

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
– 8 FEBRUARY 2006**

**KILMARNOCK TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY**

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

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To request that the Committee consider and if acceptable endorse the Kilmarnock Town Centre Strategy.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At the meeting of Development Services Committee on 20 December 2005 the Committee agreed to adopt the finalised Kilmarnock Town Centre Strategy. The Strategy is intended to help guide investment, improvements and growth to the town centre to the benefit of Kilmarnock and East Ayrshire generally. The Strategy also sets out a vision for the town centre and a programme of actions to strengthen and transform the town centre and improve all of the various functions that the town centre provides. A copy of the Strategy is available in the Members Information Point.

**3. DISCUSSION**

- 3.1 The Strategy Document makes reference to a number of matters falling within the remit of this Committee, primarily in relation to promoting and supporting initiatives for living and working in the town centre, and in relation to the Councils presence in the Town Centre.
- 3.2 It is now proposed to prepare an Action Plan which seeks to deliver the aims and objectives which the Strategy has identified. This Action Plan will be developed by a Project Team comprising of Officers from various Departments across the Council including Neighbourhood Services.
- 3.3 The Strategy will be firmly launched on 26 January 2006 and thereafter regular reports will be submitted to the Development Services Committee on progress against the Strategy.
- 3.4 At this stage Members are being requested to consider and if acceptable endorse the Strategy in so far as this Committee is concerned. In particular, the Strategy confirms that the Council should continue with a major presence in the Town Centre, and this will, in due course, be reflected on the Councils Office Accommodation Strategy.

#### **4. BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

- 4.1 A Business Improvement District is a partnership with a range of organisations in a town centre, led by the Private Sector and aimed at improving the prosperity and vitality of Town Centres. Normally such a B.I.D. would require businesses within a Town Centre to fund the detailed proposals for improvements through an additional rates burden. However, the Scottish Executive has invited applications for a fully funded B.I.D. as well as for smaller pilot schemes, and such a scheme would undoubtedly benefit Kilmarnock. At the launch of the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy, traders were supportive in principle of such a scheme. It is considered that an application for a B.I.D should be made, and the Strategy would assist in such an application.

#### **5. POLICY / COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Town Centre Strategy will play a key part in delivery of the six key themes contained within the Community Plan.

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Executive Director of Development and Property Services in his report to Development Services Committee commented that his Department have intimated to the Minister for Communities and the Minister for Finance and Public Reform that the Council would be preparing an Action Plan and costed programme for works for which financial support would be sought from the Scottish Executive and other external agencies. In addition the Council would utilise its own resources contained in the Regeneration and Efficiency Budget to progress the aims of the Strategy. The cost of meeting the aspirational objectives of the Strategy in so far as this Committee is concerned cannot be met from existing budgets.

#### **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 It is recommended that the Committee
- (i) consider, and if acceptable, endorse the finalised Kilmarnock Town Centre Strategy;
  - (ii) approve the submission of applications for a Business Improvement District within Kilmarnock ;
  - (iii) otherwise note the content of this report.

James Lavery  
**Executive Director of Development and Property Services**  
27 January 2006

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. East Ayrshire Local Plan and Spatial Development Options Paper
2. Consultation Draft Joint Structure Plan 2025
3. Report to Development Services Committee on 20 December 2005
4. Kilmarnock Town Centre Action Plan

For further information on the content of the report, contact Karl Doroszenko, Planning, Development and Building Standards Division, on 01563 576751.

**Implementation Officer:** Alan Neish.