

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE - 14 DECEMBER 2004**

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES BUDGET 2004-2005**

##### **Report by Executive Director of Development and Property Services**

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

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the progress with the projects being co-ordinated in 2004/2005 through the Planning, Development and Building Standards Division, under the Environmental Initiatives Budget 2004-2005. 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 in 2004/2005. The programme utilises funds from the Development and Property Services Miscellaneous Property Budget, the former Cumnock and Doon Valley Initiative, the Scottish Executive's Quality of Life Funding, and a Quality of Life carry forward from 2003/2004. Allocations under the former Cumnock and Doon Valley Initiative have previously been agreed at the Local Area Committees and 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 21<sup>st</sup> October 2003 agreed a list of projects to be implemented under the Derelict Property Revolving Fund, that is funded from the Quality of Life Funding.

### **3. ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES PROJECTS 2004/2005**

- 3.1 The projects being funded from this budget can be broken down into four categories :
- Environmental Improvement Projects
  - Development Studies
  - Maintenance Projects
  - Derelict Property Revolving Fund
- 3.2 The following are details of the individual projects under each category. Appendix 1 to this report gives details of the funding allocation for each project, progress with the project and the division of the Department responsible for implementation of the projects. 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 **Safety Upgrade of Pedestrian Footbridge and Footway at Waterside, Doon Valley.** This project includes 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.
- 4.2 **Improved Lighting and Paving to Area adjacent to Glaisnock Shopping Centre.** The area adjacent to the Glaisnock Shopping Centre is owned by the Council. This project is part of a continuing programme of maintenance and improvement to the shopping centre agreed by the Town Centre Management Committee and the Local Members for Cumnock, and is a proposal in the adopted East Ayrshire Local Plan.
- 4.3 **Improved Street Furniture at Sturrock Street, Kilmarnock.** This is a highly visible site on the one-way system around the town centre of Kilmarnock and is adjacent to one of the major entrances to Kilmarnock from Queen's Drive. The current landscaping consists of concrete slabs, a few standalone trees and raised brick flower beds, that are in a poor state of repair. Funds have already been allocated from the Development and Property Services Capital Programme. To successfully transform this area will require this additional funding.
- 4.4 **Improved Paving at Palace Theatre, Kilmarnock.** This is another highly visible site, with a high pedestrian usage. The proposal is to re-pave the area in Tegular block, similar to those used elsewhere adjacent to the one way system.
- 4.5 **Infilling of Catrine Viaduct.** This is the continuation of a safety upgrade requested by the Catrine Environment Group and Local Member, initially funded by the East Ayrshire Coalfield Area SIP.
- 4.6 **Provision of Access Ramp for the Disabled at Main Street, Patna.** This project will allow access for disabled, prams and push chairs to a large network of paths adjacent to the River Doon in Patna. Funding was allocated for this project for the former Cumnock and Doon Valley Initiative Funds approved by the Local Area Committee. However, to successfully complete this project additional funds are required.
- 4.7 **East Ayrshire Woodlands Project.** This funding is required to enable East Ayrshire Woodlands to continue their training programme and woodland/environmental improvement projects throughout East Ayrshire.
- 4.8 **Refurbishment of Jacobs Ladder, Newmilns.** This footpath improvement project is being undertaken by East Ayrshire Woodlands on behalf of the Ayrshire Education Trust who will retain full responsibility for the maintenance of Jacob's Ladder.
- 4.9 **Improved Street Furniture at Institute Avenue, Catrine.** This is a contribution towards environmental improvements being carried out by the Catrine Environment Group (CEG) adjacent to the Community Centre/Village Hall and Health Clinic in Institute Avenue, Catrine. CEG have recently been awarded a grant of £20,000 from Fresh Futures toward this project.

- 4.10 **Dalmellington “Gateway Art Project”.** In association with the Dalmellington Partnership a public art project is being developed at the entrance to Dalmellington. The projects 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 as indicated in a separate report to this committee.
- 4.11 **Community Garden Project, Aird Avenue, Auchinleck.** This project is being implemented by the Auchinleck Community Initiative. It aims to develop an existing vacant site into a community garden consisting of accommodation for horticultural training and growing plants, providing an educational resource for use by local schools. It is intended that the community groups will take on the responsibility for the maintenance of the site, possibly through a leasing agreement with the Council.
- 4.12 This project was allocated funds from the former Cumnock and Doon Valley Initiative Funds approved by the Local Area Committee. The project is also receiving funds from East Ayrshire Coalfield SIP under the Community Environmental Improvement Action Plans and Projects, as indicated in a separate report to this committee.

## **5. DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

- 5.1 **Development Study, Cumnock Town Centre.** A study has been carried out by Enviros into the potential to develop various development opportunity sites in Cumnock Town Centre as identified in the Adopted East Ayrshire Local Plan.
- 5.2 **Traffic Study, Cumnock Town Centre.** A traffic study has been carried out in Cumnock Town Centre to assist in the potential future development of development opportunity sites identified within the adopted East Ayrshire Local Plan and the preparation of an Action Plan for Cumnock Town Centre.

## **6. MAINTENANCE PROJECTS**

- 6.1 **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. This project will undertake maintenance works at both the Cumnock and Kilmarnock Bus Stations and bus stops throughout East Ayrshire.
- 6.2 **Anti-graffiti measures Kilmarnock and Cumnock Town Centre.** This project tackles graffiti in prominent amenity areas within Kilmarnock and Cumnock Town Centre.
- 6.3 **Safety Upgrade of Pedestrian Footway at Glaisnock footpath, Cumnock.** This project will repair an existing retaining wall adjacent to a well used footpath adjacent to the Glaisnock Water, Cumnock.

- 6.4 **Safety Upgrade of Pedestrian Footway at McKellar Place, Kilmarnock.** This project has reinstated and upgraded a well used footpath at McKellar Place, Kilmarnock.
- 6.5 **Repainting of street furniture at Avenue Square, Stewarton and Cumnock Town Centre.** This is part of a rolling programme of maintenance which tackled Kilmarnock Town Centre in 2003/4. This project will be carried out by the Criminal Justice Department Community Service by Offenders.
- 6.6 **Well Road Park, Well Road, Auchinleck.** This is a contribution to an ongoing maintenance obligation as a result of improvements carried out to the Well Road Park by the Auchinleck Community Council under the SIP funded Community Environmental Improvement Action Plans and Projects. The park is in Council ownership and maintenance is currently carried out by the Neighbourhood Services Department.

## **7. DERELICT PROPERTY REVOLVING FUND**

- 7.1 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 115-123 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.
- 7.2 The initial programme of projects agreed by Committee included the following properties. The top three on the list have now been demolished. In addition funds have also been allocated to the demolition of Amlaird Shops, Kilmarnock which is a priority due to potential redevelopment opportunities.
- Kilmarnock Amateur Boxing Club, Kirkton Road, Kilmarnock
  - 115/117 Main Street, Auchinleck
  - 123 Main Street, Auchinleck
  - 119 Main Street, Auchinleck
  - 1-7 Bridge Street, Muirkirk
  - Former Afton Valley Dyers Factory Site, 26 Castle, New Cumnock
- 7.3 The project at 1-7 Bridge Street, Muirkirk is no longer necessary or appropriate as a private developer has now purchased the site with the intention to redevelop it. To replace this project a further project has been identified by Muirkirk Environment Group (MEG) and the Local Member, at Pagan Walk, Muirkirk. MEG's intention would be to purchase two vacant and derelict buildings adjacent to their recently completed Sports Arena in Pagan Walk, to demolish them, carryout necessary remedial works and then potentially utilise the area as additional car parking adjacent to the Sports Arena. If the Committee agree to the inclusion of this replacement project it is proposed that a formal Minute of Agreement between MEG and the Council be drawn up and if MEG were to sell the site, then 70% of the net proceeds would be returned to the fund, as per the principles previously agreed.

7.4 In addition it is suggested that to allow the Council to react quickly to further demolition/re-development opportunities that are consistent with the adopted East Ayrshire Local Plan that future amendments to the projects included within the Derelict Properties Revolving Fund should be delegated to the Executive Director of Development and Property Services in consultation with the Chair of Development Services and relevant local member, with any additional projects being subject where appropriate, to a Minute of Agreement with the Council.

## **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 2004/2005. As indicated above individual projects may be receiving additional funding from a variety of sources such as East Ayrshire Coalfield Area SIP or Fresh Futures (The Big Lottery).

## **10. LEGAL AND PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 The implementation of the various projects will be carried out through 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 the Derelict Property Revolving Fund this will be progressed as appropriate through formal legal agreements with the third party property interest holders. Any property transaction outside the limits of delegation to the Executive Director of Development and Property Services will be subject to approval by the Policy and Resources Committee.

## **11. RECOMMENDATIONS**

11.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

- i) note the progress with the wide variety of projects being undertaken under the Environmental Initiatives Budget 2004-2005;
- ii) agree the replacement of the project at 1-7 Bridge Street, Muirkirk, with the project at Pagan Walk, Muirkirk under the Derelict Property Revolving Fund;
- iii) agree that future amendments to projects included within the Derelict Property Revolving Fund shall 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; and
- iv) authorise the Solicitor to the Council to enter into any necessary legal agreements to secure the successful implementation of the projects identified within the Derelict Property Revolving Fund and their redevelopment.

**James Lavery**  
**Executive Director of Development and Property Services**  
**25 November 2004**  
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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.

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

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