

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE: 1 APRIL 2004

EVALUATION OF EAST AYRSHIRE COALFIELD AREA SOCIAL INCLUSION PARTNERSHIP (SIP)

Report by the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Committee of the positive outcome of the independent evaluation commissioned by Communities Scotland of the East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP).

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As a condition of funding, all Social Inclusion Partnerships (SIPs) are subject to an independent evaluation towards the end of their designated funding period. Nationally, evaluations were required for 25 SIPs with initial designations ending 31 March 2004, including East Ayrshire Coalfield SIP.
- 2.2 The SIP Board, on behalf of Communities Scotland, commissioned an independent evaluation of the SIP in September 2003. The evaluation is designed to support the transition of the SIP into the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) process.

3. SIP EVALUATION

- 3.1 DTZ Piedad Consulting was appointed to undertake the evaluation, which commenced in September 2003.
- 3.2 The evaluation of the SIP has been concluded and the final report was submitted to Communities Scotland for consideration in January 2004, as part of the national evaluation process.
- 3.3 The independent evaluation of SIP activity has been extremely positive, particularly in respect of the degree of community involvement and engagement, and its impact in the Coalfield Area. A summary of the key findings are detailed below:
- **The vision:** The SIPs vision has remained unchanged over the life of the programme. It remains an aspirational goal and the SIPs actions are entirely consistent with the pursuit of this goal, although clearly it is highly aspirational and ambitious in certain respects.
 - **Partnership working** is considered to be one of the major strengths of the East Ayrshire Coalfield Area SIP. The SIP benefits from an active and high level involvement on the part of almost all its partners, with a particularly significant role played by east Ayrshire Council, Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire and the health authorities.

- **Effectiveness, efficiency and progress:** The SIP has worked effectively and with efficiency; the Partnership has remained focused on the objectives of promoting and achieving the SIPs vision and objectives.
- **Community engagement and participation:** The strength and depth of community engagement is the biggest single achievement of the Coalfield SIP. Community representatives feel that their influence on decision making has grown and developed and that they are genuine partners.
- **Good practice and innovation:** There is a wealth of good practice in the way the SIP and the projects it supports operate. East Ayrshire Council has been outstandingly supportive of the SIP and is proud of its achievements.

3.4 The full evaluation report was considered at the SIP Board on 21 January 2004 and the Board is currently considering the recommendations contained within it. A copy of the full evaluation report is available at the Members' Information Point. A draft Executive Summary of the full evaluation report, also prepared by the consultant, has been distributed to Members.

3.5 As a result of the positive evaluation, the SIP has been advised of a transitional funding package of approx £2.3 million for 2004/05. Subject to the development and 'sign off' by the Minister for Communities of the Regeneration Outcome Agreement (ROA) by 31 March 2005, a further three year funding package (2005/06 – 2007/8) will be secured.

4. POLICY AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The SIP Evaluation will ensure a smooth transition of the Social Inclusion Partnership with the local Community Planning process.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Nil

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The Policy and Resources Committee is asked to:

- i) note the positive evaluation of the East Ayrshire Coalfield Area SIP;
- ii) remit the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources to consider any staffing implications arising from SIP transition to community planning and to report accordingly to the Corporate Governance Committee; and
- iii) otherwise note the content of the report.

Fiona Lees

Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources

19 March 2004

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Evaluation of East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership – 1999-2003
Full Report

Evaluation of East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership – 1999-2003
Executive Summary Report (issued separately to Members)

Members wishing further information on this report should contact Gwen Barker,
Community Planning and Partnership Manager Tel: 01563 554602.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: Gwen Barker