

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 23 MARCH 2004

WORKING AND LEARNING TOGETHER TO BUILD STRONGER COMMUNITIES: SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE GUIDANCE FOR COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Director of Educational & Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members of the Education Committee of the recent guidance issued by the Scottish Executive regarding community learning and development.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In June 2002, the Scottish Executive issued *Community Learning and Development: The Way Forward* which set out how it intended to imbed Community Learning and Development more firmly within the priority of community regeneration, social inclusion, lifelong learning and active citizenship. As part of the above report, the Scottish Executive announced that guidance for community learning and development would be prepared to replace existing Scottish Office Community Education Circular 4/99. A working draft guidance was subsequently prepared and issued in 2003.

3. THE GUIDANCE

- 3.1 The definition of community learning and development contained within the new guidance describes community learning and development as a “*way of working with and supporting communities. Community Learning and Development is central to social capital – a way of working with communities to increase the skills, confidence, networks and resources they need to tackle problems and grasp opportunities*”.
- 3.2 Priorities have been established for community learning and development. These are:
- achievement through learning for adults
raising standards of achievement in learning for adults through community based lifelong learning opportunities incorporating the core skills of literacy, numeracy, communications, problem solving and information communications technology
 - achievement through learning for young people
engaging with young people to facilitate their personal, social and educational development and enabling them to gain a voice influence and place in society
 - achievement through building community capacity

building community capacity and influence by enabling individuals, groups and communities to develop the confidence, understanding and skills required to influence decision making and service delivery. This could include enabling communities to provide and manage services to meet community needs.

4. LINK TO COMMUNITY PLANNING

- 4.1** Community learning and development is seen as a key tool in delivering the Scottish Executive's commitment to social justice. It is the intention that community planning partnerships will target their community learning and development capacity to support strategies aimed at *closing the opportunity gap: achieving social justice and encouraging community regeneration.*

In doing this, there is an acceptance that provision community learning and development support to deprived neighbourhoods and individuals means that less disadvantaged communities may receive a lower level of community learning and development resources.

- 4.2** Community planning partnerships require to set clear and measurable targets for each of the three national priorities as part of their community learning development and action plans. These targets should be part of the performance, monitoring and management framework being developed for community planning, and, where relevant, be related to outcomes set in community planning partnerships regeneration outcome agreements.
- 4.3** Community planning partnerships are expected to draw on the expertise of community learning and development practitioners; use a variety of methods to support community engagement and engage with a wide range of members of the community concerned and not just those who are already active.
- 4.4** Community planning partnerships require to produce a community learning and development strategy. It is expected that the first strategy should be published no later than 1 September 2004 and cover at least a 3 year period. It is the view at this point in time that the current Promoting Community Learning theme of the Community Plan will act as the community learning and development strategy. Contact has already been made with the Scottish Executive regarding this.

5. ROLE OF COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

- 5.1** There is an expectation that the existing community learning and development partnerships play a central role.
- 5.2** Community learning and development partnerships need to ensure that voluntary organisations providing community learning and development services are fully represented in the partnership.

6. COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLANS

- 6.1** Community learning and development action plans now replace community learning plans. Currently, community learning plans focus on the 7 local committee areas with a commitment to producing thematic community plans as appropriate. The current commitment includes a thematic community learning plan for people with a disability and consideration is currently being given to a thematic community learning plan for young people.

7. EAST AYRSHIRE

- 7.1** East Ayrshire Council is well placed to implement the new guidance. The name of the Community Learning and Development Service was approved through Education Committee in April 2003. The current strategic priorities for community learning and development already mirror those set out in the new guidance and the current Community Learning Partnership already feeds into East Ayrshire's Community Planning Partnership. A staff seminar will be held to further review the service in the context of this new guidance and opportunities taken to strengthen where appropriate.

8. LEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** The guidance is consistent with the current strategic aims of the community learning and development service and the community plan.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1** There are no financial Implications.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1** It is recommended that the Education Committee:

- i) note the contents of the report

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational & Social Services

1 March 2004
KG/JP

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Community Learning and Development: The Way Forward June 2002
Working and Learning together to build stronger communities: Scottish Executive
Guidance 2004
Education Committee 1 April 2003, Community Learning and Development

Members wishing further information should contact Kay Gilmour, Head of
Community Support, Tel (01563) 576104.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: KAY GILMOUR