into three categories. However this year a further category "Environmental Initiatives" has been added to enable funding to be provided to existing environmental initiatives that the Council currently support to increase opportunities to lever further funding into these initiatives:

- Environmental Improvement Projects
- Maintenance Projects
- Derelict Property Revolving Fund
- Environmental Initiatives

- 3.2 The following are details of the suggested new projects under each category. Appendix 1 to this report gives details of the funding allocation for each project, as well as listing those projects previously approved that are being carried forward to 2005/06. The division of the Department responsible for implementation of the projects is also provided. It should be noted that progress with the Derelict Property Revolving Fund projects are dependant on agreement with the current property owners.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

- 4.1 **Glaisnock Shopping Centre.** This is the continuation of an ongoing programme of maintenance and improvement to the shopping centre and is a proposal in the adopted East Ayrshire Local Plan.
- 4.2 **A713 Dunaskin Bridge widening.** This project carried forward from 2004/05 would involve the construction of a separate footbridge alongside the existing road bridge over the Dunaskin Burn at Waterside on the A713. The A713 is a busy road and traffic passes this point at high speeds. There is no separate footway across the road bridge which is regularly used by pedestrians from the adjacent community.
- 4.3 **Catrine Railway Cutting.** This is the continuation of a safety upgrade initially funded by the East Ayrshire Coalfield Area SIP.
- 4.4 **Dalmellington Village Entrance Feature.** In association with the Dalmellington Partnership a public art project is being developed at the entrance to Dalmellington. The project includes the erection of a “book” sculpture with associated landscaping and footpath access. The land is in the ownership of the Council under the Development and Property Services account and will be subject of a lease agreement with the Dalmellington Partnership. This project was allocated funds from the former Cumnock and Doon Valley Initiative Funds approved by the Local Area Committee. It is also receiving funds from the East Ayrshire Coalfield Area SIP under the Community Environmental Improvement Action Plans and Projects. The proposed allocation would enable the project to be completed.
- 4.5 **Steps at Lugar Bridge, Cumnock.** This suggested project addresses a safety matter that has been raised by the Cumnock & District Angling Association and the Local Member. The steps leading down from Lugar Bridge to the River Lugar are a potential risk to both members of the public and the angling association. The proposal is to replace the remaining steps and install handrails down to the river.
- 4.6 **Blackwood Avenue, Catrine.** This site is adjacent to a prominent entrance to Catrine and has lain vacant and derelict for many years. The community wish to see this site brought into community ownership and environmentally improved/developed. This suggested allocation of funding would assist the community to acquire the site and prepare an improvement scheme for future implementation.
- 4.7 **National Jetski Centre, Piperhill Opencast Site.** This suggested project would assist in the development of a national jetski centre as part of the restoration of the former opencast site at Piperhill. Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire are also contributing to this rural diversification project.
- 4.8 **Galston Town Centre Environmental Improvements.** This project would part fund the installation of improved and upgraded lighting throughout the Galston Town Centre Conservation Area. This would both improve community safety and improve the environment. If approved the balance of the funding will be sourced through Roads Division budgets.
- 4.9 **Safety Upgrading of Shields Road, Footbridge, Newmilns.** This suggested project would upgrade a well used footbridge over the river Irvine at Shields Road, Newmilns.

- 4.10 **Environmental Improvements at Ayr Road and Glaisnock Street, Cumnock.** This suggested project would upgrade a key corner site within Cumnock Town Centre.

5. MAINTENANCE PROJECTS

- 5.1 **Maintenance of Bus Stations and Bus Stops.** The maintenance of bus service infrastructure is an important part of the overall policy to promote the use of public transport. The proposal if approved would enable maintenance works at both the Cumnock and Kilmarnock Bus Stations and bus stops throughout East Ayrshire to be undertaken.
- 5.2 **Maintenance of Kilmarnock/Cumnock Town Centres.** This project would enable any damage to the town centres to be dealt with, within Kilmarnock and Cumnock Town Centre.
- 5.3 **Maintenance of Industrial Estates** It is proposed that the allocation would be utilised to improve security lighting and general maintenance of Industrial Estates within Council ownership. This will encourage increased occupancy of available industrial units.

6. DERELICT PROPERTY REVOLVING FUND

- 6.1 The Derelict Property Revolving Fund was established by the Development Services Committee on 20 March 2002. Its establishment was based on agreed principles detailed in the report. It was agreed that demolition of properties at 115-119 Main Street, Auchinleck should be a priority. A further programme of projects was approved by the Committee on 21 October 2003. The aim of the fund is to enable the demolition of derelict properties within East Ayrshire, implement associated remedial works and, as appropriate, acquire the sites for the Council and enter into any legal agreements which may be required to secure their redevelopment and subsequent sale.
- 6.2 The current programme of projects agreed by Committee includes the following properties.
- 115 Main Street, Auchinleck
 - 117/119 Main Street, Auchinleck
 - Access road to the rear of 115-123 Main Street, Auchinleck
 - Pagan Walk, Muirkirk
 - Former Afton Valley Dyers Factory Site, 26 Castle, New Cumnock
 - Amlaird Shops, Kilmarnock
- 6.3 It is proposed to add the demolition of the Band Hall, Main Street, Dalmellington and a row of vacant & derelict properties at Bridge Street, New Cumnock to these projects.
- 6.4 Within the overall budget £205,084 is allocated to the above projects in the Derelict Property Revolving Fund. Amlaird Shops, Kilmarnock also has an additional £250,000 of Better Neighbourhood Services funding that requires to be spent in this financial year. As progress with these projects is heavily dependant on (potentially lengthy) property negotiations, it is difficult to accurately provide a final cost breakdown by project. However, it is considered appropriate to utilise the available

budget on those projects where property negotiations have been successfully concluded, subject to consultation with the Chair of Development Services.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

- 7.1 **Coalfield Environmental Initiative.** The Coalfield Environmental Initiative is a partnership formed to enhance, conserve, and promote the environment in the current & former coalfield extraction areas of East Ayrshire. It is supported by RSPB, Scottish Coal, SNH, SWT, EAW and the Council. Current projects include Wetland habitat creation at Hannahston OCCS, Muirkirk bird viewing project and habitat creation at Auchlin mining site. The proposed allocation would further assist with the implementation of these and similar projects.
- 7.2 **East Ayrshire Woodlands.** EAW are currently developing an Local Biodiversity Action Plan amenity area adjacent to the Irvine Valley path network at Ladyton Loch near Loudoun Kirk. This project includes improved access, native woodland planting, wetland enhancement and habitat interpretation. At Broom Braes, Logan they are creating a footpath link from the A70 at Logan/Lugar to Woodroad Park, Cumnock. This involves native woodland management. This proposed allocation would enable these projects to go ahead.
- 7.3 **Ayrshire & Arran Woodlands Partnership.** AAWP is an initiative supported by the three Ayrshire Councils, Forestry Commission & Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire. Projects including a rural diversification study to identify opportunities to develop woodland enterprise in Ayrshire, and "Ayrshire Treasured Trees" a campaign to encourage community awareness of the value of trees & woodlands, have been identified through the Ayrshire & Arran Woodland Partnership Strategy. The proposed allocation would enable these projects to proceed.

8. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The environmental improvements proposed under the Environmental Initiatives Budget are consistent with the "Improving the Environment" and "Improving Opportunities" Action Plans within the East Ayrshire Community Plan.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The programme of projects identified within this report will be undertaken within the available Environmental Initiatives Budget 2005/2006. As indicated above individual projects may be receiving additional funding from a variety of sources.

10. LEGAL AND PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The implementation of the various projects will be carried out by officers within the relevant division of the Department and Property Services Department as identified in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 10.2 In relation to individual projects under the the Derelict Property Revolving Fund they will be progressed as appropriate in consultation with Legal Services .

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

- i) agree the wide variety of projects proposed to be funded from the Development Services Environmental Initiatives Budget 2005-2006, based on the allocations indicated in Appendix 1 to this report;
- ii) agree the inclusion of the proposed demolition of Band Hall, Main Street, Dalmellington and the row of vacant properties at Bridge Street, New Cumnock under the Derelict Property Revolving Fund;
- iii) agree that the Environmental Initiative Budget allocated to the projects within the Derelict Property Revolving Fund should be utilised as required on the approved projects on the basis of completed property negotiations subject to consultation with the Chair of Development Services; and
- iv) otherwise note the contents of this report.

James Lavery
Executive Director of Development and Property Services
15 August 2005
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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Report to Development Services Committee "Restoring Communities Programme" – 13 March 2002.
2. Report to Development Services Committee "Quality of Life Funding 2003/2004 to 2005/2006" – 20 May 2003.
3. Report to Development Services Committee "Derelict Property Revolving Fund" – 21 October 2003.
4. Report to Cumnock Area Local Committee "Former Cumnock and Doon Valley Initiative Funds" – 6 November 2003.
5. Report to Doon Valley Local Committee "Former Cumnock and Doon Valley Initiative Funds" – 23 January 2004.
6. Report to Development Services Committee "Community Environmental Improvement Action Plans and Projects 2004/2005 and 2005/2006 – 14 December 2004.
7. Report to Development Services Committee "Environmental Initiatives Budget 2004-2005" - 14 December 2004.

Anyone wishing to inspect the above papers please contact Colin McKee on (01563) 576759.

Implementation Officer: Alan Neish

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Environmental Initiatives - Projected Expenditure (General Fund)

Scheme No	General Fund	Available budget 2005/6	Allocation as per Plan	Responsible Division
Balance of SIP Funding for Demolitions		£6,930		
1	Acquisition, Demolition & Reinstatement of Pagan Walk, Muirkirk		£6,930	Economic Development & Property Services
			£6,930	
Balance of Revolving Funds for Demol (Bal Sheet)		£15,000		
2	Acquisition, Demolition & Reinstatement of Pagan Walk, Muirkirk		£10,000	Economic Development & Property Services
3	Purchase of access road to rear of 115-123 Main St, Auchinleck		£5,000	Economic Development & Property Services
			£15,000	
Miscellaneous Property Budget		£57,038		
4	Maintenance of Bus Stops & Bus Stations		£25,000	Roads & Transportation
5	Maintenance of Kilmarnock/Cumnock Town Centres		£5,000	Planning Development & Building Standards
6	Environmental Improvements at Ayr Road and Glaisnock Street, Cumnock		£7,500	Planning Development & Building Standards
7	Maintenance of Industrial Estates		£18,000	Economic Development & Property Services
8	Miscellaneous Environmental Improvement Expenditure		£1,538	Planning Development & Building Standards
			£57,038	
Total		£78,968	£78,968	

Development Services Committee - 23rd August 2005**Environmental Initiatives - Projected Expenditure (QoL)**

Scheme No	Quality of Life	Available budget 2005/06	Allocation as per Plan	Responsible Division
Quality of Life C/F for 2004/05		£183,450		
9	Acquisition, Demolition and Reinstatement of Amlaird Shops		£68,107	Economic Development & Property Services
10	Acquisition, Demolition and Reinstatement of Afton Valley Dyers, New Cumnock		£35,000	Economic Development & Property Services
11	Additional funding for Acquisition, Demolition and Reinstatement of 117/119 Main Street, Auchinleck		£25,000	Economic Development & Property Services
12	Acquisition, Demolition & Reinstatement of Pagan Walk, Muirkirk		£13,047	Economic Development & Property Services
13	Glaisnock Shopping Centre (including new roller shutter doors)		£22,296	Economic Development & Property Services
14	A713 Dunaskin Bridge Widening		£20,000	Roads & Transportation
Funds for Maintenance of amenity areas		£45,000	£183,450	
15	Maintenance of Bus Stops & Bus Stations		£10,000	Roads & Transportation
16	Catrine Railway Cutting, Environmental Improvement		£5,000	Roads & Transportation
17	Dalmellington Village Entrance Feature		£5,000	Economic Development & Property Services
18	Steps at Lugar Bridge, Cumnock		£5,000	Planning Development & Building Standards
19	Blackwood Avenue Catrine		£5,000	Planning Development & Building Standards
20	National Jetski Centre, Piperhill Opencast Site		£5,000	Economic Development & Property Services
21	Galston Town Centre Environmental Improvements		£10,000	Roads & Transportation
Fund for Demolitions & Environmental Initiatives		£70,000	£45,000	
22	Additional funding for Acquisition, Demolition and Reinstatement of 117/119 Main Street, Auchinleck		£10,000	Economic Development & Property Services
23	Additional funding for reinstatement of cleared site at 115 Main St, Auchinleck		£5,000	Economic Development & Property Services
24	Demolition & Reinstatement of Band Hall Main Street, Dalmellington		£12,000	Economic Development & Property Services
25	Acquisition, Demolition & Reinstatement of properties on Bridge Street, New Cumnock		£15,000	Economic Development & Property Services
26	Coalfield Environmental Initiative		£5,000	Planning Development & Building Standards
27	EAW projects Ladyton Loch, Galston & Broom Braes, Logan		£15,000	Economic Development & Property Services
28	Ayrshire & Arran Woodlands Partnership		£8,000	Economic Development & Property Services
			£70,000	
Pedestrian Bridges and Footways		£20,000		
29	F/NEWM/30, Shields Road Footbridge Newmilns		£20,000	Roads & Transportation
			£20,000	
Total		£318,450	£318,450	