

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **EMERGENCY POWERS COMMITTEE - 19 JULY 2006**

#### **EAST AYRSHIRE CHILDREN'S PANEL – EXTENSION OF CONCURRENT MEMBERSHIP SCHEME WITH NORTH AYRSHIRE CHILDREN'S PANEL**

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

## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1** To seek approval for an extension to the concurrent membership scheme with North Ayrshire Children's Panel for a period of 6 months, in order to populate East Ayrshire Children's Panel with male Panel Members.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** There is a requirement to ensure that a Children's Panel comprises of both male and female Panel Members. There has always been a difficulty in recruiting and retaining male Panel Members and recent recruitment campaigns have focussed on recruiting additional men to the Children's Panel. The Scottish Executive recognises that Panels do experience difficulties particularly with the shortage of male Panel Members and has made provision for concurrent Panel Membership. This is an agreement between 2 Children's Panel Advisory Committees (CPAC's) and their Panel Chairs that will allow Panel Members from one area to be appointed as Panel Members to a second area as a short term solution.
- 2.2** The Policy and Resources Committee at their meeting held on 20 September 2005, (Item 23, page 1704, 03/07) agreed to the establishment of a concurrent membership scheme, and accordingly the scheme was established with North Ayrshire Children's Panel for a period of one year, up to and including 1 November 2006.
- 2.3** Following on from last year's recruitment campaign, East Ayrshire Children's Panel are still short of male Panel Members. An additional local recruitment campaign, focussing on recruiting male Panel Members has been undertaken prior to the launch of the National Campaign. The closing date for applications was 30 June 2006, and 16 applications from 59 expressions of interest have been received. Interviews with the prospective Panel Members are due to take place on 26 and 27 July 2006.
- 2.4** Following discussion with the East Ayrshire's Children's Panel Advisory Committee and the Chair of East Ayrshire Children's Panel it has been proposed to extend the existing concurrent membership scheme with North Ayrshire Children's Panel subject to the agreement of all participating organisations. In terms of the Scottish Executive procedures, all participating local authorities, Chairs of Children's Panels, participating Panel Members, and CPAC's require to agree, before Scottish Ministers approval is sought.

Accordingly approval to extend the concurrent membership with North Ayrshire Children's Panel is sought from this Committee for a period of 6 months up to and including 1 May 2007.

- 2.5** By extending the concurrent membership scheme for a period of up to 6 months, up to and including 1 May 2007, it is hoped that East Ayrshire Children's Panel will be populated with the new male recruits from the Local Recruitment Campaign as detailed in 2.3 above, who will be required to complete a Fast Track Pre-Service Training Programme and be eligible to sit on East Ayrshire Children's Panel by December 2006. Further, the period up to and including 1 May 2007 will also tie in with the timescales for the National Pre-Service Training which will run from January until May 2007, after which new recruits from the National Recruitment Campaign will also be eligible to sit on hearings.

### **3. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1** East Ayrshire Council has responsibility for maintaining a Children's Panel in terms of the Children's (Scotland) Act 1995.

### **4. COMMUNITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1** The work of the Children's Panel links with two of the main themes from the Community Plan, Improving Opportunities and Improving Community Safety.

### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1** Schedule 1 of the Children's (Scotland) Act 1995 indicates that the local authority may pay the expenses of Children's Panel Members.
- 5.2** East Ayrshire Council provides financial provision to meet the work of the Children's Panel. The extension of the concurrent membership scheme may cause a slight increase in expenses as a result of the North Ayrshire Panel Members travelling to Hearing within East Ayrshire. However, it is anticipated that this will not be a significant increase.

### **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1** The Committee is asked to:-
- (i) agree to the extension of the concurrent membership scheme with North Ayrshire Children's Panel for a period of 6 months up to and including 1 May 2007; and
  - (ii) to remit authority to the Administration Manager, in his capacity as Clerk to the CPAC, to carry out the necessary consultation arrangements to obtain approval from North Ayrshire Council, Panel Chairs, CPACS and the Scottish Ministers.

Elizabeth Morton  
Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

LY/DL  
10 July 2006

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. Minutes of the Children's Panel Advisory Committee of 23 May 2006.
2. Scottish Executive Circulars no SEED 2002.05

Any person wishing further information on this report should contact Bill Walkinshaw, Clerk to the CPAC on Tel No (01563) 576135. Any person wishing to inspect the background papers in respect of this report should contact Lynn Young, Administrative Officer on Tel No (01563) 576283.

**Implementation Officer: Lynn Young, Administrative Officer**